



The Liulihe Archaeological Project: Investigating a Bronze Age Settlement Outer Enclosure at Liulihe, China

Course ID: ARCH 380L

June 13TH - July 10TH, 2026

Academic Credits: 7 Semester Credit Units

FIELD SCHOOL DIRECTOR(S)

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OVERVIEW

The Liulihe site in Beijing is a Chinese Bronze Age city dating from about 2,800-3,000 years ago. Remains

at the site include rammed-earth city walls, moats, large rammed-earth buildings (palaces or ancestral temples), small above-ground buildings, crypts and semi-crypts, ceremonial relics, and burials of various grades.

Numerous excavated inscriptions indicate that the site was the capital city of the state of Yan, one of the most northerly feudal states of the Western Zhou period, as recorded in the literature. Artifacts reflecting the highest level of productivity and aesthetics of the time, such as bronze, jade, lacquer, and primitive porcelain, were unearthed from the aristocratic tombs at the Liulihe site. The study of pottery can show that there were people of different origins mixing here at the Liulihe site and distributed in different classes.

The site has been known since 1945, and excavation and research work has been carried out since 2019. The main research objectives of this phase of the Liulihe site are focused on early urban planning and layout, architectural forms and assemblage relationships of major buildings, and archaeological research on burials, with the types of excavations including dwelling sites and burials.

The content of the summer school is real fieldwork and excavation operations, which contribute to the overall project goals. The excavation sites we use for the summer school have a certain degree of continuity, and have been selected, investigated and test excavated beforehand to ensure that the students' internships will be productive.

Students will mainly participate in the excavation, drawing, sampling and recording of Liulihe city outer enclosure, as well as archaeological survey, exploration, recording, and data collation and uploading in other parts of the broader urban project. Teachers will live with students to facilitate communication. During the internship, students will be involved in excavation work under the guidance of their teachers and can ask them questions at any time. Teachers encourage and support students to actively express their views and opinions, and to make rational suggestions. The program hopes to establish a close relationship between students and research work, and to improve their research ability and interest in participating in research.

Outside of work and study, we will lead a visit to the World Heritage Site of the Zhoukoudian *Homo erectus* site and participate in the Great Wall conservation and restoration survey. Participants may be involved in public outreach or science popularisation activities.

ACADEMIC CREDIT UNITS & TRANSCRIPTS

Credit Units: Attending students will be awarded 2 semester credit units through our academic partner, Connecticut College. Connecticut College is a highly ranked liberal arts institution with a deep commitment to undergraduate education. Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school (see assessment, below). Students are encouraged to discuss the transferability of credit units with faculty and registrars at their home institution prior to attending this field school.

Transcripts: An official copy of transcripts will be mailed to the permanent address listed by students on their online application. One more transcript may be sent to the student's home institution at no cost. Additional transcripts may be ordered at any time through the [National Student Clearinghouse](#).

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites at this field school. While an introduction to archaeology and anthropology courses (including an overview course on the Bronze Age in East Asia) would be helpful, it is not

necessary. As this is a field-based learning environment, students should understand that they will be exposed to environments and physical labour that they may not be used to on a daily basis.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The main goal is for the students to master the theory, techniques and methods of Chinese field archaeology through a typical archaeological excavation of a large Chinese site, and at the same time to make some contributions to our real research work.

In the process, we will allow students to learn the techniques of archaeological exploration, excavation, recording, collecting, data cleaning, pottery classification and statistics. Students will have the opportunity to engage with some Chinese Bronze Age archaeology and learn about early Chinese urban features. In addition, students will learn how to discuss how to develop urban archaeological work and how to better tell stories through archaeological work. Students will learn how to set academic goals, interpret phenomena, and work better as a team.

TEACHING TEAM BACKGROUND

Two staff train the students to learn core skills for the whole program, and two other staff who own master's degrees in English-speaking countries help students to complete relevant international formalities and help overcome communication obstacles between international students and Chinese teachers, and students. These four team members are all female. There will be a professional vocabulary booklet in both Chinese and English for students and teachers to communicate, reducing misperceptions about the excavation command.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Skills:

- Site investigation: including field surveying, coring, use of measurement and positioning techniques such as GPS, and collection of specimens.
- Site excavation: excavation methods and techniques including excavation, collection of artifacts, measurement, mapping, photography, recording, and setting information database. Also, the use of a variety of instruments, to the level of being able to operate independently. Understand the criteria for judging site relationships and be able to make simple judgments about the relationship of remains.
- Labwork: understanding including classification of remains, restoration, drawing, and chronological study of artifacts.
- Record writing: to be able to independently carry out prospecting records or burial excavation records.

Concepts:

- Increased understanding of the Bronze Age in China
- Increased understanding of early Chinese cities and urban evolution
- Learn how to integrate material culture with historical narratives
- Learn how to differentiate between multicultural elements and the discussion of different ethnic groups.

Learning:

- How to organise and design archaeology at large sites centred on early cities

- How to frontload scientific and technical archaeological programs in excavations
- How to tell stories through archaeological material
- Improving cooperation in team research

ASSESSMENT

30%: An excavation diary, including records, drawings, and photographs of the excavation of the site or burial for which the student is responsible.

20%: A classroom quiz on what the students know and have learned about the site.

20%: A presentation, centred around the remains or burial for which the student is responsible.

20%: Teamwork, where students will be required to complete a creative exercise related to the site in any form, such as a vlog, a poster, etc.

10%: Participation.

NB: Students are required to attend a minimum of 90% of field excavation activities.

COURSE SCHEDULE

All IFR field schools begin with a safety orientation. This orientation addresses local and program protocols concerning student behavior, appropriate attire, local practices and sensibilities that may be unfamiliar, potential fauna and flora hazards, harassment and discrimination policies, and the student Code of Conduct.

This program will start on **JUNE 13TH**, and end on **JULY 10TH 2026**. Students are required to do fieldwork on all days except the arrival day, off day, the departure day and lecture time.

2026		June				
Monday	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
01	02	03	04	05	06	07
08	09	10	11	12	13	14
					1. Arrival 2. Dinner	Forenoon: 1. Opening ceremony Afternoon: 2. Lecture1: The Development, Concept, and Methodologies of Chinese Field Archaeology (Qin Lin) 3. Work Camp orientation
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Forenoon: 1. Lesson 1- Overview of Liulihe (Wang Jing) 2. go to excavation site and assign excavation missions Afternoon: 3. Lesson 2- Principles and methods of field archaeology (An Nina) 4. Quiz	Go to Excavation	Afternoon: Lesson 3-Recording and mapping - the basics and the practice(An Nina) Evening: regular meeting	Go to Excavation	Go to Excavation	Afternoon: Lecture2: Sampling and multidisciplinary research in the field (metallurgy, ceramics)(Liu, Siran)	Go to Excavation
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Go to Excavation	Trip 1 1. Capital Museum 2. Chinese Archaeological Museum	Go to Excavation	Go to Excavation	Afternoon: Lecture 3: Sampling and Multidisciplinary Research in the Field (Direction of Environmental Archaeology) (Deng, Zhenhua)	Trip 2: 1. The Palace Museum	Off Day
29	30	01	02	03	04	05
Go to Excavation	Go to Excavation					
2026		July				
Monday	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
29	30	01	02	03	04	05
		Trip 3 1. the Great Wall's Jiankou part	Go to Excavation	Go to Excavation	Afternoon: Lecture 4: Landscape Archeology (Sam Turner)	Trip 4 1. Zhoukoudian Site 2. Yunju Temple
06	07	08	09	10	11	12
Afternoon: 1. Student give field work presentation 2. Completion ceremonies Evening: Teamwork	Students Submit the Archaeological Record	Forenoon: Teachers analysis the records submitted Afternoon: Students revise the records	Students revise the records	Departure		

Note: Students are required to do fieldwork on all days except the arrival day, off day, the departure day and lecture time.

Fieldwork Daily routine

5:30-5:50 Breakfast

5:50-6:00 Depart for site

6:00-10:30 Work on site

10:30-11:00 Daily Summary

11:00-14:40 Lunch break

14:40-15:00 Depart for site

15:00-18:30 Work on site

18:30-19:00 Dinner

REQUIRED READINGS

PDF files of all mandatory readings will be provided to enrolled students via a shared Dropbox folder. Students are encouraged to download and/or print readings prior to traveling. Course participants are expected to be prepared to engage the discussions led by facilitators, all of whom will be looking for compelling evidence that students have read and thought about the assigned readings prior to the scheduled day on which they are first discussed.

Colin Renfrew, Paul Bahn. 2016. *Archaeology: Theories, Methods, and Practice*. College Edition / Seventh Edition (2016) 49-72; 177-232

Archaeology Site Manual, Museum of London, Archaeology Service, Third edition-1994. Chapter 3.5.

Techniques of Archaeological Excavation, Barker, P., London, Batsford. 1977, 3rd ed. (1993). Chapter 5

Pottery in Archaeology, (Cambridge Manuals in Archaeology), Clive Orton, Paul Tyers and Alan Vince, Cambridge University Press, 1993. Chapter 2, Chapter 19.

Willey, Gordon R. 1953. "Prehistoric settlement patterns in the Virú Valley, Peru." *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin*. 155:1-453.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Li Liu, Xingcan Chen. *The Archaeology of China*, Cambridge University Press, 2012

Bell, J.R. 1994. *Reconstructing Prehistory: Scientific Method in Archaeology*. Temple University Press: Philadelphia.

Principles of Archaeological Stratigraphy, Harris, E. C., London, Academic Press 1989, 2nd ed.

Sampling in Archaeology, (Cambridge Manuals in Archaeology), Clive Orton, Cambridge University Press.