

DHIBAN EXCAVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, JORDAN

Course ID: ARCH 350H
July 5-August 8, 2018

FIELD SCHOOL DIRECTORS:

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INTRODUCTION

Located 40 miles south of Amman and 12 mile east of the Dead Sea, *Tall Dhiban* is one Jordan's most important historical sites. A mound of more than 30 acres in area and 130 feet in height, *Tall Dhiban* contains a fascinating record of some 6,000 years of human occupation. Dhiban has been a town in the first phase of urbanism, capital of the biblical kingdom of Moab, an outpost of Nabataean culture at the time of the Roman conquest, a thriving city at the peak of the Byzantine Empire, an early conquest of first Islamic caliphs, and a key agricultural center in the aftermath of the Crusades. Today, Dhiban is a vibrant modern town primarily composed of Bedouin from the Bani Hamida tribe.

The Dhiban Excavation and Development Project (DEDP) has been working since 2004 to both understand the rich and complex archaeological record of *Tall Dhiban* and to help local residents and government agencies to preserve and develop this record as an economic and heritage resource for the future. The story of Dhiban is one of "boom and bust", of rapid settlement growth and equally rapid contraction. We are interested in understanding why people continually returned to a place that has no permanent water supply. We are interested in understanding how the difficult environmental conditions at Dhiban have interacted with the wider economic and social developments in the Near East over the past six millennia. We are also interested in understanding how the material past of Dhiban has continually shaped its present and its future.

In 2018 the DEDP will explore these issues in two ways. In the field, we will excavate a large house that collapsed between c. 570-610 CE (radiocarbon dated), probably as the result of an earthquake. We will document the rich record this house contains of life in the 6th-7th centuries CE, including a wealth of organic remains and objects from everyday life. In particular, we will ask if the local autonomy that is said to characterize the last phase of the Byzantine Empire in Jordan can be seen in the economic

organization of Dhiban. We will also ask whether or not the changes in diet and economic strategies that seem to follow the collapse of this house can be related to the Islamic conquest of Dhiban.

In 2018 we will also continue our study of a major Iron Age water reservoir built at the end of the 9th century BCE when Dhiban was capital of the biblical kingdom of Moab. Major public infrastructure projects such as this are rare for Iron Age Jordan and raise many questions regarding the nature of kingdoms like Moab, which otherwise seem to lack the centralized governmental institutions normally associated with the concept of the State.

Our second focus for 2018 will be on processing and analyzing the many samples collected during 2018 and previous excavation seasons. This includes ancient seeds and animal bones, as well as pottery, glass, metal and other less common materials. Depending upon the status of several site development and museum projects involving Dhiban, students may also have the opportunity to work with the Department of Antiquities of Jordan to clean and consolidate buildings excavated in the 1950s, erect information signs on site, prepare informational brochures and other resources for both students and adults in Dhiban, and upgrade the display cases dedicated to Dhiban in the Madaba Archaeological Museum.

All students will receive training in, and perform, both field excavation and post-excavation laboratory work. Student interest and aptitude will help determine how much time each student spends on any one component of the project.

ACADEMIC CREDIT UNITS & TRANSCRIPTS

Credit Units: Attending students will be awarded 12 quarter credit units (equivalent to 8 semester units) through our academic partner, UCLA Extension. UCLA is a top ranked research university and its archaeology program is ranked as #1 in the country. All IFR field schools instructors and curricula are approved both by the corresponding academic department and the Academic Senate at UCLA. This field school provides a minimum of 192 direct instructional hours.

Transcripts: Transcripts are available through UCLA UnEX portal at <http://bit.ly/1KjIFZK>. Grades will be posted and transcript available usually within six weeks after the end of this field school. All IFR field schools are designated 'XL' and thus are transferable courses, depending on the student major, GPA etc. To learn more about XL designation, go to <http://bit.ly/1KrpahW>. UCLA students, go to <http://bit.ly/1QkSkR8>.

Credit Units Transfer: Most universities accept UCLA credit units – there are very few exceptions. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss the transferability of the credit units with school officials BEFORE attending the field school.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The aim of this course is to familiarize students with the core concepts, skills, and practical and ethical challenges of archaeological field research within the context of the archaeological record of Jordan since the Middle Holocene. This will be achieved by each student through their guided participation in all aspects of the excavation process, such as: **excavation** on the site of *Tall Dhiban*; **manual documentation** including the completion of locus (i.e. context) forms and the drawing of plans and sections; **digital documentation** through the use of a total station surveying instrument followed by mapping and database management in a GIS environment, as well as digital photography and photogrammetry; **finds processing** including the washing, labelling, identification and registration of

excavated finds; and **environmental sampling**, including geo-archaeological sediment analysis and the recovery of botanical remains by means of water flotation.

Students will also achieve the course aims by attending lectures, weekly project meetings and weekend fieldtrips to archaeological sites of relevance to the research goals of the DEDP. The field school will commence on **July 5th, 2018** with two days of hands on training in basic excavation and field documentation procedures in order to get you ready to start digging. For the remaining 4 weeks lectures will occur once per week. On Thursdays, all students and staff will participate in a weekly review of the project's progress in relation to its research goals and design. Course activities will run every day from Sunday through Thursday until August 7, 2018, with field trips on some weekends (Friday or Saturday).

DISCLAIMER – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Archaeological field work involves physical work in the outdoors. You should be aware that conditions in the field are different than those you experience in your home, dorms or college town. This program operates in a typical semi-arid Eastern Mediterranean environment. Average daily high temperatures in July and August range from 85-89°F. However, in 2015 daily highs were over 100 °F most days in August. Our work day runs from 5:30-13:00 to avoid the worst of the heat, but temperatures can already be high and the sun strong by 9:00 AM. Dehydration, sun stroke and severe sunburn are very real dangers if care is not taken in regularly drinking water, and covering your skin and head. These dangers are exacerbated when exerting yourself in the outdoors. Both for this reason, and in keeping with Jordanian standards of modesty, you will not be allowed to work in shorts or sleeveless shirts. Stinging wasps and scorpions are present on the site. While their bites are painful rather than dangerous for most young adults, they can present a serious risk to those with heart conditions or who suffer allergic reactions to insect bite. Mosquitos are present at night when it cools off. Mosquitos in Jordan are not known to carry infectious diseases such as Malaria or Dengue Fever. However, we recommend the use of insect repellent and mosquito nets for comfort when sleeping.

If you have any medical concerns, please consult with your doctor. For all other concerns, please consult with the project director – as appropriate.

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for participation in this field school. This is hands-on, experiential learning and students will study on-site how to conduct archaeological research. Archaeology involves physical work and exposure to the elements and thus, requires a measure of acceptance that this will not be the typical university learning environment. You will get sweaty, tired and have to work in the outdoors. Students are required to come equipped with sufficient excitement and adequate understanding that the archaeological endeavor requires real, hard work – in the sun, on your feet, and with your trowel.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successfully completing this course, students will have acquired:

- A basic understanding of the process of archaeological research, including the inter-relationship between research questions, research design, data collection and processing methods, and the data themselves
- The basic manual and intellectual skills necessary essential to carrying out archaeological excavation to a high standard.
- A firm grasp of the fundamental principles and procedures for finds processing and registration.

- A good appreciation and basic knowledge of the methods and importance of environmental sampling in its various forms.
- A basic grasp of digital documentation procedures.
- A basic understanding of the principle social and cultural-historical developments in Jordan from the mid-Holocene to the Ottoman Empire.
- A basic familiarity with the material culture of central Jordan in the periods under excavation in 2018.
- A basic appreciation of the ethical responsibilities and significant challenges involved in preserving the archaeological record of Jordan as a valued cultural and economic asset for its citizens, and the world at large.

GRADING MATRIX

60% Attend and demonstrate good citizenship (i.e. engagement, punctuality, collegial contributions in discussions, and active participation in group exercises) in daily field and lab work, lectures, practical training, project meetings and field trips.

20% Portfolio including 1 context sheet filled in and explained by the student and a notebook (provided by the project) with diary entries for each of the sites visited on the field trips.

10% Reflexive skills survey and interview. Students will reflect on what skills they have learned in the field school and how well they have mastered these skills in an interview with senior staff members. **(to be scheduled during week 5)**

10% Quiz covering the background readings assigned prior to the students' arrival in Jordan. **(July 12, 2018)**

TRAVEL & MEETING POINT

Students enrolled in the field school are expected to arrive on July 5, 2018 at Queen 'Aliya International Airport (Amman Jordan) where they will be met by project staff. Please email your travel itinerary to the field school director (bruce.routledge@liv.ac.uk) as soon as it is confirmed. Students who arrive outside of the agreed arrival "window" will need to take a taxi to our base beside the Madaba Archaeological Museum (in Madaba). The airport taxi stand is immediately outside of the arrivals gate and the 30-minute trip to Madaba has a fixed price regulated by the government (22 Jordanian Dinar at the time of writing).

The director's Jordanian cell/mobile number will be provided to all students nearer your departure date. Use that number and/or the director's email address to make contact with the team if you miss your flight, are delayed or are scheduled to arrive outside of the arrival "window" on July 5, 2018.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

All U.S., Canadian and EU citizens will require both a single entry tourist visa for Jordan and a passport valid for at least 6 months from the date that the visa is issued. Visas can be purchased via the Jordanian embassy in your country of citizenship or they can be purchased at the passport control point in Queen Aliya Airport upon your arrival in Jordan. The current price for North American and European citizens is 40 Jordanian Dinars (JoD). Please note that the fee must be paid in JoD. If you have not purchased dinars prior to your arrival, there are money changers adjacent to the passport control area that you can use. Your visa is initially valid for one month and can only be extended for a second month if you check in at a police station within your first 30 days in the country. This will be arranged on your behalf by the project.

In addition to the tourist visa, all foreign participants on archaeological excavations in Jordan must be

reviewed by the government. This involves submitting your passport information, a photograph and some basic personal information (address, occupation, previous experience etc) at least three months prior to the beginning of the excavation permit. For DEDP 2016 this means no later than April 2, 2018. Once you have been accepted onto the 2016 DEDP Field School Dr. Routledge will contact you to collect this information.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Our project base is in Madaba, a city of c. 80,000 (c. 1/3 Christian and 2/3 Muslim) 15 miles north of Dhiban with good tourist infrastructure, including restaurants, hotels, banks and a wide range of shops. Free WiFi is available in a number of cafes and internet USB dongles can be purchased in Madaba for your laptop or smartphone. Team members will sleep 3-4 per room in gender segregated apartments that have electricity, running water, showers and western-style toilets. Water is in short supply in Jordan, so all team members are expected to conserve water at all times. Breakfast is provided on site and a large lunch will be prepared each weekday by our (excellent) cook. Evening and week-end meals are less structured, with students free to eat food available in the project kitchen or purchase their own food in Madaba. Meals will be provided during field trips where appropriate. We can accommodate vegetarian diets as a matter of course. More strict dietary restrictions (vegan, kosher, allergies, lactose or gluten intolerance, etc.) are more difficult to accommodate and will need to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Dr. Routledge by email (bruce.routledge@liv.ac.uk) if you have any such dietary restrictions.

Etiquette

It is important to remember that while living and working in Jordan we are guests and should always be respectful towards our hosts. This means maintaining a level of modesty and decorum in our dress, public behavior and consumption of alcohol. For both men and women, our **modest dress code** in public spaces includes sleeved shirts and long trousers/skirts (no bare chests, shorts, short skirts, low neck lines, sleeveless or backless clothing). Not only will you avoid drawing attention to yourself, you will also help to protect yourself against sunburn, sunstroke and skin cancer.

The **roof and patios of the project's apartments** are considered public spaces. Be mindful of what you wear and say, as our neighbours will be living nearby. Also, be discrete--watch your noise levels, since neighbours will be disturbed by the noise. No sunbathing on the roof or on patios.

Team members are forbidden from consuming **alcohol** when in Dhiban and must limit their consumption elsewhere. Jordan's official religion is Islam, and drinking in the street is against the law. Consuming alcohol is acceptable outside of Dhiban, for example, in restaurants in Amman and Madaba. However, even in larger towns your behaviour will reflect upon the project as a whole. Reports of public displays of drunkenness will lead to your dismissal from the project. Basic guidelines to remember: 1. Be discreet 2. Do not drink too much--public drunkenness is unacceptable 3. Team members are expected to work, regardless of self-inflicted fatigue. 4. Alcohol contributes to dehydration. **Students are NOT** permitted to drink alcohol during the workweek, and staff members are encouraged to limit their consumption.

ITEMS TO BRING

Required:

- A 4" or 4.5" pointing trowel—(Philadelphia or London style). Marshalltown or WHS-Tyzack are the best brands for archaeology.
- Sturdy boots/ hiking shoes with ankle support. Steel toes are not necessary, but no one will be allowed to excavate in sneakers or sandals.

- Work gloves.
- A hat or appropriate head-covering for sun protection.
- Long-sleeved work shirt (team members are not permitted to work on site in sleeveless garments). 100% is highly recommended for comfort in the heat. **Please be sure that the shirt tails are long enough to prevent your buttocks and/or underwear and/or lower back from being exposed when you bend over to excavate!**
- Cotton t-shirts to wear under your work shirt. This helps create a cooling micro-climate next to your skin.
- Cotton long-legged work pants (trousers) (team members are not permitted to work on site in shorts). **Please be sure that the rise of your pants (trousers) is sufficient to cover your buttocks and/or underwear when you bend over to excavate!**
- Day backpack appropriate for carrying personal equipment to and from the site. Warning: this item will experience considerable wear & tear & dirt. Do not bring a Vuitton!
- Water bottle (24 – 32 oz.)
- Sunglasses with UV protection
- Sunblock with a high SPF
- Insect Repellent
- Light sleeping bag or sheets and pillowcase. Foam pillows and mattresses are supplied by the project.
- Towel and washcloth

Recommended:

- Lip balm with high SPF
- Bandana or scarf to protect the back of your neck from the sun. (Many options to purchase in Madaba).
- Flip flops that can be worn in the shower (can be purchased in Madaba)
- Flashlight & batteries
- Personal first aid kit, including Tylenol/Advil, cold/sinus medication, Imodium, etc. (The project will also have a collective first aid kit for each apartment).
- Mosquito net
- Clothespins for hanging laundry (available in Madaba)
- Personal toiletries (Most are available in Madaba, but brands are limited. Women: tampons are difficult to purchase outside Amman.)
- Stuff-sacks to store laundry, toiletries
- laptop computer (useful but not required for field school assignments)
- Unlocked cell phone that can take a Jordanian SIM card (this will save you a lot of money in roaming charges).
- At least one set of “restaurant worthy” clothing.
- Swimwear. (Note: strictly for swimming at hotel pools, the Dead Sea etc. Sunbathing in or around the project apartments or in any public space is not allowed).

ITEMS NOT TO BRING

- Any form of GPS devices
- Walkie-talkies
- Any electronic device that emits a radio signal

All of these objects are illegal in Jordan without explicit written permission from the government. These devices will be confiscated at the airport upon arrival.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Orientation

Jul 05 - Arrival at Queen Aliya International Airport and transport to Madaba

Jul 06 – AM: Jet lag recovery time

PM Lecture a) – Welcome to Jordan (staff and student introductions; geography, environment, history, language, religion and current issues for Jordan).

PM: Lecture b) – Introduction to the Dhiban Excavation and Development Project (health & safety, the site, research goals & research design 2016).

PM: Project welcome dinner

Jul 07 – AM On site orientation and hands-on excavation training.

PM Lab orientation and basic post-excavation training.

Weeks 1-5 (July 8 -August 7)

Standard work day (Sunday – Thursday)

4:15 AM – Wake up. Light “first” breakfast (coffee/tea, bread, jam etc.)

4:45 M – Roll call and transport by bus to site.

5:25 AM - Arrive at site

5:30 AM-9:00 AM – First period of excavation

9:00-9:30 AM – Second breakfast in shade tent.

9:30-11AM – Second period of excavation

11-11:15 AM – Break in shade tent.

11:15-12:30 – Third period of excavation

12:30-12:50 – Units cleaned and inspected. Tools gathered and stored for the night.

(On Thursdays clean-up will start at 12:00 and the last 30 mins of the day will be spent visiting other excavation units on site to see their progress).

13:00 – Transport to Madaba.

13:45-14:30 Lunch

14:30-16:00: Free time (i.e. nap)

16:00-19:00: Lab work. Normally this entails cleaning and processing finds. One day per week students will work in small groups learning skills and assisting staff members in one of the following areas of data collection and analysis: i) Geo-archaeology; ii) Paleo-ethnobotany; iii) Digital survey and GIS mapping; iv) Finds registration and analysis; v) Photography and illustration.

19:00-19:45 Dinner

21:00: Lights out

August 8, 2017 – Pack-up and depart

Every **Wednesday** there will be a **lecture** from 18:00-19:00. Each lecture will address major interpretive or methodological issues in the archaeology of complex societies by means of the archaeological record of Jordan.

Week 1: Themes for Environmental archaeology in Jordan: Land, water and food.

Week 2: Themes for Iron Age Jordan: Social change, identity and state-formation.

Week 3: Themes for Hellenistic, Nabataean and Roman Jordan: Trade and imperialism

Week 4: Themes for Byzantine and Early Islamic Jordan: Money, religion, and power.

Week 5 Themes for Middle Islamic and Ottoman Jordan: Agriculture, pastoral nomadism and “collapse”.

Every **Thursday** (except July 26 – the Petra Weekend) there will be a **project team meeting** from 18:00-19:00 to review of the progress of research that week and plan for the week to come.

On some **weekends** there will be a field trip to archaeological sites relevant to this content of this course:

Week 1: Walking tour of Madaba (Madaba Archaeological museum; “Church of the map”; Madaba Archaeological Park; Church of the Apostles).

Week 2: Sites in the Madaba region (Mt. Nebo; Kh. Mukhayyat; Mukawir (Macherus); Kh. Ataruz; Umm ar-Rsas).

Week 3 – Petra and the Wadi Dana nature reserve (Long weekend – Friday-Sunday).

READINGS (all provided in pdf form via IFR)

1. Routledge, Bruce. n.d. *The Dhiban Excavation Manual*.

2. *The Idiot’s guide to the Dhiban Excavation Manual* (i.e. a handy 2 page abbreviated version. Laminated copies will be available in Jordan so that you can use one in the field).

3. Farahani, Alan, Adelsberger, Katherine, Lau, Hannah, n.d. *Dhiban: Environmental archaeology sampling and processing protocols*. A guide to how and why we collect and analyze organic (e.g. seeds, bones) and inorganic (e.g. soil, shells, plaster) materials from the site that are both visible and microscopic.

3. Kutner, Melissa, Fatkin, Danielle, Routledge, Bruce *Dhiban field trip site guide* (brief notes, maps and plans relevant to the sites we will visit on the weekends)

4. *Jordan – Current Issues Reading Pack* (a collection of brief UN, Jordanian government, NGO and news media internet sources providing basic data and perspectives on current issues in Jordan, esp. with the Syrian refugee crisis, Islam, government, environment, economy, and demography).

5. *Archaeology of Jordan Reading pack* – 1 brief article to accompany each week’s lecture.