



EXHUMING HUMAN REMAINS FROM MODERN MASS BURIALS: FORENSIC ARCHAEOLOGY FROM THE BATTLE OF TERUEL, SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Course ID: HIS 489

June 2-29, 2024

Academic Credits: 8 Semester Credit Units (Equivalent to 12 Quarter Units)
School of Record: Culver Stockton College

This program is focused on exhumation of human remains who perished during the 1937-38 Battle of Teruel, one of the most vicious of the Spanish Civil War. The program is designed to train students in the excavation and exhumation of mass burials in conflict zones and prepare participants with methodological and legal issues (chain of custody, documentation, etc) that are crucial elements of such work. This program takes place where family & community members are alive and have deep and intensive interest in the exhumation work.

This program is emotionally and physically demanding, requiring the utmost respect for the dead and the living. Students should be aware of the challenges and should attend only if they feel this type of experience is for them. This program DOES NOT offer onsite professional grief counseling.

DIRECTOR:

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Spanish Civil War was fought from 1936 to 1939, between Republican and Nationalist forces. The war began in 1936, when General Francisco Franco began with a coup d'état against the democratically elected Republican Spanish state. Franco wanted to establish a fascist state in Spain and was supported by the then contemporary fascist regimes of Germany and Italy. The war was seen by many around the world as a struggle between dictatorship and democracy and was internationalised almost immediately. Volunteers from around the world joined combatants of both sides.

The Spanish Civil War was a global political event. But it was also experimental grounds to test modern weaponry and modern war tactics – especially by the Germans and Italians. Claude Bowers, United States ambassador to Spain during the war, said it was a "dress rehearsal" for World War II. By early 1939, the Nationalist won the war and Franco ruled Spain as its Fascist leader until his death in November 20, 1975.

The Battle of Teruel was one of the most consequential within the Spanish Civil War. The battle was fought in and around the city of Teruel between December 1937 and February 1938, during one of the worst winters in Spain. The battle was one of the bloodiest actions of the war, with the city changing hands several times by first falling to the Republicans and eventually being retaken by the Nationalists. The battle resulted with over 110,000 casualties for both sides, including Spaniards and many international combatants – Germans & Italians from the Nationalistic side, other internationals from the International Lincoln Brigade at the Republican side.

Due to the vicious fighting, Teruel is considered the 'Stalingrad' of the Spanish Civil War. More than 40,000 soldiers from both sides died there. At least 406 of these soldiers were buried in a large mass grave at the site of San Blas, a small cemetery on the outskirts of Teruel. The soldiers were buried side by side, regardless of the side they fought for, with their weapons, uniforms, boots, and personal objects. This mass burial is the focus of this program.

In 1937, Ernest Hemingway and Robert Capa travelled to Teruel and documented the battle (see Fig 1). Like Hemingway & Capa, other Americans participated in the Spanish Civil War fighting mostly on the Republican side as volunteers at the Abraham Lincoln Battalion. Americans actively participated in the battle of Teruel and captured their time there in hundreds of photos and half a dozen documentary films (<https://alba-valb.org>).



Figure 1: Ernest Hemingway helping a Republican soldier from the 40th Division with a jammed rifle at Teruel (Photograph by Robert Capa, 1937)



Figure 2: Map of Teruel during the Spanish Civil War

Initial archaeological investigations at San Blas were carried out in 2022 and the remains of 18 individuals were recovered. One of the remains recovered wore a uniform with brass buttons with symbols of the U.S. Army, and in one of the pockets that individual had a comb engraved with the name of the city of New York. This suggest that American members of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion were buried at San Blas, and that more U.S. citizens may be recovered there.

For the 2024 season, we plan to continue work at San Blas and exhume the remains of additional 15 combatants. Our goal is to identify and bring closure to families and decedents of these individuals. In addition, our educational goal is to teach students how to plan, execute, record, document and identify individuals from mass burials. While we hope such skills will not be needed, we recognize that the reality is different and that professionals trained in excavation of mass burials are still needed across the world.

The project is a collaboration between the Colegio de Docotores y Licenciados de Aragón, the Carpetania Integra and Universidad Europea Valencia.

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER

The Center for Field Sciences was established to support field training in a range of sciences at sites across the world. Traveling and conducting field work involves risk. Students interested in participating in any CFS program must weigh the potential risk against the value of education provided for the program sites of their choosing.

Risk is inherent in everything we do and the CFS takes risk seriously. A committee of leading scholars review each field school location prior to approval. Once a program is accepted, the CFS continually monitor conditions at the program site, its academic quality and ability to conduct as safe of an experience as possible.

The CFS does not provide trip or travel cancellation insurance. Students are encouraged to explore such insurance policies on their own. Post Covid 19, most basic policies do not cover trip cancelation due to pandemics. If you wish to purchase an insurance policy that cover such contingencies, explore Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) plans. [Insuremytrip.com](https://www.insuremytrip.com), [Squaremouth.com](https://www.squaremouth.com) or [Travelguard.com](https://www.travelguard.com) are possible websites where students may explore different insurance policies.

You should be aware that conditions in the field are different than those you experience in your home, dorms or college town. You will be exposed to the elements, live in rustic accommodation, and expect to engage in physical activity daily.

We do our best to follow schedule and activities as outlined in this syllabus. Yet local permitting agencies, political, environmental, personal, or weather conditions may force changes. This syllabus, therefore, is only a general commitment. Students should allow flexibility and adaptability as research work is frequently subject to change.

All students must consult medical professionals to ensure they are fit to participate in this program. If you have any medical concerns, please consult your doctor. For all other concerns, please consult with the program director – as appropriate.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

Our program presents a unique opportunity to learn how to properly excavate and document the victims of war through the application of forensic methods and techniques. We will use interdisciplinary approach to identify individuals, diagnose traumatic pathologies resulting in death because of a war and violence. Participants will learn about processes and circumstances of mass burials and conservation (taphonomy) of the human body, methods of registration and exhumation, the interpretation of the circumstances of death, as well as excavation methods, documentation and analysis of associated artifacts.

Our program is designed to train students and professionals. Experience from this program may benefit individuals interested in forensic anthropology, forensic archaeology and bioarchaeology.

While some experience working with human remains will be helpful, beginners are welcome. The first two days of the program will focus on training in ethics, international field and laboratory work protocols in forensic anthropology, human rights and their legal context in war conflicts. Each student will be trained in excavation techniques and bio-anthropological methods.

- Chain of Custody protocols.
- Storage and transportation of human remains.
- Conservation of materials and artefacts found in mass graves.
- Biological profile: human anatomy, age, sex and height estimation
- Forensic pathology: study of injuries, trauma and activity markers in contexts of war.
- Introduction to forensic genetics.

Participants will be provided with a dossier with information on methods, practice and theory of the forensic archaeology of human remains and physical anthropology.

This field school is aimed to be practical and applied – both in the field and at the lab. The first two weeks will be dedicated to field work in the documentation and exhumation of human remains. The following two weeks will be dedicated to analysing human remains in the lab. Each student will be assigned the remains of a single individual, which they will have to document for the entire process. Students will have the guidance, assistance and help of staff members at all times.

We will hold a seminar every Friday afternoon where we will discuss work done during the week, methods, findings, questions and discussion. Saturdays are dedicated for excursions to important archaeological and cultural sites in the area and Sundays are rest days.

LEARNT SKILLS

We are aware that many students may not seek academic careers but will pursue employment in the private sector. To that end, we are following the Twin Cairns Skills Log Matrix™

(<https://twincairns.com/skill-set-matrix/>) and will provide training for the following skills

Skill	Skill Definition
Artifact Curation	Ability to safely register, document and store a wide range of artifact types in curation facilities following state and federal laws
Artifact Documentation	Ability to measure, record, photographed and classify various artifact types in the lab/post ex setting
Artifact Identification	Ability to identify archaeological artifacts and ecofacts, from both pre contact and historical context
Artifact Processing	Understand how to assign artifacts to accepted cultural/geological spheres, across space (classification) & time (seriation)
Basic Conservation & Preservation	Ability to conduct initial field conservation and preservation of different artifact types, features & architecture
Bioarchaeology	Ability to excavate, document & study human remains
Data Recording	Ability to use printed or digital sheets to document & record field data
Excavations/General Principles	Know how to excavate in cultural or arbitrary layers, document and record all excavation activity
Map & Plan Making-Manual	Ability to use a theodolite & measuring tape to produce maps and plans of a site

Photography	Ability to take clear images of various feature, artifact & soil colors at various light and field depth conditions
Screening	Ability to use general & geological screens to identify, collect and record small scale finds
Soil Identification	Ability to identify, describe and record different types of soil and depositions
Stratigraphy	Ability to identify, measure and describe stratigraphic layering of a site

COURSE SCHEDULE

Arrival day is Sunday, the first day of the program.

The initial two days of the program will be dedicated to discussions and study of the cultural, methodological and theoretical aspects of the project. Weekly lectures will be held every Wed, prior to dinner. Seminar will be held each Friday afternoon to discuss project progress, theoretical and methodological issues related to work at the site.

Saturdays are dedicated to field trip. The scheduled excursions will include the following:

1. Archaeological Museum of Teruel.
2. The frontline of trenches and bunkers around Teruel
3. Belchite, a town marked by the civil war
4. Albarracín

Sunday is a day off.

The last day of the program is a Saturday. Students should plan to depart any time during that day.

GENERAL PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Week 1	
Sunday 4:00-6:00pm	Arrival Dinner
Monday 9:00 -5:00pm	Lecture
Tuesday 8:00-5:00pm	Lectures
Wednesday 8:00-5:00m	Work at the site
Wednesday 7:00pm-8:00pm	Lectures
Thursday 8:00-5:30pm	Work at the site
Friday 8:00-5:30pm	Work at the site
Friday 7:00pm-8:00pm	Seminar
Saturday 9:00am-12am	Excursion
Sat 1:00pm-forward	Free afternoon
Sunday	Free day
Week 2 (Mon-Sat)	
M-F 8:00am-5:00pm	Work at the site
Wednesday 7:00pm-8:00pm	Lectures
Friday 7:00pm-8:00pm	Seminar
Saturday 9:00am-12:00pm	Excursions
Sat 1:00pm-forward	Free afternoon
Sunday	Free day
Week 3-4 (Mon-Sat)	
M-F 8:00am-5:00pm	Work at the lab
Wednesday 7:00pm-8:00pm	Lectures
Saturday 9:00am-12am	Excursions
Sat 1:00pm-forward	Free afternoon
Sunday	Free day

The Director and organizing institutions of the program reserve the right to modify the schedule for scientific needs or for unforeseeable circumstances.

TYPICAL WORKDAY

6:30am	Wakeup
7:00am	Breakfast
7:30am	Departure to the field site
8:00am	Work begins at the site
10:00-10:15am	Morning break
1:30-2:30pm	Lunch
2:30pm	Work on at the site
5:00pm	End of workday
7:00pm	Wednesday Lecture/ Friday seminar
8:30pm	Dinner

ACADEMIC GRADING MATRIX

Students will be graded based on their work as follows.

% of Grade	Activity
30%	Site work: Excavation (use of tools, digging, levelling, measuring and drawing, record, photography, labelling and storage. Cataloguing: Washing, sorting, labelling, photography, storage
30%	Lab work, bones identification, bones photography, Analysis file and data base of human cremations
10%	Lectures
10%	Friday Seminar
10%	Teamwork, flexibility, adaptability, involvement, initiative.
10%	Interaction with staff and directors, discuss doubts and questions, suggest interpretations.

SKILLS MATRIX LEVELS

The school instructors will evaluate the level each student achieved on the list of skills provided above. Each skill will be graded on one of the following three levels:

Basic: Can perform the skill/task with some supervision.

Competent: Can perform the skill/task without any supervision.

Advanced: Can perform the skill/task and teach others how to do it.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The required minimum attendance for the successful completion of the field school is 90% of the course hours. Any significant delay or early departure from an activity will be calculated as an absence from the activity. An acceptable number of absences for medical or other personal reasons will not be taken into account if the student catches up on the field school study plan through additional readings, homework or tutorials with program staff members.

PREREQUISITES

None. This is hands-on, experiential learning and students will study on-site how to conduct archaeological research. Field work involves physical work and exposure to the elements and thus requires a measure of understanding that this will not be the typical university learning environment. You will have to work outdoors and will get sweaty and tired. Students are required to come equipped with sufficient excitement and adequate understanding that field work requires real, hard work, in the sun and wind. The work requires patience, discipline, and attention to detail.

PROGRAM ETIQUETTE

Teruel has an important historic and artistic heritage, in particular its Mudejar architecture which has been recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Spanish people and institutions are highly sensitive for the preservation of their cultural heritage and getting permits to work in Teruel requires strict adherence to Spanish rules of excavation and respect of the local law, culture and history. This project is in its second year, and we plan to continue and work at the site for years to come. Students at this field school represent the project, both while on and off site. Misbehaviour by any project staff reflect badly on us and may prevent the renewal of research permits.

Students who violate Spanish authorities' excavation regulations, disrespect Spanish law or culture, or disrespect the dead will be subject for removal from the project. We are at Teruel's project to observe and to learn, to enrich ourselves and the public, to study and appreciate the diversity of human culture past and present.

ABOUT TERUEL

Teruel is a Spanish city located in the south of Aragon, capital of the province of the same name. Located in the central-eastern area of Spain, at an altitude of about 915 m above sea level, it seats at the confluence of the Alfambra and Guadalaviar Rivers. It has an important Mudejar artistic heritage, part of which has been recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The most notable Mudejar monuments are the church of Santa María, cathedral of the diocese of Teruel, and the towers of El Salvador, San Martín and San Pedro, at the foot of which is the church of the same name, also in the Mudejar style. Teruel has other tourist attractions such as the Mausoleum of the Lovers of Teruel, El Torico and the Dinópolis paleontological center.

Teruel climate is characterized by very cold winters and warm/temperate and dry summers. One of the most popular foods is Teruel's Jamón (which is part of some toasts called "delicias de Terue") and ternasco de Aragón. Some dishes of interest are reñaos, teruel migas and Teruel soup. Among the Teruel pastries are "lover's sighs", pastries with a cheese base.

EQUIPMENT LIST

The site is permanently covered, so we are not affected by sun or rain.

1. Passport or ID card. All European citizens should bring their health card, or health insurance card, if applicable
2. Student/University ID
3. Mosquito repellent and after-bite cream
4. If you are taking any medication, remember to bring it with you.
5. Stationery for personal use (notebook, pens etc)
6. Bring your laptop computer as we will be using a digital dossier for the course.
7. Appropriate adaptor for all electronic devices.
8. Consider purchasing an international plan for your phone or purchase a local SIM card when you arrive.
9. We recommend that you wear light and comfortable clothing. You should bring a jacket and/or windbreaker, as well as very comfortable shoes. During excavations, you can wear long or short sleeves shirts, pants or shorts.
10. You don't need to bring any instruments or tools for the excavation. We will provide you with all the tools and instruments you will need for this program.
11. Bring some nice/"dressier" for times when you go out for dinner.
12. Personal First Aid Kit (available in most pharmacies) including. Sterile gauze pads, waterproof bandages, large bandages 8cm x 6cm, Ace bandage 5cm x 4.5m, and medical tape 1.25 x 5m, Eye Wash 20ml, iodine and hydrogen peroxide. Below is an example of a kit available at a pharmacy

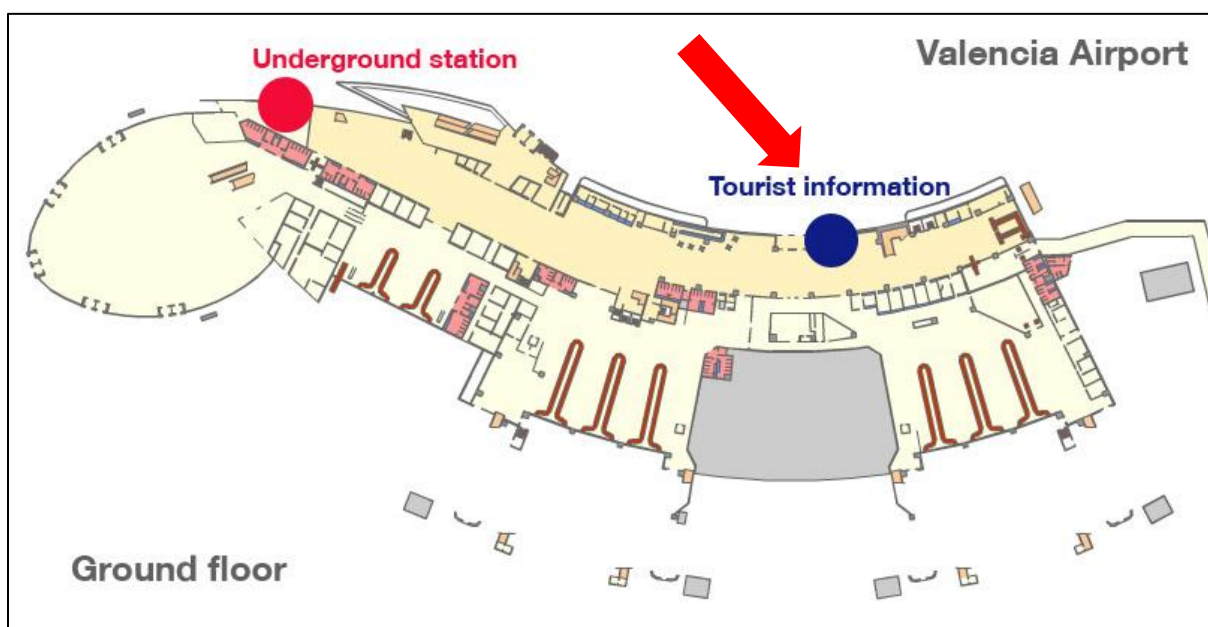
with most of the supplies: http://www.boots.com/en/Boots-St-John-Ambulance-Essential-First-Aid-Kit_1258543/

13. A small backpack (for your food, bottle of water, wet wipes, camera, papers etc.)
14. Please join us in our efforts to reduce the use of disposable plastics pieces during our program. We kindly ask you to bring your personal meal set – plate, cup, spoon, fork & knife.
15. A good attitude for work, study, and discoveries.

TRAVEL & MEETING POINT/TIME

We suggest you hold purchasing your airline ticket until six (6) weeks prior to departure date. Natural disasters, political changes, weather conditions and a range of other factors may require the cancelation of a program. The CFS typically takes a close look at local conditions 6-7 weeks prior to program beginning and makes a Go/No Go decision by then. Such time frame still allows for the purchase of deeply discounted airline tickets while protecting students from potential loss of airline ticket costs if CFS is forced to cancel a program.

We will meet students on Sunday, the first day of the program, at 5:00pm at the Valencia Airport (VLC). Meeting point is by the Tourist Information Booth at the Arrival Hall. Students will then be transported to Teruel by car, a trip of about two hours.



If you missed your connection or your flight is delayed, please call, text or email project director immediately. A local emergency cell phone number will be provided to all enrolled students.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

There are no special visa requirements for U.S. citizen travelling to Europe, as long as they do not stay longer than 3 months. Passport's expiration date should exceed the stay by at least 3 months.

Citizens of other countries are asked to check the Italian embassy website page at their home country for specific visa requirements.

MEALS & ACCOMMODATION

All staff and student will be staying at Hostal El Bugar, Teruel, C. Portillo, 6, 44003 Teruel. (<https://hostalelbugar.com>). The rooms are simple, comfortable and welcoming with free WiFi, TVs, minifridges, and ceiling fans. Rooms are single sex and shared between 2-4 people.

The project provides breakfast, lunch and dinner throughout the week, with the exception of the lunch and dinner on the trip day (normally Saturday) and free day (normally Sunday). Please let us know of any dietary restrictions (vegetarian/vegan) so that we may inform the restaurant in advance.

Lunch: We will have lunch in a bar 100 meters from the site.

Dinner: This will be provided at a local restaurant. Dinner is provided for by the project. Meals include a starter, main course, dessert, wine and water (other drinks are not included, but you can order and pay for yourself). Dinner will be at 8:30 pm.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

International dialling code: +34

Money/Banks/Credit Cards: As a major touristic destination, Teruel has a wide availability of banks where you can use your ATM and credit card.

ATM Availability: There is a wide availability of banks where you can use a credit card and ATMs

Local Language: Spanish is the official language of the Country. English and Spanish are the languages of the program.

Measure units: degree Celsius (°C), meter (m.), gram (gr.), liter (l)

ACADEMIC CREDITS & TRANSCRIPT

Attending students will be awarded 8 semester credit units (equivalent to 12 quarter credit units). Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school based on the assessment matrix (above). This program provides a minimum of 160 direct instructional hours. Students are encouraged to discuss the transferability of credit units with faculty and the registrar at their home institutions prior to attending this program.

Students will be able to access their transcript through our School of Record – Culver-Stockton College. C-SC has authorized the National Student Clearinghouse to provide enrollment and degree verification (at <https://tsorder.studentclearinghouse.org/school/select>). Upon completion of a program, students will get an email from C-SC with a student ID that may be used to retrieve transcripts. The first set of transcripts will be provided at no cost, additional transcripts may require payment. If you have questions about ordering a transcript, contact the C-SC office of the registrar at registrar@culver.edu.

REQUIRED READINGS

PDF files of all mandatory readings will be provided to enrolled students via a shared Dropbox folder.

Bass, W. 1995. Human Osteology: A Laboratory and Field Manual. 4th Edition, Missouri Archaeological Society, Columbia.

DeGrazia, D. 2017. The Definition of Death. In The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, ed. E.N. Zalta. Stanford: Stanford University. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/death-definition/>

Squires, K., Errickson, D., Márquez-Grant, N. (2019). Introduction. In: Squires, K., Errickson, D., Márquez-Grant, N. (eds). Ethical Approaches to Human Remains. Springer, Cham. Pg 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-32926-6_1

White Tim D., Black Michael T., Folkens Pieter A. 2012. Human Osteology. Elsevier Academic Press.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

FORENSIC PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY Proceedings 2002-2011. The Proceedings of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences is an official publication of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) and includes various areas of the forensic sciences such as pathology, toxicology, physical anthropology, psychiatry, odontology, jurisprudence, criminalistics, questioned documents, digital

sciences, engineering sciences and other disciplines. The proceedings herein are from the Physical Anthropology section for the years 2002 to 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY SPANISH ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY AND ODONTOLOGY June 2013 Coordinator: F Serrull.

Unearthing gendered repression: an analysis of the violence suffered by women during the civil war and Franco's dictatorship in Southwestern Spain. Laura Muñoz-Encinar

Spanish Civil War: The recovery and identification of combatants Lourdes Herrastia , Nicholas Márquez-Grantb, *, Francisco Etxeberriaa,c