

ANTHROPOLOGY 381 (6 credits)
Archaeology Field Methods: Archaeological Field School in Fiji

University of Hawai'i College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Anthropology, Summer 2003

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Course Syllabus

Objectives and Strategy

Our primary goal is training students in archaeological field methods. At the same time, we are conducting primary field research relating to a number of problems and hypotheses concerning the evolution of Fijian culture and its place in the southwestern Pacific. Through practical experience and hands-on participation in field work, students will gain the skills necessary to generate archaeological field data. Our strategy is to mix a range of field work activities with some field laboratory work to give students a full, balanced view of field research in archaeology.

Our first week at University of Hawai'i will be an intensive academic and pragmatic orientation. During this time students will have lectures on (1) the archaeological record, (2) research design and field data acquisition, (3) Pacific prehistory, with an emphasis on the southwestern Pacific, (4) Fijian prehistory, and (5) Fijian culture and language. Students will have a packet of readings to complement the lectures, and provide the basis for our discussions.

During our orientation students will also complete practical exercises on mapping and other field work skills. A detailed schedule of our activities during the U.H. orientation is given below. A campus map will be sent with your course reading packet.

We have three major field research objectives: (1) survey ,(including detailed mapping) of sites on Nacula, (2) to test coastal zones for early deposits ,(such as Lapita sites), and (3) to generate basic data from recovered artifacts prior to leaving the field. Students will rotate between field activities. We will discuss our research objective in greater detail during our orientation week.

You should expect to participate in and learn the following kinds of methods/skills:
-site survey and recording

- tape and compass mapping (plan and contour maps)
- field photography
- site excavation strategies and excavation methods
- stratigraphic/sedimentary/soil description, recording, and analysis
- laboratory work (midden and artifacts)
- compilation of site survey data
- fitting research objectives to the practicalities of field work

Readings

The required readings (listed under the orientation schedule) are included in the course packet (sent separately). These materials should be read in advance of the orientation week, and then carefully reviewed for our class sessions. The readings are listed for each day (below).

General *recommended* readings (get these at your local library or bookstore) include:

Irwin, Geoffrey

1992 *The Prehistoric Exploration and Colonization of the Pacific*. Cambridge University Press.

Kirch, Patrick V.

2000 *On the Road of the Winds: An Archaeological History of the Pacific Islands before European Contact*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Kirch, Patrick V.

1997 *The Lapita Peoples: Ancestors of the Oceanic World*. Blackwell, Oxford. (Note: This recent book provides background to Lapita, the earliest cultural manifestation in Fiji).

Nunn, Patrick D.

1994 *Oceanic Islands*. Blackwell, Oxford. (Note: This book is an excellent introduction to the geology, landscapes, and environments of the Pacific.)

Scarr, Deryck

1984 *Fiji: A Short History*. George Allen & Unwin, London.

Schedule, U.H. Orientation

Our first-week orientation is designed to put Fiji and our research there into a larger theoretical and methodological framework. Students will read background materials, have lectures, and participate in discussions. We will ask you to learn about the Pacific and Fiji during the orientation and participate in a critical analysis of the issues for the island's archaeology and prehistory. This larger context is essential to critical, meaningful, and productive research.

Sunday, 22 June

Students arrive in Honolulu and check in to the Hale Aloha dormitory at University of Hawai'i

Mānoa Campus.

Monday, 23 June (Saunders Hall 345)

9:00 am Introductions and practicalities of Fiji travel
10:30 am Oceanic/Fijian Prehistory—lecture and discussion
11:30 am Break for lunch
1:30-4:30 pm Principles of mapping (outside lab): Tape and Compass Mapping
Readings: Clark and Anderson 2001; Green 1981; Hunt et al. 1999

Tuesday, 24 June (Saunders Hall 345)

9:00 am The archaeological record
9:30 am Research design and research problems in Fiji—lecture and discussion
11:30 am Break for lunch
1:30-4:30 pm Laboratory analyses—ceramics, bone, shell (Dean Hall 102)
8:00 pm *Hale Noa* to drink kava!
Readings: Allen et al. 2001; Cochrane 2002; Dancey 1981, Chps 1-3; Field 1998; Szabo 2001

Wednesday, 25 June (Saunders Hall 345)

9:00 am Fijian culture and language—lecture and discussion
11:30 am Break for lunch
1:30 pm Laboratory analyses—ceramics, bone, shell (Dean Hall 102)
4:30 pm Kava ceremony
Readings: Hau‘ofa 2000; Lal 1992; Ravuvu 1983; Tora 1987

Thursday, 26 June (Saunders Hall 345)

9:00 am Fijian geoarchaeology and site geology—lecture and discussion
10:30 am Free—time to make last-minute purchases, explore Honolulu
Readings: Kirch 1993; Hunt 1997

Friday, 27 June (Saunders Hall 345)

9:00 am Fijian environmental change—lecture and discussion
10:30 am Principles of mapping (outside lab): Auto-level profiling
ca. 8:00 pm Begin departures for the Honolulu Airport; Depart for Fiji
Readings: Clark et al. 1999; Nunn 1997

Schedule, Nacula Island, Fiji

Above all, we ask for your understanding in our need to be *flexible*. To the best of our ability we will plan and schedule our activities. However, inclement weather, local contingencies, and other unforeseen events, make detailed or rigid planning in Fiji somewhat

difficult, even counter-productive. So please think: *Flexibility*. With that in mind, your T.A.s and I will devise a rotation schedule for your activities at the locations where we will be working. Our daily schedule will be announced/discussed at our morning and evening meals. We will normally work Monday-Friday, with most Saturdays and all Sundays off.

We arrive on Nacula Island on Sunday, 29 June. We will likely be on Nacula Island for one or two days before archaeological field work begins. We can not begin our field work until we have followed the necessary cultural protocols in asking our hosts' permission to conduct our work. This may involve a *sevusevu* (i.e., ceremony asking for permission, usually involving kava-drinking) and discussions with local village leaders.

Grades

Students will be evaluated on their overall participation, including positive attitude, teamwork, cultural sensitivity, and intellectual engagement (i.e., thinking, asking relevant questions, classroom and field discussions, readings, *learning*). Students will also be evaluated on their labs/exercises and the quality of daily work. We expect each of you to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible, thus learning the most you can during our field research. As you do your work, please feel free to ask for feedback/evaluation. Specifically, students will be evaluated using a 400-point scale divided amongst these four categories:

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| 1) Overall participation | 100 points (attitude, teamwork, etc.) |
| 2) Intellectual engagement | 100 points (readings, discussions, etc.) |
| 3) Field effort | 100 points |
| 4) Labs/Exercises | 100 points (mapping labs and analytical labs at UH) |

The instructor, teaching assistants, and cultural anthropologist will submit a point total in categories 1-3 for each student; these will be averaged to produce the final points in categories 1-3. The points in category 4 will be determined by the mapping-lab hand-outs you turn in (50 points) and your participation in analytical labs at UH (50 points). The overall letter grade will be determined by summing points in each category and applying a simple percentage distribution to the total out of 400 where 100%-90% is an A, 89% to 80% is a B, 79% to 70% is a C, 69% to 60% is a D, and 59% or lower is an F. The University of Hawai'i does not award +/- grades (although the university will begin this practice fall semester, 2003). The teaching assistants and cultural anthropologist may excuse themselves from submitting points for a student in a particular category if they feel they can not adequately grade the student's performance. The instructor makes the final decision on course grades.

While grades are important, resist the temptation to focus solely on "what I need to do to get an A". Earning an A grade is a simple matter. To do so you should: fully participate (i.e., mentally and physically) in each day's activities and your assigned tasks; demonstrate sensitivity to, and a willingness to understand and engage in Fijian culture; show your mastery of the assigned readings through informal and formal discussions with your teachers; and during our orientation week, turn in lab assignments which demonstrate a command of the lab principles.

A Note on Conduct and Responsibility

We have a long term commitment to archaeological research in Fiji. We do not want misconduct or irresponsible behavior on the part of our students to put our relationships, and thus our ability to work in the islands, at risk. We also have an ethical responsibility to the archaeology of the islands as well as to the living descendants of that remarkable record. Thus our ethics and behavior must be impeccable. We will ask (i.e., require) students to agree on (and sign) a code of conduct. Students who fail to abide by this code will be excused from the field school and sent home early (failing the course). The code includes abiding by the laws and social mores of Fiji (e.g., drug laws) and the laws/ethics/code of conduct relating to archaeological field work (e.g., collection/theft of artifacts, bones, etc., for personal possession) and living in a small island community. Having said this, don't worry we will have a great time in Fiji—working, learning, and having a lot of fun!