Anthropology 410
Ceramic Analysis in Archaeology

Spring CRN 34987 University of Oregon

Instructor: Professor William S. Ayres
Office: 273 Condon Hall
Class: Room 203 Condon Hall, UH 16:00-17:50; plus project laboratory hours
Office Hrs: MW10:00-11:00; plus in lab.
       Packet, Materials on Reserve, Main Library; lab volumes

Course Content:

This course reviews methods of ceramic analysis and interpretation used in archaeology. Archaeological methods and theory are examined in the context of prehistoric and historic ceramic data drawn from various world areas. We will use specific pottery collections and case studies of ceramic analysis from both prehistoric and contemporary situations. Pottery manufacturing steps and procedures are of considerable interest to the analyst. Significant archaeological questions about ceramic use and analysis revolve around the determination of pottery use by past peoples from technical aspects of pottery, use-wear characteristics, and context.

Ceramic evidence from sites offers many opportunities to explore technological and social behavior of earlier peoples, but recording and managing this information is a problem for the archaeologist because of the large numbers of ceramic artifacts and potsherds typically recovered. The course objectives are to allow students to develop a knowledge of the study of prehistoric pottery as a part of anthropology and to gain skills in basic laboratory analysis. Class sessions will be devoted to lecture, discussion and lab analysis.

Basic Sources:
Rice, P. Pottery Analysis: A Sourcebook. 1987
Shepard, A. Ceramics for the Archaeologist. 1965 NK4235.S47 1980