

Military and Diaspora Archaeology in Southern Illinois

Dates: May 17 – June 25, 2021

Organization: SIUC Anthropology Department

University Affiliation: Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Application Closing Date: May 10, 2021

Terrestrial: Yes

Underwater: No

State: Illinois



Description:

The 2021 SIUC field school will include safety protocols related to the coronavirus. Field school applicants should have completed at least one year of college prior to applying, but no previous field experience is required. Students will work in small groups wearing a mask and practicing social distancing. They also will cycle between three archaeological sites, the French Fort Kaskaskia I (1734-1765), the American Fort Kaskaskia II visited by the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1800-1807), and the pre-Civil War African American Miller Grove community, including laboratory work at the SIUC Center for Archaeological Investigations curation center. Both of the fort sites (especially Ft. Kaskaskia II or the Garrison Hill site, which was discovered in 2017) are almost completely unknown from an archaeological perspective. Consequently, the 2021 field investigations will concentrate on delimiting the boundaries of and locating structures, cellars, and other features at both sites through a combination of remote sensing technologies and hand excavations. Students will receive “hands on” instruction in the use of ground penetrating radar (GPR), gradiometers, drones, and GPS mapping equipment to search for subsurface features and create detailed maps of the two forts. Hand excavations will concentrate on investigating French and American colonial period features previously discovered outside the walls of Ft. Kaskaskia as well as further investigation of the French barracks. Investigations at the Garrison Hill site seeks to recover artifactual and food remains associated with the US Army Garrison at that site, from which Lewis and Clark recruited 12 of their expedition members.



Fort Kaskaskia

The same technologies and methods will be applied to investigate the Miller Grove site, a freed African-American settlement established in the 1840s comprised of over 20 households, a church/school, and a cemetery that now exists entirely as an archaeological site on the Shawnee National Forest of southern Illinois. Oral histories collected from community descendants indicate that the community played a pivotal role in helping runaway enslaved people on their dangerous journey through southern Illinois, an area occupied by white settlers who were largely pro-southern and pro-slavery in their outlook. Field school investigations at this site may include site tours led by USDA Forest Service archaeologists and limited investigations at one or more sites if this can be done safely wearing masks and employing social distancing.



Miller Grove

Field school students also will be instructed in artifact analysis and curation methods at the CAI curation center in Carbondale. Particular emphasis will be placed on preparing materials recovered by past investigations at the Miller Grove site for curation. The curation center is a very large modern facility with enough room for students to work safely wearing masks and employing social distancing methods.

About the Field School

Southern Illinois University (SIU) is located in Carbondale, Illinois, a town of approximately 25,000 people. Students will travel from the Center for Archaeological Investigations (CAI) curation center each day in university provided vans to the field school sites, which are all located approximately an hour from Carbondale. During the field school, we may take field trips to historic and prehistoric period sites located in the vicinities of Ft. Kaskaskia and Miller Grove including the French Ft. de Chartres state park and the historic French town of St. Genevieve, Missouri. Prehistoric sites that may be visited include the Piney Creek site, the largest prehistoric rock art site in Illinois with over 200 images. Housing is available at the dormitories on the SIUC campus or at Touch of Nature (an environmental facility with cabins operated by SIUC). Touch of Nature (TON) is similar in appearance to a summer camp with woods, lake, deer, and other animals. Meals are available at TON for an additional charge. Students who stay at TON also will need to have their own car, as it is located about a 15-minute drive from the main SIUC campus. SIUC may be able to assist students with housing costs depending on the success of our crowdfunding campaign designed to support students who could not otherwise attend the field school, and on the number of students that apply who need such housing.

Credits: 6 (Anthropology) at SIU Carbondale

Costs: \$2,427.50, which includes all required fees.

For more information including how to apply, please visit the SIUC archaeology field school web page at <http://cola.siu.edu/anthro/undergraduate/field-school/>. Additional information regarding the Center for Archaeological Investigations (CAI) at SIUC including photos and information regarding last year's field school can be found on the SIU-CAI Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/centerforarchaeologicalinvestigations>.

You can also contact the field school Director (Dr. Mark Wagner) directly for information at mjwagner@siu.edu, telephone: 618-453-5031