

Discipline Specific Elective (DSE): Archaeology: Theory and Practice

Credit distribution, Eligibility and Prerequisites of the Course

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course (if any)
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/ Practice		
Archaeology: Theory and Practice	4	3	0	1	12th Pass	

Learning Objectives

The objective of this course is to explore different varieties of archaeology and examine the theories, methods and techniques used by archaeologists to retrieve the material culture of the human past. As part of this course we aim to provide a basic introduction to different aspects of archaeology, its development as a distinct discipline and understanding of the latest methodologies in this field. This course introduces students to the process of archaeological investigation from the discovery of sites to their excavation and analysis of the recovered archaeological evidences. This course includes training in field methods including visits to archaeological sites or museums or both. Field trip to an ongoing excavation or exploration of any site/sites is suggested.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of this course the student shall be able to:

- Develop a foundation on the understanding of the nature, development, and value of archaeology as a discipline.
- Understand the characteristics and chronology of cultural deposition; and significance of pottery and other artifacts.
- Be able to identify and differentiate between the artifacts of different time periods

SYLLABUS :

Unit I: Introduction to Archaeology

- a) Definition aims and scope
- b) Archaeological findings and their significance

Unit II: Field Methods

- a) Development of Field Archaeology in India
- b) Exploration Techniques (Practical aspect: Exploration kit, Site form, Survey data sheet, label/labelling of antiquity and pottery)

- c) Excavation Techniques: vertical and horizontal (Practical aspect: Stratigraphy, Site
- d) Notebook, 3D Recording, Trench Layout, Elevation and Plan, Drawings- section, structure, pottery, antiquity; photography, label of antiquity)

Unit III: Analysis of Archaeological Evidences

- a) Classification of objects/findings (Practical aspect: identification of artifacts, features and Ecofacts)
- b) Characteristic features of Pottery: from Neolithic to Mughal Period (Practical aspect: Identification and drawing of potteries)

Unit IV: Field Tour

- a) Explorations, ongoing excavations, visit of archaeological site and historical monuments
- b) Identification of archaeological material through the visit of museums (National Museum, Delhi; Art and Archaeological Museum, Department of History, DU; Archaeological Museum, Old Fort Museum, Delhi; Indraprastha Museum, The Indian Archaeological society, Delhi)

Practical component (if any) - NIL

Essential/recommended readings

Unit I: Introduction to Archaeology

This unit introduces archaeology as a scientific study of past human cultures through material remains. It defines archaeology, explores its aims—such as understanding human evolution, culture, and societal development—and outlines its interdisciplinary scope involving history, anthropology, and science. The unit emphasizes the importance of archaeological findings, including tools, pottery, and structures, in reconstructing past lifeways. These artifacts provide vital clues to economic, social, and religious aspects of ancient civilizations, contributing significantly to our understanding of human history and cultural heritage. (Teaching Time: 3 weeks Approx.)

- Childe, V.G. 1960. *A Short Introduction to Archaeology*. New York: Collier
- Childe, V. Gordon. 1956. *Piecing Together the Past: The Interpretation of Archaeological Data*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Pandey, J.N. 2000. *Puratattva Vimarsha* (in Hindi), *Prachya Vidya Sansthan*, Allahabad
- Sharer, R. J. & Ashmore, W. 1979, *Fundamentals of Archaeology*, The Benjamin/Cummings Publishing Company, California.
- Raman, K.V. 1991. *Principal and Methods of Archaeology*. Parthanjan Pub. Madras
- Wheeler, R.E.M. 1961. *Archaeology from the Earth*. Penguin (Also available in Hindi)
- शर्मा, जी. आर. 2006. पुरातत्व का परिचय. वाराणसी: बाणारस हिंदू यूनिवर्सिटी प्रकाशना
- Pandey, J.N. 2000. *Puratattva Vimarsha* (in Hindi). *Prachya Vidya Sansthan*, Allahabad.

Unit II: Field Methods

This unit covers the evolution of field archaeology in India, highlighting pioneers and key excavations. It teaches exploration techniques, including the use of kits, site forms, and survey data sheets, along with the proper labelling of antiquities. Excavation methods such as vertical (for chronological layering) and horizontal (for spatial understanding) are discussed. Practical components include maintaining site notebooks, creating trench layouts, stratigraphic analysis, and 3D recording. It also involves elevation and plan drawing, artifact photography, and systematic labelling—essential for recording and interpreting archaeological data. (Teaching Time: 6 weeks Approx.)

- Chakrabarty, D.K., 1990, *India An Archaeological History*, Oxford: OUP.
- Rajan, K. 2016. *Understanding Archaeology: Field Methods, Theories and Practices*. Thanjavoor: Manoo Pathippakam.
- Raman, K.V. 1991. *Principal and Methods of Archaeology*. Parthanjan Pub. Madras
- Schiffer, M.B. 1991. 'Archaeological Method and Theory', *Journal of Field Archaeology* 18(4), pp. 523-526
- Wheeler, R.E.M. 1961. *Archaeology from the Earth*. Penguin (Also available in Hindi)
- Pandey, J.N. 2000. *Puratattva Vimarsha* (in Hindi). Prachya Vidya Sansthan, Allahabad.
- त्रिपाठी, वी. 2012. भारतीय पुरातत्व: सिद्धांत और प्रक्रिया. दिल्ली: अभिलाषी प्रकाशन।

Unit III: Analysis of Archaeological Evidences

This unit focuses on the classification and analysis of archaeological materials. It distinguishes between artifacts (human-made objects), features (immovable elements like walls), and ecofacts (natural remains). Students learn identification skills and methods for interpreting these finds. A major focus is the study of pottery, a key chronological and cultural indicator. Practical exercises include recognizing stylistic and functional characteristics of pottery from the Neolithic to the Mughal period and documenting them through detailed drawings, aiding in the reconstruction of ancient technologies and societal practices. (Teaching Time: 6 weeks Approx.)

- Dhavalikar, M.K., 1999, *Historical Archaeology of India*, New Delhi: Books and Books
- Jain, V.K., 2017, *Prehistory and Protohistory of India: An Appraisal*, Delhi: DK Print World (Also available in Hindi)
- Paddaya, K., 2011, 'Stone age technology in India', *Ancient India, New Series, No. 1*
- Pandey, J.N. 2000. *Puratattva Vimarsha* (in Hindi). Prachya Vidya Sansthan, Allahabad.
- Sankalia, H.D., 1982, *Stone age tools: Their techniques, names and probable functions*, Pune: Deccan College.
- Sinha, B.P. (ed). 1969, *Potteries in Ancient India*, Patna: Patna University Press
- Renfrew, Colin, and Paul Bahn. 1991. *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- मिश्र, टी. एन. 2005. भारतीय पुरातत्व में सामग्री संस्कृति का विश्लेषण. लखनऊ: भारतीय विद्या संस्थान।

Unit IV: Field Tour

The field tour provides hands-on exposure to archaeological practices and materials. Students participate in site explorations, visit ongoing excavations, and study historical monuments to understand contextual archaeology. Visits to major museums such as the National Museum and Archaeological Museum at Old Fort allow students to observe and identify authentic artifacts, gaining insight into typology, material culture, and preservation techniques. These experiences enhance practical understanding of archaeological processes, bridging classroom knowledge with real-world application and fostering appreciation for cultural heritage and archaeological research. (Teaching Time: 3 – 5 days Approx.)

- Balme, J, and Alistair Paterson (eds). 2014, *Archaeology in Practice*, Willey Blackwell, UK
- Drewett, Peter, 1999, *Field Archaeology: An Introduction*, UCl press, London
- Verma, R.K., 2000, *Kshetriya Puratatva*, Paramajyoti Prakashan, Allahbad
- Atkinson, R. J. C. 1953. *Field Archaeology*. London: Methuen.
- शर्मा, आर. एस. 1990. भारत की पुरातात्विक धरोहर. पटना: बिहार राष्ट्रभाषा परिषद्।

Suggestive readings (if any)

- Anthony Agrawal, D.P. 1982. *Archaeology in India*, Copen Hagen Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies.
- Allchin, B and F.R. Allchin 1983. *The Rise of Civilization in India and Pakistan*. New Delhi: Select Book Service Syndicate.
- Atkinson, RJC. 1953. *Field Archaeology*. Methunen, London.
- Brothwell, D.R. and A.M. Pollard (eds). 2001. *Handbook of Archaeological Sciences*. John Wiley and Sons: New York.
- Chakrabarthi, D.K. 1988. *A History of Indian Archaeology: From the beginning to 1947*, New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal.
- Harris, E.C. 1979. *Principles of Archaeological Stratigraphy*. London: Academic Press.
- Kenyon, K.M. 1961. *Beginnings in Archaeology*, London
- Linda, Ellis. (ed). 2000. *Archaeological Method and Theory: An Encyclopedia*, Garland Publishing, Inc, New York & London
- Mathew and Co. Basker, P. 1982. *Techniques of Archaeological Excavation*, London, Batsford
- Renfrew, Colin and Paul G. Bahn. 2000. *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice (3rd Edition)*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Note: Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch from time to time.