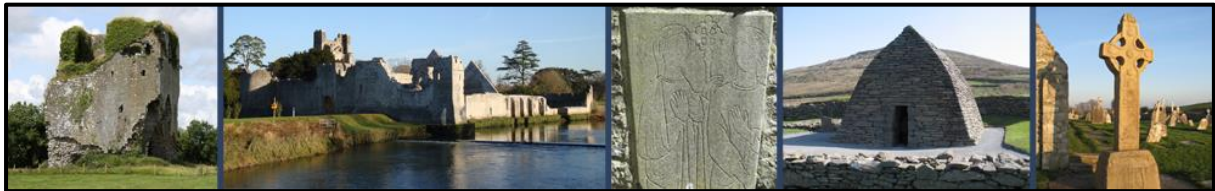


Course 2

Course Code: SS109

Introduction to Archaeological Excavation



Field School Structure

The Galway Archaeological Field School (GAFS) is an independent research and educational institution. Our courses have been approved by the University of Galway (formerly the National University of Ireland, Galway), which is one of the top five universities in Ireland. A faculty member of the School of Geography and Archaeology at the University of Galway, Dr Kieran O’Conor, acts as the Academic Director of the Field School. Students may undertake courses for credit with GAFS and, following successful completion of the course, GAFS will submit grades to the University of Galway, who will then issue a credit transcript to the student’s home university or college. The University of Galway’s course code for our *Introduction to Archaeological Excavation* course is **SS109** and they offer 6 Semester Credits to North American students or 12 ECTS to European students.

Course Description

This module will introduce students to the practicalities of archaeological excavation and provide them with hands-on experience of the key techniques they need to master to become proficient excavators. They will learn to excavate using a variety of tools, but will also gain valuable experience of a range of on-site recording techniques which will generate a structured written record, a series of scaled drawings and an extensive photographic archive of the site under examination. They will be

involved in the analysis of the stratigraphic evidence on the site and will also learn the key points of on-site health and safety, a vital part of on-site training for students of archaeology. The course will have a particular emphasis on medieval archaeology and so the excavation site and the sites visited on field trips, which will include a series of castles, churches and monasteries, will be selected with this focus in mind.



Course Instructor

This module will be taught by the Director of the field school, Dr Rory Sherlock, with assistance from several experienced archaeologists. Rory is a very experienced archaeologist and architectural historian who has worked and published in the fields of Irish archaeology, and medieval and post-medieval Irish architecture, for over twenty years. His contact details are as follows:

*Dr Rory Sherlock MIAI
 Director, Galway Archaeological Field School,
 Birchall, Oughterard, Co Galway, Ireland.
 Email: rory@gafs.ie
 Web: <https://gafs.ie/>
 Phone: +353 (0)872867061*

Duration: Four weeks of full-time study

Semester Taught: Summer

ECTS: 12

Schedule	Lectures - 4 x 1.5 hours	=	6 hours
	Lab Hours - 4 x 2.5 hours	=	10 hours
	Field-based learning - 20 days	=	160 hours
	Self-study hours	=	30 hours
	Total = 206 hours		

Course Prerequisites

Students taking the *Introduction to Archaeological Excavation* course are not required to have previous excavation experience and are not required to be currently studying archaeology or anthropology. We accept all students on this course because we believe that all those who are interested in archaeology should have the opportunity to participate in a research excavation in order to fully understand how the process of archaeological excavation works and in order to assess whether archaeology is a good career choice for them.

Learning Outcomes

1. Use excavation tools (trowel, shovel, mattock) with skill to produce clean surfaces to normal excavation standards.
2. Work on site in a safe manner and follow instructions regarding health and safety with care.
3. Have knowledge of the nature of a site grid and a TBM and be able to explain their role and use in the site recording process.
4. Identify archaeological objects during the excavation process and then record them in the standardised manner used on the site.
5. Identify obvious deposits and cut features and discuss their stratigraphic context.
6. Enter recording data onto context sheets for features they have excavated.
7. Assist in drawing site plans, sections, elevations and profiles to scale.



Assessment

Each student will be required to keep a daily student diary to record field activities and these will be used to assess outcomes 3, 5, 6 & 7 and carry a 50% weighting for the course assessment. The students' engagement with the course will also be assessed by the Course Director on the basis of their on-site participation and their performance in various on-site tasks and the director's

assessment of their participation and performance will assess all the learning outcomes and will carry a 30% weighting. A short 10-question multi-choice exam will be held on each Friday of the course and these will carry a combined weighting of 20%.

Reading List (optional)

BARKER, P. 1993. *Techniques of Archaeological Excavation*. 3rd edition. London, Batsford.

CARVER, M. 2009. *Archaeological Investigation*. London, Routledge.

COLLIS, J. 2001. *Digging up the Past: An introduction to archaeological excavation*. Stroud, Sutton Publishing.

HARRIS, E. 1979. *Principles of Archaeological Stratigraphy*. London, Academic Press.

MUSEUM OF LONDON 1994. *Archaeological Site Manual*. Museum of London Archaeology Service. Third Edition.

ROSKAMS, S. 2001 *Excavation*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

