

The Eastern Band of
Cherokee Indians
Tribal Historic Preservation
Office



ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Historical Archaeology Field School

An Historic Period

The Historic Cherokee Landscapes project investigates Cherokee community resilience and reformation during the 16th century to early 18th century, a period of volatile change in the U.S. Southeast due to warfare, disease, and involvement in global economic networks associated with European colonization. While colonial expansion was profoundly, violently transformative, it also embarked within a much longer Native American political, social, and economic history.

Views of the Colonial Past

Historical evidence shows that Cherokees played critical political



Students will learn how to do survey, excavation, mapping, artifact analysis, curation, and public outreach

and economic roles during the upheaval of 1540-1730, but information about even well-documented towns is limited. Fortunately, archaeological evidence is abundant and provides evidence of what tends to be left out of written accounts: the tenor of daily life.

Life in Cherokee Towns

Colonial strategies not only tried to contain Native Americans through forced resettlement, but also unsee their very presence by treating land as wilderness, uninhabited, or widowed. This "empty" land was in fact where Native Americans lived, harvested food, and performed other acts of daily life. Investigating regional ecology, town plans, architecture, and activities in different places recovers traces of past generations, an enduring testimony of people who left an indelible record of themselves, their connections to each other, and their role in pivotal historical events whose legacy persists today.

This archaeological field school is part of a multiagency, multidisciplinary research program directed by the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI), with undergraduate and graduate course credits offered through Illinois State University (ISU).

Students learn first-hand how to do **every phase** of archaeological work: survey, geophysical and imagery-based remote sensing, excavation, artifact analysis and curation, data analysis, and public outreach. Specialists from the National Park Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service provide training in geophysical prospection. Students complete a research project in artifact or spatial analysis that they present to the EBCI Tribal Elder's Archaeology Advisory Board.

Excavations will focus on **Nvnnnyi** (31SW3) and **Cowee** (31MA4 and 31MA89). Nvnnnyi was a center for early British factors, then largely abandoned or sparsely occupied after 1761. Bartram's 1775 account describes how Cowee, a Mother Town, was at the crossroads of main routes that led to Cherokee Valley, Overhill, Lower, and Out Towns. Cowee's mound is one of the most intact Mississippian-period (A.D. 800-1540) archeological structures in western North Carolina. British traders located at Cowee in the early 18th century. British and Revolutionary forces vied for control of Cowee, with three major campaigns there between 1760 and 1776.



Cowee, A Cherokee Mother Town.



Application Information

APPLICATION
DEADLINE:

April 15, 2015

To apply contact

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Sampeck**

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of Anthropology
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To apply, please send an email to Dr. Sampeck describing why you would like to take the course.

No previous experience in archaeology or anthropology required.



Course details

COURSE CREDIT undergraduate: 3 or 6 semester credits; graduate: 6 semester credits

COSTS Lodging, a few meals, event fees, and research expenses: \$1100 ; Commuter (NC resident) \$400; Incidental fee (all students) : \$75

Tuition: ISU students: your current rate

Non-ISU: in-state per credit hour rate no matter state of residence