**AHS 1202 Principles and Practices of Archaeology**

**Course Objectives:** The major objective of this course is to introduce students to methods of archaeology, secondly is to show students how archaeologists reconstruct past life ways.

**Course Description**

This course shows that archaeology is principally preoccupied with the exercises of establishing evidence for the past cultural occurrences, recovering it and ultimately using it to reconstruct the past life ways. In the exercise of establishing archaeological evidence archaeologists employ various methods, but the chief of all is survey on larger landscapes using different methods. Extensive and intensive surveys are conducted depending on the objective of the research. Archaeological evidence is either found exposed on surface or all many cases buried in the ground. Recovery or non-recovery of archaeological evidence depends too on the research interest and objectives. Some archaeological evidence is not movable and the study has to be conducted on the site. For the movable objects, archaeologists are some times obliged to excavate deep trenches to study the evidence or recover it for laboratory study. Excavation has become the prominent exercise in Archaeology because most past cultural materials are buried in the ground and hence require proper and careful removal. Archaeologists have developed various techniques and strategies of excavation. The course also portrays how archaeologists put together their field and laboratory finding to reconstruct the would be lost human past ways of life both synchronically and diachronically.

**Assessment:** 30% Course Work; 70% Examination

**Course Outline**

Topic 1: Aims and Nature of Archaeology

* 1. Definition
  2. Archaeology as Science
  3. Archaeology as History
  4. Archaeology as Anthropology

Topic 2: Archaeological Survey

2.1 Reconnaissance

2.2 Extensive survey

2.3 Intensive survey

2.4 Survey methods

2.5 total record of survey

Topic 3: Archaeological Excavation

3.1 Pre- excavation techniques

3.2 Stratigraphy

3.3 Types of excavation

3.4 Total record excavation

Topic 4: Classification and Interpretation of Archaeological Data

4.1 Cleaning

4.2 Inventory

4.3 Typology

4.4 Comparative analysis

Topic 5: Archaeological Dating

5.1 Calendars

5.2 Relative dating

5.3 Chronometric dating

5.4 Dendrochronolgy

5.5 Geo-magnetic dating

**Basic readings**

Fagan, B 1997. *In the Beginning*.New York: Longman

Damey, W 2001.*Archaeological Field Methods*. Minneapolis; Burgen publishers &co

Feder, K. L 2000.*The Past in Perspective: An Introduction to Human Prehistory.* California: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Joukowsky, M. (1980), *A complete manual of field archaeology: Tools and techniques of fieldwork forarchaeologists.*New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Renfrew, C and P. Bahn (1991), *Archaeology: Theory, Method and Practice.*London: Thames and Hudson