

Fort Vermilion Archaeological Project

The Fort Vermilion archaeological field school is a 4 week, 6 credit program (two third-year courses: Arky 3300 and Arky 3400) that takes place in north-western Alberta. The site is on a lower terrace of the west bank of the Peace River, about 50 km south of High Level.

Students, volunteers, and researchers work together to excavate one of the earliest fur trade sites in Alberta. This field school will take place from **June 2 – 30, 2018.**



Research Objectives of the Fort Vermilion Project

Fort Vermilion was established in 1798 by the North West Company and was likely abandoned by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1830. Previous excavations revealed stratified layers of occupation. Among the buried remains were structural elements, mammal and bird bones, shells, nails, metal containers, lead shots and balls, gunflints, beads, ceramic sherds, pipes, and lithic artifacts.

The main research objectives of this project are to expose and study the structures of the fort, to link the archaeological remains to specific cultural activities that were carried out, and to delimit the occupation phases at the site. We will explore the cultural changes that took place at the site over the three decades it was occupied.

2018 Archaeological Field School

Through hands-on learning, you will gain experience in excavation and survey methods, and field documentation. You will also be introduced to the practical and intellectual challenges presented by field research.



You will receive training in laboratory analysis and will have the opportunity to process and catalogue the cultural remains you find.

The broader context of your archaeological finds and the site will be explained through discussions, lectures, and workshops.



A Typical Day on the Dig

7:00	Rise and shine	13:00	Lunch on site
7:30	Breakfast	13:30	Afternoon excavations
8:30	Morning lecture and workshops	18:00	Return to camp
10:00	Travel to the site	19:00	Dinner at camp
10:30	Morning excavations	22:00	Lights out

Laboratory work is done in the evenings and on the weekends.



Field School Learning Outcomes

By the end of the field school, you will have a solid understanding of archaeological field methods, know the value of detailed excavation records, and have experience in laboratory analysis. You will also learn how your efforts and discoveries contribute to the academic goals of the research project.

You will be immersed in the local environment and culture of northern Alberta, learn about the people that live there, and make many new friends!

Interested in Participating?

An archaeological field school requires real, hard work in a camp environment. The weather may be hot or cold, rainy or sunny. You will get dirty and be very tired by the end of the day. We hope that the thrill of discovering artifacts that were buried for hundreds of years outweigh the stiff muscles and long days. There is no better way to learn how to do field research than actually doing it!

If you would like to participate in the 2018 field school at Fort Vermilion please contact Dr. Shawn Bubel, Department of Geography, University of Lethbridge. Email: bubest@uleth.ca