Course description
Boston's "Big Dig", the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel Project, was the most highly visible project to bring to light parts of Boston's buried history. In this course you will learn about the daily lives of Boston's early residents through an intensive exploration of artifacts and features that archaeologists have excavated from many sites throughout the city. Course participants will walk Boston's streets and visit many Boston sites, guided by archaeologists who have helped unearth the city's past. Visits to local archaeological laboratories will make it possible to view and even to handle some of the most recent finds not just from the "Big Dig" but also from beneath Faneuil Hall, the Boston Common, and many other famous spots in the city. Last but not least, class members get to dig up a bit of Boston history first-hand, by participating in the ongoing excavations at the Blake House—the oldest house in Boston!

Aims of the course
This course offers an intensive look at the archaeology of early Boston, drawing upon readings as well as site tours & hands-on experience with artifacts excavated from sites in downtown Boston. The field trips constitute an important component of the class through which you will be introduced to the sites discussed in the lectures & the artifacts unearthed from Boston sites as well as meet many of the archaeologists who are helping Boston's buried history come to light.

Assignments and grading
Students are expected to attend all classes and field trips and to complete all of the assigned readings. Regular classes will be conducted in lecture format. Students will be graded on class participation and preparation (15%), on three short reports (see below) (15% each, for a total of 45% of the grade) as well as a final exam (40%).
The three papers are to consist of short (1.5–2 pages double-spaced) reports of your impressions of your field-trip experiences & how well the site visits related to or enhanced your understanding of the course readings & lectures. The papers should be journalistic in style & need not contain bibliographies; they are due on the following dates: June 1, June 10, June 24.

**Readings**

**Reserve readings**

Readings indicated on the syllabus with an asterisk (*) will be available in the Course Documents folder on the course web site (see below).

**Texts (Distributed free of charge at first class meeting)**


**Course Web Site**

All class participants have access to the course materials through the course web site; here you will find course documents such as the syllabus, announcements about the course, copies of or access to course readings, links to WWW sites you will visit as part of your course assignments, and a communications center from which you can communicate with other members of the class. I'll also be posting course announcements to the web site. Please plan to visit the site regularly.

You can access the site either by clicking on the course title/number in your Student Link Class Schedule, or you can point your browser to http://blackboard.bu.edu, then click on the link to the current semester, then select Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, then the link to the class. You will be prompted to login; to do so, enter your BU login name (the portion of your email address that comes before the @). When prompted to enter a password, enter your regular BU password. Once you are “in” you can change your password and other details of your account, arrange to have your course email forwarded to another address, and so on. (If you’ve used the system before, it will have stored any changes you made to your personal details.) Follow the on-line instructions.

If you do not have a BU email account, you can apply by following the directions found at [http://www.bu.edu/computing/accounts/apply/](http://www.bu.edu/computing/accounts/apply/).

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Syrup bottles from the Endicott St. privy.
Meeting Topics and Reading Assignments

Wednesday, May 20
Introduction to the Course
• Orientation: course structure, grading, logistics
Morning Lecture: The Backdrop: Geology of the Boston Basin
A Brief Overview of Boston’s History
Boston Common

Reading:

Afternoon field trip: Meet at 1 pm on Boston Common for the annual Ancient Fishweir dedication ceremonies featuring the Wampanoag Tribal Dancers, followed by an archaeological walking tour of Boston Common.

Monday, May 25 HOLIDAY, NO CLASSES

Wednesday, May 27
Morning Lecture Part 1: Boston Prehistory
- Native American sites in the Boston area
- The Boylston Street Fishweir Project, parts I and II
- Case Study: Rainsford Island

Reading:

Morning Lecture Part 2: Charlestown: "Mother of Boston"
- Early exploration
- Colonial settlement of Boston & the Harbor Islands
- Archaeology of the Central Artery North, a Charlestown neighborhood
- The Chelsea/Water Street Block in Charlestown
The First State House/Three Cranes Tavern

Reading:

Afternoon field trip: Meet at 2 p.m. at the Sam Adams statue in front of Faneuil Hall. Walking tour of the Shawmut Peninsula, water shuttle to Charlestown & tour of the Charlestown Archaeological District with Boston City Archaeologist Ellen P. Berkland.

Friday, May 29 Note: this is makeup day for Monday holiday.
Morning Lecture: The Archaeology of Women’s Lives in Colonial Boston
Case Study: The Katherine Nanny Naylor Privy

Readings:

Optional reading:

Monday, June 1
Morning Lecture: Everyday Life in Early Boston
- The Blackstone Block: The Bostonian Hotel Site, the Wilkinson Backlot Site, and Scottow’s Dock
- Archaeology at the John Carnes Site
- Faneuil Hall

Readings:


Optional Readings:


Afternoon Field Trip: Meet at 2 pm at Sam Adams statue for archaeological walking tour of Rose Kennedy Greenway, led by M. Beaudry.

**Wednesday, June 3**

**Afternoon Lecture: The Archaeology of Boston Neighborhoods**

- Archaeology at the Paul Revere House
- Boston’s early homes, including background on the Blake House

**Reading:**


Afternoon Field Trip: Meet at 2 pm at the Paul Revere House for a tour, after which we will go to the City Archaeology lab for a tour and to view artifacts excavated from the Paul Revere House.

**Monday, June 8**

**Morning Lecture: The Archaeology of Health & Hygiene in Early Boston**

- Boston’s “medicine men”
- Case study: The Padelford Privy

**Reading:**


Further reading TBA.

Afternoon presentation (tentative): PhD candidate Diana Gallagher will give a presentation at BU about her dissertation research on health and hygiene, especially parasite analysis, from a number of sites in Boston.

Wednesday, June 10

Morning Lecture: Eating and Drinking in Early Boston

- Archaeological evidence for foodways in early Boston
- Boston’s 19th-century “medicine men”
- Case study: The Padelford Privy

Reading:

- Landon, David B., selections from Feeding Colonial Boston.

Optional readings:


Afternoon field trip/presentation: Meet at 2 p.m. at the Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts, Boston. Dr. David B. Landon will give a presentation on his study of animal bones from Boston sites and what these tell about diet and animal husbandry and a tour of the archaeology lab at UMass Boston.

Monday, June 15 Guest Lecturer: Dr. Nancy S. Seasholes

Morning Lecture: Boston's Major Landmaking Projects

- The history of selected major landmaking projects in Boston

Reading:


Afternoon field trip: Meet at 1 p.m. in front of Sam Adams statue. Walking tour of central waterfront, led by Dr. Nancy S. Seasholes.
Wednesday, June 17
Morning Lecture: African Americans in Boston
- Black Bostonians, a history
- Archaeology of the African Meeting House & Smith School

Reading:
- Landon, David B., *Archaeology of the African Meeting House*
- *Pierson, W. D., 1988, Black Yankees.* University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst. (selected passages)

Optional readings:

Afternoon: walking tour of Boston's Black Heritage Trail, led by M. Beaudry or NPS Ranger. Meet at 2 pm at the memorial to Robert Gould Shaw & 54th Regiment (corner of Beacon & Park Streets, directly across Beacon St. from the State House). Best T stop is Park St.

Monday, June 22
Morning Lecture: Part 1. Death and Commemoration in Colonial Boston
- History of Boston's burying grounds
- An overview of colonial tombstone carving: designs, makers, change over time
- The Boston Burying Grounds Initiative: preserving early tombstones and burying grounds

Reading:

Part 2. Unearthing Boston: A Review (review sheet will be distributed in class)
- What have we learned?
- An overview and review of Boston archaeology
- How Boston fits into the overall field of urban archaeology

Afternoon: Meet City Archaeologist Ellen Berkland for tour of one or more historic Boston burying grounds. Time TBA, directions will be distributed in class.

Wednesday, June 24
Final Examination 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.