

Tâll Dhiban Archaeological Project

The Tâll Dhiban archaeological field school is an 8 week, 9 credit program (three third-year courses: ARKY 3000, 3300, 3400), from **May 1-June 21, 2025**. It includes an online course on the archaeology of Jordan before departure. The excavations take place at Tâll Dhiban, located in south-central Jordan, directly east of the Dead Sea. It is 30 km south of Madaba where we live during the field school.

University of Lethbridge students have been participating in archaeological field schools in the Near East for more than four decades, working alongside other students, volunteers, and researchers from around the world.



Research Objectives of the Tâll Dhiban Project

European explorers became interested in the site of Dhiban in the 19th century when the Mesha Inscription was discovered. While some of this monumental inscription has been broken and lost, what has survived preserves the story of Mesha, king of the Moabites and enemy of Israel. In the inscription, Mesha explains that his god, Chemosh, helped him throw off the yoke of Israel, a claim that parallels accounts found in the Bible.

Since the 2000s, a joint British and American team have uncovered more evidence of Mesha's Iron Age kingdom. The team has also explored a Nabatean temple and are examining how society at the site was transformed as Islam replaced Christianity as the dominant religion of the region.

Archaeological Field School

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



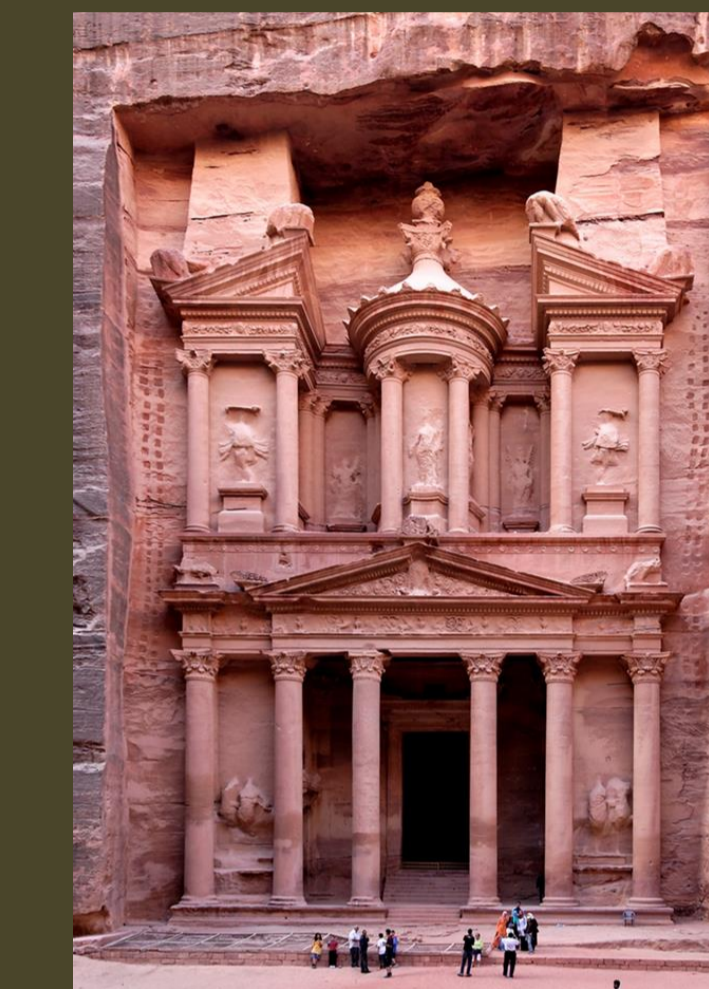
You will also receive training in laboratory analysis and have the opportunity to process and catalogue the cultural remains you find.

The broader context of the archaeological finds and the site will be explained through lectures and field trips to other sites across Jordan.

A Typical Weekday on the Dig

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|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 4:00 Rise and shine | 14:30 Break |
| 5:15 Arrive at the site | 16:00 Pottery washing |
| 9:00 Second breakfast | 17:00 Laboratory work |
| 9:30 Back to excavating | 18:00 Evening lecture |
| 13:00 Return to Madaba | 19:00 Dinner |
| 14:00 Lunch | 21:30 Lights out |

We will excavate 6 days a week, taking Fridays off. The six-day field trip will also be full, packed days!



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 Middle Eastern culture, learn about the people that live there, their history, and the politics, and make many new friends!

Interested in Participating?

An archaeological field school requires real, hard work in a camp-like environment. It will be hot, 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 thousands of years will outweigh the stiff muscles and early mornings. There is no better way to learn how to do field research than actually doing it!

If you would like to participate in the 2025 field school at Tall Dhiban, Jordan please contact Dr. Shawn Bubel, Department of Geography, University of Lethbridge. Email: bubest@uleth.ca