

Introduction to Southwestern Archaeology

The Introduction to Southwestern Archaeology course will cover basics of archaeology and the prehistory/history of the Southwestern United States/northern Mexico. The course will use powerpoint presentations and discussions to cover the primary Southwestern cultures (Ancestral Puebloan, Hohokam, Mogollon, Sinagua and Patayan) and will cover the Paleoindian, Archaic, Formative, Protohistoric and Historic periods. The class will also include information on the native tribes in the area today and opportunities for viewing local archaeological sites and volunteer archaeological work.

Objectives

1. Introduce students to archaeology and the astounding prehistory of the Southwestern United States and northern Mexico.
2. Inform students about the resilience and productivity of indigenous peoples of the Southwest.
3. Inform students about the laws, ethics and rationale for protecting and conserving archaeological sites and resources.
4. Instill an appreciation for previous people and their culture and continuing influences in the Southwest.

January 14, 2026 – Introduction – purpose of the class, why study the past, basic archaeological research, laws protecting archaeological resources, Southwestern archaeological history, geography and geology of the area and global perspectives on human occupation.

January 21, 2026 – Paleoindian Period

January 28, 2026 - Archaic Period

February 4, 2026 - Formative Period: Basketmaker II and III, and Pueblo I, II, and III - Ancestral Puebloan including Mesa Verde, Chaco and Virgin areas.

February 11, 2026 – Formative Period: Remainder of Southwest – Comparing the Ancestral Puebloan with the other major cultures of the Southwest and northern Mexico focusing on the Hohokam, Mogollon, Sinagua, and Patayan.

February 18, 2026 – Protohistoric Period: Pueblo IV

February 25, 2026 – Historic Period and Pueblo V, American Indians in the Southwest today

March 4, 2026 - Opportunities for volunteer work, local archaeological sites, and how to keep up with current archaeological research.

Diana Hawks has an associate's degree in Geology and a BS and MA in Prehistoric Archaeology. She worked as an archaeologist beginning in 1975, including private companies and the Bureau of Land Management for 27 years. In retirement she works part-time for Road Scholar as an educator on bus tours to the national and state parks of southern Utah and northern Arizona.