

# the **epic** ADVANTAGE

## **Student/Faculty Collaborative Research Experience**

### **The Materiality of Belief: Cognitive Archaeology and Ancient Greece**

**Dates: June 14-June 30, 2020**

**Credits: Choice of 0 or 2**

**Leader: Susan Wise**

**Application Deadline: November 1, 2019**



## **Description of Experience and Research:**

Cognitive archaeology explores the interrelationship between thought and material remains, seeking to understand as much as possible about past people's beliefs based on the objects and spaces they used. This EPIC research project introduces students to the discipline of cognitive archaeology through the study of archaeological sites and artifacts of ancient Greece. We will visit a range of excavated sites in order to explore the ways in which scholars use evidence to draw conclusions about the ideas and beliefs that shaped the material remains. We will also learn about (and do our own) collections-based research through the careful study of archaeological artifacts housed in key museum collections.

## **Career and research focus:**

This program is ideal for students interested in Ancient and Classical Studies, Archaeology, Art History, and Museum Studies. Students on the program will be introduced to the foundations of cognitive archaeology and will in turn practice using these methods in their study of the material remains of ancient Greece. Students will have the opportunity to connect with archaeologists to discuss key aspects of the profession, including: site excavation, the processes of artifact preservation, inventory and storage, the interpretation of excavated material, and improving museum collection accessibility.

## **Location and Living Arrangements:**

This EPIC Advantage Program will take place in two locations in Greece: the city of Athens and the region of the Argolid. Athens provides access to some of the most important archaeological sites and museums of Greece, including the Acropolis, the new Acropolis museum, the National Archaeological Museum, and the Kerameikos. During our stay at Athens, students will become familiar with key aspects of Greek material culture, including the nature and layout of Greek sanctuaries, public spaces, and the iconography of Greek art. The second half of our program will involve traveling to various locations in the Argolid, including the site of ancient Corinth, the prehistoric citadel of Mycenae, the sanctuary of Demeter at Eleusis, and the sanctuary of Asklepios at Epidauros. Housing will consist of shared rooms in local hostels, hotels, and apartments. Travel to sites will include public transportation (buses, subway), walking, and excursions in a mini-van driven by the faculty leader.

**Faculty:**

Susan Wise is an Earlham professor who offers classes in both the Ancient and Classical studies department and the Museum Studies program. Her area of specialization is Greek archaeology, and she has excavated at ancient sites in Greece and Turkey. She has co-lead six Earlham May Term programs in Greece.

**Requirements:**

This program requires significant physical activity, including substantial walking, traversing irregular terrain, and long periods spent outside in the sun. Students must be prepared to navigate a variety of locations, from large cities to remote archaeological sites. Although no artistic skill is required, students should be willing to use drawing as a way of learning.

**Expectations for Students:**

Students will be expected to actively (and enthusiastically!) participate in group activities, which will include visits to archaeological sites and/or museums, on-site discussions about archaeological material and related readings, and conversations with archaeologists about their work. Students will keep a journal in which they record detailed observations and drawings of archaeological objects; the notes collected in these journals will inform the final group presentation project. Learning goals for the program include:

- Acquire knowledge of the methods of cognitive archaeology and employ them in one's own research
- Apply techniques of iconographical analysis in the interpretation of archaeological material
- Hone skills of close observation in looking at, sketching, and describing archaeological material
- Gain familiarity with multiple stages and aspects of archaeological investigation

**Preparation**

Students will be required to take a 1 credit EPIC Advantage Orientation seminar during the Spring 2020 academic semester. This seminar will provide the necessary background and travel logistics for students to maximize the experience. Class meeting dates/times will be determined in the future.

**Student Eligibility**

Preference given to rising juniors and seniors. Rising sophomores and May graduates are eligible to apply. Ideally, students will have a strong background/interest in ancient Greece or the study of material culture.

**Cost to Student:**

This experience is funded as an Epic Advantage opportunity. Funding includes travel, room and board and additional expenses as required by the program. This funding does not include the cost of passports and immunizations or other personal expenses.

**Program plans subject to change.**

**Program Policies:** <https://earlham.edu/academics/off-campus-study/program-policies/>