

Turnover and Change in Campus Archaeology

Since its inception in 2007 the Michigan State University Campus Archaeology Program (CAP) has protected archaeological resources on MSU's campus. CAP has experienced major changes in its undergraduate and graduate student population. We rely heavily on both graduate and undergraduate students to run effectively. This strategy succeeds by employing students that have a strong commitment to CAP, ensuring overlap between campus archaeologists, and maintaining a strong record of prior work through field notes and digital media. This promotes continuous institutional memory, as well as a strong sense of collaboration and teamwork among both the current students and alumnus of the program.

Over the last 8 years, there have been five different campus archaeologists leading the program. Each Campus Archaeologist served from 1 to 2 years, and each had a different set of undergraduate interns and volunteers, as well as graduate research fellows supporting them. This means that over the last eight years, we've had at least 30 undergrad students, 20 graduate students, and five campus archaeologists participating in CAP.

But it isn't just the program that has turnover- the university is consistently changing. Each year, thousands of new students, staff and faculty members become part of Michigan State University. We not only need to deal with internal change of the Campus Archaeology program, but the external change of the university. How do we do this? By maintaining a strong record of the program, providing a consistent identity and goal, and commitment to the program.

CAP Roles

Campus Archaeology Director

Dr. Goldstein created the Campus Archaeology Program and continues to serve as the director of the program. Her role as director is to coordinate CAPs place within the University system and directly oversee the campus archaeologist and CAP fellows. In order to maintain continuity, Dr. Goldstein acts as the institutional memory of the program and provides guidance on the goals, objectives, and overall identity of CAP. As individuals change in the program, she can ensure that the program itself maintains continuity but also continues to grow and evolve. In selecting the individuals involved in the program, she ensures that they will maintain the program's identity, keep high standards and be committed to moving the program forward.

Campus Archaeologist

The campus archaeologist is a half time research assistant position that requires 20 hours of work per week. The job entails handling the day-to-day program operations, including managing interns, coordinating with CAP fellows on their projects and regular meetings with infrastructure planning and facilities regarding construction projects. This role is primary to maintenance and continuity of the Campus Archaeology Program, but is also a position with high turnover and wide variation in experience and expertise. The Campus Archaeologist needs to ensure that the identity of the program is maintained through online and in-person outreach, coordinate excavation and lab work on campus, work with graduate and undergraduates to conduct research, and also work closely with administration and other units on-campus-.

It has taken several years and many Campus Archaeologists to build the relationship with, not only the construction companies on campus, but also the many

departments of MSU's Infrastructure and Planning Facilities (IPF). As many of you know, it is not always easy to explain why construction timelines needs to be expanded or stretched for the sake of archaeology, and why our work is vital to the university. In order to ensure that our relationship with facilities and construction crews is maintained, the previous Campus Archaeologist works closely with the new Campus Archaeologist to be clear about how the process of working with facilities works, creating a bond between the primary construction managers and planners, and passing on knowledge about the inner workings of facilities. For example, we know that sidewalks are replaced in the fall, and there are strict deadlines about when these need to be completed due to football season. By being conscientious about the timeframe and pressure the sidewalk construction crew is under, we can work with them to ensure that archaeological finds are protected and they don't fall back on their schedule. By passing on this type of knowledge, and building trust between construction, facilities and the new Campus Archaeologist, the previous Campus Archaeologist ensures the smooth running and continuity of the program.

CAP fellows

CAP fellows are graduate students who receive a graduate school fellowship to work with the program. The fellowship allows them to develop an independent research project that relates to CAP, but also aid in the day to day running of the program by helping with undergraduate interns, outreach events, field work, and lab research.

Graduate fellows work closely with the Campus Archaeologist and Director in order to ensure that their projects helps with the goals and objectives of the program, supports the existing identity, and does not stray from the mission of the program. These research

projects help prepare CAP for future excavations, analyze excavated sites and artifacts, or develop outreach programs and activities. The projects are well-documented, publicized on social media, and add to our record of activity.

Graduate fellows also serve an important role for the Campus Archaeologist- usually, the individual selected to be the upcoming Campus Archaeologist will first be involved in the program as a fellow, then selected as the Campus Archaeologist, and may return to be a fellow after. This allows the future campus archaeologist to become familiar with CAP policies, procedures, and activities.

CAP Interns and Volunteers

Every year CAP extends internship and volunteer opportunities to outstanding undergraduate students. These are typically students that have participated in our field school, or taken courses from Dr. Goldstein or CAP fellows. These undergrads work in the lab, learning how to wash, catalog, and accession artifacts. They also help with campus survey and shovel test pits. Official interns are required to work on individual research projects that will be presented at the annual University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum in the spring. This gives students the opportunity to conduct archaeological research, and present this information formally. Their work helps CAP move forward in its research goals, and gives undergrads first hand archaeological experience.

Having undergraduates actively involved in the program is important as it also allows us to get a feel for the current climate of undergraduates in the university. Undergraduate students make up the largest and most transient part of MSU's population, and in order for Campus Archaeology to maintain its relevance, we need to understand

this group. By having undergraduates participate in the maintenance and continuity of the program, we ensure its continued importance.

Beyond the roles individuals play in maintaining the program, there are a number of tools that we use to ensure continuity.

Social Media and Digital Tools for Maintaining Consistency

Social media has played an important part in shaping Campus Archaeology from the beginning. While it continues to be a primary tool in engagement and transparency, it is also important to maintaining consistency within the program. There are two major ways that social media is helping to do this; by maintaining a record of activity and articulating a strong cultured identity.

Social Media and Digital Tools as a Record

Social media provides a strong record of what we've done, how we've done it, and how we're interpreting the past. The blog is the strongest example of this. As each new CAP participant begins working in the program, they are instructed to read the blog to see what people in the program have done, how they've talked about it, and what we've completed. Having this more casual resource gives students an opportunity to learn directly from their predecessors even when they are no longer part of the university. The blog provides a backlog of our development, how interpretations have changed over time, what projects have already been looked at, and how we interpreted it within the context of the broader university. While we have the records that document what we did at different events, the field notes from excavations, the quantitative lab notes- the blog provides a more qualitative look into what worked, what didn't, who came to the events,

how successful the project was, possible challenges, and a more qualitative and personal look into past work.

Social Media as a Guiding Identity

Having a strong identity that is clearly articulated is critical to maintaining a consistent program despite changeover. Just as social media provides a record of activity and progress, it also sets the tone for how we communicate, the goals and objectives of the program, and the voice of Campus Archaeology. While there are slight variations in the way that blogs are written, tweets are sent, facebook maintained and more, there is a tone and set of objectives that are maintained regardless of who is at the helm. This works because of three major themes.

First, there is transparency. We always share our locations, what we are finding, how we're interpreting this, and what happens to the artifacts and data throughout the process. This is an important aspect of who we are as a program that is apparent in our social media approach. We tweet locations, we blog about events, we share the photos, and we provide open documentation of how archaeology is done on campus. We share photos of artifacts as we identify them, we ask for help with identification on Twitter, we blog about how these artifacts and excavations add to our understanding of the university's history, and we highlight the different individuals within the program who are doing the work.

Second, there is a dedication to the university. We are part of MSU, we bleed green, and we are proud of our university- so we make this clear through social media, through the ways that we make connections between what we're finding, historic MSU, as well as modern day campus. We retweet MSU related tweets and news, we blog about

broader events at MSU, and we provide an archaeological perspective to current events. Part of maintaining our identity as campus archaeology, is maintaining our connection to the university.

Third, we engage with the broader public. We don't use social media to just inform or advertise, we use it as a tool to network, build community, maintain engagement beyond the university, and create connections with archaeology broadly. Our social media demonstrates our commitment to active online and in-person engagement. We can ensure that our identity is maintained despite turnover by providing a common voice and tone for the CAP identity.

Digital and Analog Records

It is also vital to maintain detailed paper and digital records of activities. More often than not, CAP has multiple ongoing projects active at the same time. Since these often transition from one campus archaeologist to the next, strict record keeping is necessary. At any time the director or campus archaeologist should be able to quickly tell the status of any open project, as well as access past records of all work that was previously done. By maintaining specific formatting and documentation, the record keeping is able to maintain its continuity.

A similar approach is necessary with our Geographic information system, or GIS. Just as the research backgrounds of each campus archaeologist vary, so does their familiarity with GIS. The CAP GIS database is an import tool in creating continuity and maintaining the program despite changes in the students involved. Having an up to date and accurate spatial database is critical for archaeological work. MSU covers 5,200 acres, 2,100 of which is actively developed. Most of our work focuses in the oldest

portion of campus, so there are many excavations conducted by different people over the last 8 years in a small section of campus. Our GIS database demonstrates what has and has not been excavated, notes areas that need further attention, areas that would be good for future field schools, and allows us to analyze the materials we uncover broadly in space. The GIS database is also an important resource for each new campus archaeologist; it allows them to easily understand the scope of past CAP work, and allows them to plan for future excavation.

Commitment and Conclusion

Over the last 8 years, there have been five different campus archaeologists leading the program, at least 30 undergrad students, 20 graduate students participating in CAP. Four out of five Campus Archaeologists are still actively involved in maintaining the program, regardless of their academic status. Just as Universities have alumni, CAP also creates alums that maintain strong relationships with the program. Numerous interns have gone on to be active in archaeology and graduate programs, and many of the graduate students are involved over their entire career at MSU. Those involved in CAP are committed to it because they recognize the value this unique program plays not only to MSU, but also to their future careers. It requires a lot of work, and planning but CAP has maintained its functionality and continuity despite tremendous turnover. It is possible to have a robust campus archaeology program that runs mainly on students.