

# CRM, SFU & YOU

New Options for Professional Preparation  
from Simon Fraser University

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Recent growth and diversification in the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Department of Archaeology has made it possible to propose development and delivery of an expanded range of credential alternatives. Among these are programs focused on preparing students for professional participation in applied archaeology and cultural heritage stewardship. Here we offer our thoughts on the emerging context for professional archaeological practice, outline the vision and plans taking shape through SFU program initiatives, and invite support, planning input, and enrollment.

## **Globalization and Diversification in Archaeological Practice**

In recent years, archaeological method and theory has been shifting towards greater engagement with social, political, and economic mainstreams. With these changes, new opportunities exist to make the discipline more relevant and responsive to communities, stakeholders, and the public. There will never be a better time than now for archaeology to move emphatically beyond self-limiting perception and marketing of our discipline as a stuffy den of antiquity, a backwater of method and theory generally cut off from meaningful engagement with the world beyond the ivory tower. Building on generations of scholarship and advocacy, archaeologists have established the conservation ethic and interdisciplinarity as cornerstones of professional practice (see Lipe 1974; Lynott and Wylie 1995; Wylie 2005). Briefly, the conservation ethic identifies preservation and stewardship of the archaeological record as our profession's first priority, discouraging extractive use of the record of the past except in cases of imminent destruction, substantial societal benefit, or some combination thereof. Our collective success is apparent in the codification of this ethic in the *BC Heritage Conservation Act*, the *US National Historic Preservation Act*, a rapidly growing corpus of national and international law and policy, and numerous professional codes of conduct. We estimate that, globally, nearly \$1 billion is spent annually on and through archaeology and related endeavors, exclusive of museums and monument preservation. A clear majority of North Americans support such investments, strongly favoring the protection of archaeological heritage and its appropriate use in schools, protected areas, creative and

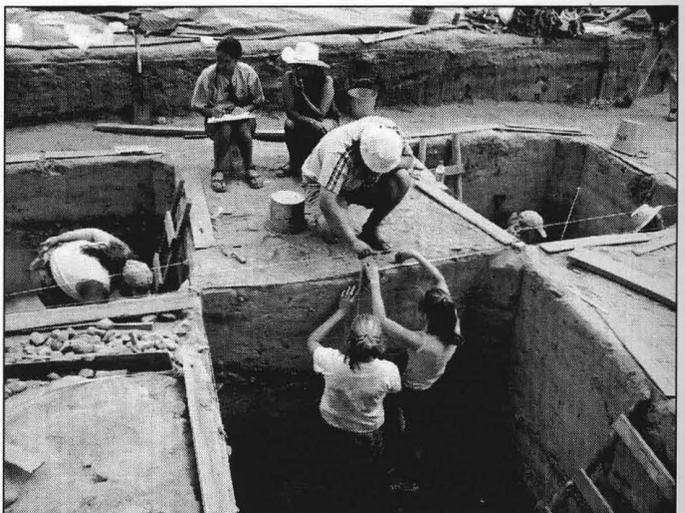


Figure 1 (above). In the current legal and ethical environment, archaeological resource management projects require the cooperation and collaboration of multiple stakeholders. This petroglyph boulder mitigation project was initiated by the Upper Similkameen Indian Band and involved the participation of government and industry. (Photo: M. Klassen).

Figure 2 (below). Over the course of 15 years, students in the SFU-Secwepemc Education Institute's Field School in Indigenous Archaeology were directly involved in research-based projects that were coupled with training in archaeological resource management and participation in community-based archaeology (Photo: G. Nicholas)

cultural perpetuation endeavors, and tourism-oriented economic development (Pokotylo and Guppy 1999; Pokotylo 2007). It is well known that most professional archaeologists with graduate degrees are today employed not in academic departments and museums, but in consulting firms, national and local government bureaus, and corporate planning and compliance offices ([www.saa.org/membership/survey](http://www.saa.org/membership/survey) and [www.britarch.ac.uk/training/profile.html](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/training/profile.html)). Indeed, "cultural resource management," in the context of an unprecedented rate of industrial development, is now a major force driving change in the discipline (Figure 1).

On the basis of expanding partnerships with communities,

businesses, governments, and other academic domains, archaeology is inexorably emerging as one element in the far broader enterprise of heritage stewardship—the studying, caretaking, and carrying forward of collective values through places, objects, and traditions. Archaeology has come of age and we owe it to our forebears and future generations to bring our impressive arrays of sites, data, concepts, and perspectives to bear on sticky issues ranging from looter prosecution and sustainable ecosystem management to public education and intercultural reconciliation. Henceforth, the majority of archaeologists are likely to have most of their professional lives driven by, and responsible to, market and political forces rather than by research interests or compliance mandates.

In recent years, the growing engagement of Aboriginal groups and other interested parties in heritage stewardship has challenged the conventional role played by archaeology in B.C. and elsewhere (Nicholas 2006). The special status of archaeologists as self-appointed stewards of the archaeological record has been strongly questioned, along with the privileging of scientific over traditional values in making management decisions (Ferris 2003; Nicholas and Hollowell 2007; Smith 2004; Wylie 2005). Intellectual property rights, “decolonizing” method and theory, and landscape planning have also become points of contention. All of these issues make the argument for re-examining theory, method, and practice in the context of heritage stewardship training all the more compelling.

The challenges associated with forging a sustainable archaeology in response to these global trends are easily balanced by the abundance of unprecedented opportunities. Cherished ideals of complex projects directed by individuals are giving way to interdisciplinary, reciprocal, and multivocal collaborations that integrate descendent community interests, regional resource management objectives, oral traditions, documentary and landscape studies, and so forth. Recent examples from North America range from multi-tribal interpretation of archaeological sites in Arizona’s San Pedro Valley (Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2006), to collaborative engagement in the context of impact assessments (Budhwa 2005), to Lyons’ (2007) study of ancient objects and remembered landscapes as foundations for Inuvialuit self-determination in the Canadian Western Arctic (see also Nicholas and Andrews 1997). The longstanding notion that the archaeological record’s scientific and research values are paramount is increasingly challenged by competing cultural, land management, educational, and economic development values. Regional and subdisciplinary preferences and practices are more responsive than ever to national and international concerns for issues as diverse as data comparability and shared ethical standards and guidelines. The internet and other technologies are dissolving barriers to collaboration. Indigenous and descendent communities are obliging deeper professional examinations of and commitments to ethical practice. Humanity in general is struggling to retain the best and most useful parts of the past.

As these processes unfold, archaeological practitioners are being called upon to either adapt or yield our established position as the primary progressive source of sustained innovation in heritage research, training, interpretation, and conservation. The single best means for fostering continued leadership and growth for archaeology is through creative and deliberate attention to the

preparation of future archaeologists — to the creation of expert and agile researchers and problem solvers who welcome opportunities to balance and integrate scientific values with cultural, economic, and management values. SFU Archaeology is pursuing plans for just this sort of student training.

### **Expanded Options for Graduate and Undergraduate Training in Applied Archaeology at SFU**

SFU hosts an equivalent of nearly 30,000 full-time students and delivers diverse programs at campuses in Burnaby, Kamloops, Surrey, and Vancouver. SFU’s enduring organizational mission includes innovation and community outreach; and SFU’s response to challenges and opportunities embedded in archaeology’s globalization has entailed substantial growth and diversification in archaeological research and training. By 2009, the SFU Archaeology Department will employ at least 19 tenured or tenure-track faculty with research interests spanning most of the planet and with special expertise in western North America, Indigenous archaeologies, bioarchaeology, and forensic and physical anthropology, an increase from 11 positions in 2005 ([www.sfu.ca/archaeology/index.htm](http://www.sfu.ca/archaeology/index.htm)). Faculty expansion — in conjunction with the 2007 addition of a suite of all-new, cutting edge laboratory facilities, award-winning on-line initiatives launched through the SFU Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (<http://www.sfu.ca/archaeology/museum/index.html>), and expansions of the department’s relationships with the SFU First Nations Studies program and the internationally respected School of Resource and Environmental Management—has set the stage for enhanced program offerings in applied archaeology and heritage stewardship.

SFU Archaeology is in the final stages of planning for the development of two distinct programs intended to produce thinkers, writers, and researchers with skills and perspectives attuned to global opportunities and project-specific realities (Table 1). The first, a new B.A. Certificate in Cultural Resource Management, is being created through realignment and strategic expansion of the existing classroom and field school curriculum. The new certificate would complement existing joint major opportunities with Anthropology, First Nations Studies, and Latin American Development Studies. The CRM Certificate is intended to engage between 5% and 25% of the SFU undergraduate cohort (a total of 8–40 students) in a 30-credit-hour program that will provide the essential training in archaeological method and theory while encouraging student creation of a personalized “toolkit” of knowledge, skills, experiences, and perspectives. As currently proposed, the certificate’s 24-credit-hour core curriculum features coursework in Archaeological Resource Management, Material Culture Analysis, a regional survey course, at least one course in First Nations Studies, plus a minimum of 10 credit hours of field school training in both archaeological survey and excavation. Intended for launch in 2008 or 2009 following review by the SFU Faculty Senate, the program is especially designed to boost the competence of students intending to pursue entry-level positions with consulting firms, museums, other heritage institutions, and First Nations. Similar certificates in Forensics, Ecological Archaeology, and Community Archaeology/Museum

Table 1. Proposed New SFU Training Programs in Archaeological Resource Management.

	B.A. CERTIFICATE	M.A. PROGRAM
FORMAT	Coursework à Field School à B.A. à Employment	2-Year Cohort à 2 terms of Graduate Coursework + Thesis - On-line component possible
LAUNCH	Fall 2008 or 2009	Fall 2010
INFLOW	~ 10 – 25 % of Undergrad Enrollment à 2 – 6 grads per year	12-16 Per Year, with Appeal to Canadian, US, and International "Market" (Experience + 3.0 GPA)
EMPHASES	Academic Prep + CRM	CRM + Arch Theory + Spatial Analysis & GIS
OUTFLOW	Students, Writers, Novice Practitioners	Researchers, Writers, Independent Thinkers, Interdisciplinary
ASSESSMENT	Course & Field School Grades	Course Grades + Thesis (Spatial Analysis, Methods, Planning / Policy, Material Culture / Regional Synthesis)

Studies are under consideration.

The second, somewhat more ambitious program is a new M.A. Program in Applied Archaeology and Heritage Stewardship. A primary impetus for this program is the recognition that graduate level training has become an essential step for virtually all career professionals; in this sense, an M.A. program will contribute to the continuing professionalization of our discipline. The outline of this program has been approved at the faculty level and is working its way through university and provincial reviews. We envision offering, as a complement to the Department's existing graduate curriculum, an intensive program of two or three terms of classroom study followed by a (maximum) one-year research and writing effort resulting in a thesis. Scheduled for debut in Fall 2009 with an initial annual cohort of 8–16 junior colleagues, the program will target current CRM practitioners with interests in boosting their skills and credentials while pursuing a project of particular interest and merit. Planning parameters include intentions to limit residential requirements in B.C.'s lower mainland to two or three terms in order to facilitate participation by international students and those with established family and career responsibilities elsewhere. An on-line component is under discussion and may take shape as a means of establishing baseline understandings within program cohorts.

Funding for new faculty positions and for facilities to support this special program will come through SFU's Surrey campus development initiatives, and current plans call for the program to build synergy with the Surrey campus' technology focused programs through an emphasis on spatial analyses, geographic information systems (GIS), and remote sensing applications in archaeology ([www.surrey.sfu.ca](http://www.surrey.sfu.ca)). In addition to the wide variety of courses offered by SFU Archaeology, participants may take elective courses in SFU's School of Resource and Environmental Management and First Nations Studies program. Efforts are underway to design thesis standards and guidelines in order to structure and streamline thesis preparation to reduce student uncertainty and faculty workload. We expect most theses to focus on the program's thematic strengths in heritage stewardship and cultural resource management: (1) policy, planning, and

post-project data and site conservation; (2) regional and material culture syntheses using CRM data; (3) CRM methodology; and, as mentioned, (4) spatial analysis and GIS applications.

#### An Invitation to Participate

As is true for various other pursuits that began primarily as quests for knowledge and perspective (e.g., astronomy, economics), archaeology's applications and spin-offs now occupy center stage. Our discipline has grown and diversified primarily as a consequence of successful efforts by our disciplinary predecessors to establish legislative protections for archaeological heritage and to foster public interest in and support for archaeology. Archaeology's success, however, is entailing exposure to unprecedented political, demographic, cultural, and market forces, thus placing a growing burden on practitioners to identify and focus aspects of our work upon broad collaborations and consensus-based standards of practice. As archaeology continues to transition into greater reliance upon direction, financing, and assessment from sources beyond our discipline and colleagues, new opportunities and challenges are coming into view (Hunter, in press; Moore 2006).

Our intention is to position SFU and Canadian archaeology at the pragmatic interface of research-, conservation-, and community-oriented archaeologies (Figure 2). The new generation of curriculum introduced here will facilitate knowledge acquisition and partnership mobilization across geographical, disciplinary, and community boundaries. Particularly promising are collaborations with First Nations and lesser developed countries to identify overlaps among national, community, and research agendas. The proposed M.A. program, in particular, has significant potential to attract supporters and participants as a context for applied research in archaeology and heritage stewardship. We are committed to the development and deployment of the very best minds and technologies in the ongoing quest to protect the archaeological record and attendant cultural traditions and to ensure that when this record must be destroyed, these minds and tools are poised to respectfully extract the fullest range of cultural, management, educational, and

scientific values—and to meet the needs of multiple stakeholders.

The proposed programs cannot succeed without support from local, national, and international communities. We thus conclude with invitations and pleas to contribute constructively to the development and delivery of the two initiatives. That is, we ask that colleagues working in contracting, consulting, and compliance domains share their views regarding how the programs we are developing might best serve current and future employment markets. We invite project and organization managers to consider how B.A.-level interns and certificate bearers, as well as M.A.-level thesis researchers might contribute to their pursuits. We respectfully encourage First Nations leaders to consider ways and means for developing or expanding relationships with cultural heritage professionals and SFU. We request that avocational archaeologists and other interested parties continue to expand their support for the protection and appropriate use of the archaeological record. Finally, and most fundamentally, we seek students with diverse backgrounds and ambitions to contribute to the planning process by identifying their educational and career goals, interests, and needs, and by their enrollment applications.

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