

USI students begin six-week Archaeological Field School in New Harmony

5/9/2016 | Erin McCracken Merris

The University of Southern Indiana's Archaeological Field School will begin next week on Wednesday, May 11 and last for six weeks, ending on Friday, June 10. About 10 USI students will participate in the six-week field school directed by Dr. Michael Strezewski, Associate Professor of Anthropology.

The school will focus their studies on areas in the northwest part of New Harmony, Indiana, which includes the Harmonist Cemetery and a number of areas located a significant distance outside the cemetery. No excavations will occur within the cemetery, which contain historic burials and Native American Mounds. Above ground methods, including magnetometry and resistivity surveys, will be conducted within the walls of the cemetery to develop a better understanding of the prehistoric occupation of the area, which dates to the early Middle Woodland Crab Orchard phase (circa. 200 B.C. - A.D 300).

Students will work to better document the Native American mounds and newly identified geometric earthwork within the Harmonist Cemetery and gain insight into the scope and age of the prehistoric habitation areas that are adjacent to the cemetery.

During the six weeks, students will learn basic mapping, excavation techniques and artifact identification through these above ground surveys, small test excavation sites and a large scale excavation site in the village area outside the cemetery.

Weather permitting, students will be working at the sites 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday throughout the six weeks. The public is encouraged to visit the excavation sites to observe the students work and ask questions about the process and student's findings.

The daily tour of the historic sites, which leave the Atheneum at 1 p.m., will include the field school as part of their tour during this time period.

For more information regarding the field school, contact Erin McCracken Merris at emccracken@usi.edu or 812-682-4488.