

Visiting Temple University Professor to Dedicate Archaeology Lab

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The Department of Public Safety's former garage, the white building next to Denny and DPS, is now property of the Archaeology department as it has been transformed into the W. M. Keck Foundation Center for Human Origins and Ancient Cultures, also known as the brand new Archaeology lab.

Senior Lab Assistant Jennifer Danis '03 and Junior Lab Assistant Sarah Peterson '05 were excited about this year's new lab, especially when compared to the old lab. While the old digging area, which was in the former Archaeology lab in the basement of Denny, was only 64.6 square feet, the Keck Center has a dig site that measures 439.5 square feet, which is an unheard of size in comparable simulators in the United States. Allison Cuneo '07, another lab assistant, said, "It's absolutely amazing—before we used to step on top of each other because you could only fit two or four people comfortably—here it's like a real site."

The digging area, called SEF for Simulated Excavation Field, is filled with multiple layers of different types of soil, within which multiple types of typical archaeological finds are scattered. Peterson said, "It's fantastic. We had a hard time putting it together though, it was just me, Jenn and Allison sometimes" about filling in the dirt for the simulator. It took three weeks from start to finish, with all three lab assistants working eight hours a day to create the layers. Filling in the layers are various graves, walls and a well, which were filled with copies of authentic ancient Grecian pottery. Thanks to a special deal, a small work-

shop in Greece provides these copies to the school so that students can have as realistic a dig experience as possible. New equipment in the lab was paid for by the Keck Foundation, while renovations of the garage into a lab were funded by the Ferris Foundation.

On Friday, Apr. 28 at 8 p.m., the lab will finally be considered "finished." Philip Betancourt, an archaeology professor at Temple University will give a lecture called "Excavating the Earliest Copper Smelting Workshop on Crete," in which he will talk about the Bronze Age economy of Minoan Crete and present new evidence from Chrysokamino, an early workshop in northeast Crete. This is part of the dedication ceremony for the lab, which will end with dinner for invited VIPs at President Durden's house.

The SEF is used in the Fundamentals of Archaeology: Theory and Field Archaeology class to prepare the students for the summer dig, the Dickinson Excavation Project and Archaeological Survey (DEPAS) in Mycenae, Greece. Every summer, about 10 students travel with Professors Christofilis Maggidis and Leon Fitts to Greece to dig in Mycenae, the actual kingdom of Agamemnon from Homer's *Iliad*. The program is designed to give Dickinson (the only college permitted to dig inside the citadel) students exclusive dig experience for graduate schools, because, as Maggidis says, "most grad students haven't had a single season of dig experience."

The rest of the lab includes office space for Maggidis, Danis and Peterson, as well as a private computer lab used to create digital projects. The digital projects are databases that compile information about different aspects of archaeology. Keramos, the newest project, is a

database of pottery shards found during the summer in DEPAS. The aim, Maggidis says, is that "when this will have 40,000 entries, one will be able to find everything in, say, destruction layer 2, and it will give you a list of all those shards—it'll be a huge help to anyone studying pottery at Mycenae." He also hopes that one day, other excavations will follow suit so that it will be as easy as using Google to search for a specific type of pottery for study. The other two digital projects are called Atrous and ICON. Atrous is a massive bibliography of papers and studies on anything involving the ancient city of Mycenae, while ICON is a student- and faculty-accessible only database of pictures of dig sites, artifacts and ancient architecture around the Mediterranean Sea.

The Archaeology department at Dickinson, an interdisciplinary effort by five different departments, easily puts this college in the top 10 list for undergraduate Archaeology degrees. Here, students get theoretical background and actual field experience thanks to SEF and the summer Mycenae program. This is only the beginning, however, if Maggidis, who typically gets 200 different students a year, has anything to say about it. "Eventually, now that we have a growing number of students, I would like to see more archaeologists teaching at Dickinson. Visiting professors teaching a few classes for a semester would be great for students, as they would be exposed to different kinds of archaeology, such as geoarchaeology and Egyptology." He says that at Dickinson, all four necessary parameters (money, administrative pushing, a knowledgeable faculty and many eager students) came together and allow for this great department to do fantastic things.