"Most second-year graduate students in archaeology in this country have never had a single season's experience in the field. Dickinson students have the dig simulator, which is unique in the United States, and they come with me to Mycenae for one, two or three seasons. There's nothing more effective than hands-on experience." Christofilis Maggidis, associate professor of archaeology and director of the Dickinson College Excavation Project and Survey in Mycenae, Greece

archaeology

Archaeology is a process of discovery—literally uncovering the past. Students come into the field of archaeology from classics, astronomy, earth sciences, history, art history and anthropology. Working in the simulator, students experience the precision and rigor of the scientific method. They gain insight into the interplay between imagination (hypothesis) and empirical reality (experimentation). They grasp what we can and also do not yet know.

Mycenaean clay figurine of Φ-type (1400-1100 B.C.)

Athenian drachma, Aeginetan stater and South Italian Greek coins (Classical period: 5th/4th centuries B.C.)

Athenian black-figure panel amphora (550-525 B.C.)

Golden bracelet (4th century B.C.)

The Simulation Lab

One of six compulsory courses for archaeology majors, Fundamentals of Archaeology is taught in the dig simulator. Buried in its layers are a settlement, a shrine, a cemetery and a road. Underneath lie the carbonized wood remains of Neolithic huts. Students learn about burial customs by studying

"Working in the simulator teaches us the same process we use at Mycenae—the same kind of recording system, the same kind of drawing and picture taking. When you get there you've already seen all the forms you'll be using. You know all the terminology." Kristen Wroth, Carol Stream, Ill., *lab assistant, has been to Mycenae twice*

the objects—all replicas—in the graves: coins, jewelry and human bones. As they excavate, they find shards of pottery, all precise copies of the authentic pieces from the National Archaeological Museum and other museums. Designed by Associate Professor Christofilis Maggidis, the simulator was constructed in a matter of weeks. Excavating to the point where only two square-foot patches of concrete floor lie exposed has taken three years. "We go very slowly," Maggidis explains. "The goal is not to excavate fully but to learn how to use the system—which is the very same system that we use at Mycenae. So when you're there you can work blindfolded."

Mycenae, Greece Funded by a grant from the Keck Foundation, Dickinson's million-dollar archaeology laboratory consists not just of the dig simulator but other cutting-edge technology. The gadgets include global positioning system (GPS) units, ground-penetrating radar (GPR), gradiometers (to scan the ground prior to excavating) and total stations (to measure latitude, longitude and elevation in a fraction of a second). These technologies are all vital at Mycenae. Recently, an article in *Archaeology Magazine* highlighted the unprecedented work being done there by Maggidis and his team of Dickinson students.