

Archaeology of a California Mission

Guidelines for Field Reports

Instructions: The final requirement for the SBS 260s/360s archaeology field course is to produce a very basic lab report that describes and interprets those lab and field operations that produced the data set required at end term. Please note the following content requirements for both the data graphs, and final project reports:

1. Data Analysis: Please use the data set downloaded from the main database that pertains specifically to your unit, and from one other excavation unit selected at random, in order to produce a comparative analysis in Excel graph or chart form. The Excel graphs or charts should include a breakdown and analysis of the data from your unit, and that of one other unit, by material or specimen type. An example of the analysis might include the charting of the following:

a. Total quantities of tile, ceramic, bone, shell, metal within your unit. Each of these categories might be graphed in a bar chart by total unit quantities, with the quantity determined by weight or raw counts of individual items. Note, however, that raw weights are often preferable.

b. Having produced the graph for the total Unit sample, then you should move to produce a few additional charts that reflect these same materials by individual unit level from within your unit. You may opt for raw counts, or weights of specimens, depending on what your group or team decided to use as your basis for evaluating total quantities within each Unit Level.

[For example, let us say you have 100 individual tile fragments, 50 bone fragments, 20 shell specimens, and 2 metal objects in Unit Level 1 by raw counts. Chart the quantities noted, and then proceed to document quantities by level in Unit Level 2, and so forth. This should produce between 2 and 4 charts, depending on the total number of Unit levels excavated]

c. Finally, having produced the chart for Total Specimens within your unit, produce one additional chart based on Total Specimens within one other excavation Unit selected by you and your group or team members. This last chart need only be included to indicate that your analysis was extended to one other Unit.

[In your summary and description, you need only make reference to the charts and what they indicate about predominant specimen types within Unit Levels, and between your Unit, and one other Unit as indicated].

2. Project Report Format: Having prepared your Excel graphs as a team, you should then take said graphs (produced in collaboration with other team members) and prepare an individually written project report or summary that includes the following sections:

i. Introduction: Please provide an introductory statement that includes some of the following basic information: Site Designation (CA-MNT-18), Dates of Excavation, Unit(s) Excavated and reported upon, team members names, an overall statement of material types recovered, and objectives of the overall project. Finally, a preliminary statement about what you intend to review in your report would be appropriate in this context [**1 page**].

ii. **Background:** This should consist of a brief summary of the primary project objective specific to those efforts undertaken in this instance (e.g., relocating the Mission wine cellar, and subsequently, seeking to recover the room blocks identified with Structures 1 and 2). If relevant, you should plan to cite the Wireless Archaeology project website and Wireless Journals for additional information on that portion of the project [**1-2 pages**].

[Some basic reference to Mission or archaeology related sources, or bibliography, should be made so as to frame the scholarly significance of the research. Your texts, particularly that on the bibliography of "Alta California" (Ayers book; yellow text) would be useful in this context].

iii. **Materials and Methods:** This consists of an overview of Lab and Field methods and materials employed in the excavation and processing of specimens. You should identify basic equipment used, processing methods, online or wireless data entry and journals, and Munsel tests. In other words, provide a summary of basic archaeological field methods, and lab activities [**2-3 pages**].

[This portion of the paper should include reference to content from your textbook(s) or related bibliography so as to frame your discussion about basic archaeological methods].

iv. **Observations:** This portion of the report should summarize your basic observations on what was recovered and what significance it might bear to the interpretation of the site and its history. This is the interpretive portion of your report and should make specific use of the tabled data, graphs, charts or other diagrams produced from the Excel data provided [**1-2 pages**].

[In other words, you might wish to make specific reference to graphs that illustrate varying quantities of shell from Unit Level to Unit Level to suggest that the upper levels of your unit were much more disturbed, and produced less shell from primary archaeological contexts. Such an observation might lead you to conclude that shell was removed from the upper levels of the site as a result of disturbance and clearing operations pertaining to the modern landscape of the Mission grounds. Other observations might pertain to specific findings, such as Majolica ceramics, that generally provide an effective means by which to date portions of the structures excavated to specific colonial era developments].

v. **Conclusions:** Your conclusions should succinctly summarize the primary points, or themes, elaborated upon in your final report. A restatement of some of the most important observations, findings, or insights would be appropriate in this context. The conclusions should also serve to refocus attention on the value of having undertaken the project in the first place [**1 page**].

3. **Requirements:** Please bear in mind that the final project report should not consist of cut and paste versions of your Wireless Journals. While you may use your wireless journals and field notes to summarize or prepare observations, findings, or a summary of methods employed, the project report itself should not consist of cut and paste text from other posted sources.

That content noted is basic to any social science project report format. One other example is provided at <http://archaeology.csumb.edu/Guidelines/FormatGuides/TermPaperFormat.pdf>.

The original, more complicated, format for the project report is located at: <http://archaeology.csumb.edu/Guidelines/FormatGuides/LabCheckGuide.pdf>. Please note that this link provides a reminder that your report will require a cover page that includes a Title, Name, Date, etc. The title page should include that basic information required in most any other project paper.