Sanisera Archaeology Institute for International Field Schools

Course 061: Archaeological Tour in Egypt: Giza, Saqqara, Luxor and a Nile Cruise to Aswan

Course Syllabus · 2027 season

Course ID	SAI 061 · Archaeological Tour in Egypt
Country / Location	Egypt · Cairo, Giza, Saqqara, Dahshur, Dendera, Abydos, Luxor, Edfu, Kom Ombo, Aswan and Philae
Dates	May to October 2027 (6 sessions of 10 days)
Duration	10 days per session
Instructional hours	84 hours: 64 contact hours (8 days x 8 h of guided study visits, on-site lectures and seminars) + 20 hours of supervised independent study (course paper, written after the trip)
Recommended credit equivalence	4 semester credits (reference scale: about 20 instructional hours per semester credit; 80 h = 4, 100 h = 5, 120 h = 6). Credit is awarded by the student's home institution; see section 12.
Level / Prerequisites	Introductory. No previous knowledge required.
Language of instruction	English
Maximum enrolment	15 students per session
Tuition	from USD 3,400 per session (see section 14)
Instructors	Fernando Contreras Rodrigo (Course Director); José Luis López Delgado (Egypt specialist and lecturer on site)
Contact	info@archaeology.institute · www.archaeology.institute · Ciutadella de Menorca, Balearic Islands, Spain

1. Program description

A ten-day field course on the archaeology of Egypt, conceived as a travelling seminar rather than a tourist trip. The group visits the principal monuments of Egyptian civilisation and several rarely visited sites of the Nile Valley, accompanied throughout by an expert in Egyptian archaeology who explains each site from the point of view of research: how it was excavated, what is known and what is still under discussion.

The route follows the historical sequence of Egypt from north to south: Giza, the Grand Egyptian Museum and the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir; Saqqara and Dahshur; Dendera and Abydos; Thebes (Karnak, Luxor, Valley of the Kings, Deir el-Bahari); and a four-night Nile cruise from Luxor to Aswan with stops at Edfu, Kom Ombo and Philae.

2. Course objectives

- To give students first-hand knowledge of the fundamental archaeological sites of Egypt.
- To teach students to read a monument as an archaeologist: building phases, iconographic programmes, techniques, funerary contexts.
- To relate each site to its period, from the Early Dynastic to Christian Egypt.
- To explain how archaeological research and the history of Egyptology built current knowledge.

3. Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the evolution of the pyramid from the mastaba to Giza and the organisation of an Old Kingdom royal funerary complex.
- Read the plan of an Egyptian temple and distinguish New Kingdom from Ptolemaic architecture.

- Describe the structure and decoration of a New Kingdom royal tomb.
- Recognise royal cartouches, titularies and offering formulae on monuments.
- Distinguish periods and styles of relief, painting and statuary in situ.
- Place the main sites in the chronology of Egypt and discuss current research debates.
- Present a monument or site orally with appropriate archaeological language.
- Write a short research paper on a topic of Egyptian archaeology, using academic sources and correct citation.

4. Course format and instructional hours

Days 2 to 9 are devoted entirely to guided study visits to sites, temples and museums (approximately eight hours per day, with on-site lectures and discussion), which gives 64 contact hours. Day 1 is the arrival day and Day 10 the departure day. After the trip, each student writes a course paper on a topic of Egyptian archaeology agreed with the instructor before Day 9 (2,500-3,500 words plus bibliography), equivalent to 20 hours of supervised independent study and due 30 days after the end of the session. Total: 84 instructional hours.

Total instructional hours: 84 hours. This figure appears on the Certificate of Completion and on the Student Evaluation Report.

5. Course schedule

Indicative daily schedule; the order of activities may change according to weather, site conditions and research needs.

Day	Activities
Day 1	Arrival in Cairo on your own; reception at the hotel. No scheduled activity.
Days 2-3	Cairo and surroundings: pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx; Grand Egyptian Museum; Saqqara (step pyramid, mastabas, Serapeum) and Dahshur (Bent and Red pyramids); Egyptian Museum, Tahrir.
Days 4-5	Flight to Luxor. Dendera and Abydos; Karnak and Luxor temples; west bank: Valley of the Kings, Deir el-Bahari, Colossi of Memnon. Boarding the cruise.
Days 6-8	Nile cruise Luxor-Aswan: Edfu, Kom Ombo, First Cataract, felucca, Philae. Evening seminars on board. Return flight to Cairo.
Day 9	Cairo: final visits; student presentations; assessment and certificates. Last night at the hotel.
Day 10	Breakfast and departure for the airport.
After the trip	Course paper (20 hours of independent study): research and writing on the agreed topic of Egyptian archaeology; submission by e-mail within 30 days of the end of the session. The final grade and the Certificate of Completion are issued within 15 days of submission.

6. Assessment and grading

Students complete four assignments in addition to the daily supervised activities: a daily journal, the course's record sheets, a final presentation and a course paper. The final grade is calculated as follows:

Component	Weight	Description
Participation and conduct during the visits	30 %	Daily assessment by the instructors of attention, questions, contribution to the on-site discussions and compliance with the Code of Conduct.
Daily journal	15 %	A written entry for every study day describing the sites visited, the archaeological questions discussed and the student's own observations.
Monument record sheets	15 %	Monument record sheets (one per site: plan sketch, phases, iconography, observations), assessed for accuracy, terminology and legibility.
Final presentation	10 %	A 10-minute presentation on Day 9 on a monument or site of the itinerary, followed by questions.

Component	Weight	Description
Course paper	30 %	A research paper of 2,500-3,500 words plus bibliography on a topic of Egyptian archaeology agreed with the instructor before Day 9, written after the trip and submitted within 30 days of the end of the session. Assessed for the use of academic sources, argument, accuracy and citation.

Grading scale

Letter grade	Percentage
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	below 60

Grades are recorded as a percentage and as a letter grade on the US scale above. Students who request it receive a Student Evaluation Report signed by the Course Director, with the breakdown of the grade, the attendance record and the instructional hours completed, for submission to their home institution. The Institute does not itself award academic credit.

7. Attendance policy

Attendance at all scheduled instructional activities is compulsory. A minimum attendance of 85 % of the instructional hours is required to pass the course and to receive the Certificate of Completion. Absences for documented illness or injury are excused but still count towards the 85 % threshold; unexcused absences lower the participation grade. Students who leave the course early receive a certificate stating only the hours actually completed.

8. Prerequisites and who should apply

None. Minimum age 18. Valid passport (six months) and Egyptian entry visa (e-visa or on arrival).

9. Instructors

Fernando Contreras Rodrigo — Course Director. Licenciatura in History, specialisation in Classical Archaeology (Autonomous University of Barcelona). Five-year degree officially recognised in Spain at Master's level (MECES 3). Director of the Sanisera Archaeology Institute; since 1993 he has directed research, conservation and heritage-management projects in Spain, Italy and the United Arab Emirates, and since 2015 annual excavation and restoration missions for the Government of Dubai. Author of more than thirty publications and reports.

José Luis López Delgado — Egypt specialist and lecturer on site. Specialist guide in Egypt with more than forty tours led across the country; specialisation in Roman numismatics and long-standing collaborator and co-author of the Institute's publications on the Roman city of Sanisera.

10. Equipment and what to bring

- Light clothing, hat, sunscreen, comfortable walking shoes, water bottle.
- Notebook for the daily journal; camera.

- Passport, visa, travel insurance (basic insurance included).

11. Travel and meeting point

Fly to Cairo (CAI) on Day 1; the hotel address is sent after registration. Departure from Cairo on Day 10.

12. Academic credit and transcript

The Sanisera Archaeology Institute is an independent, non-profit institution and does not award academic credit directly. Students who wish to receive credit for this course should obtain pre-approval from their department or study-abroad office before the course begins, using this syllabus. On completion, the Institute issues a Certificate of Completion stating the course, dates, instructional hours and final grade, and, on request, a detailed Student Evaluation Report. Students from universities in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia have regularly obtained credit for Sanisera courses in this way: students from more than 40 universities have done so (see the list on the Institute's website). The Institute is currently working towards a School of Record agreement with a US accredited institution for the issue of official transcripts.

13. Code of conduct and safety

All students and staff are bound by the Institute's Code of Conduct and Anti-Harassment Policy, available on the website, which applies at the site, in the laboratory, in the accommodation and during free time. A safety briefing is given on the first day; students may decline any activity they consider unsafe. Serious breaches of the Code may lead to removal from the course without refund. Accident insurance at the site is included; students are responsible for their own health and travel insurance.

14. Dates, tuition and what is included

Session	Dates 2027	Tuition (USD)
1	24 May - 2 June	$ 3,400
2	14-23 June	$ 3,400
3	19-28 July	$ 3,400
4	28 July - 6 August	$ 3,400
5	13-22 September	$ 3,400
6	4-13 October	$ 3,400

Tuition includes

- Tuition and teaching.
- Accommodation in four- and five-star hotels in Cairo (double/triple rooms, breakfast).
- Four nights of Nile cruise, full board.
- All meals of the programme.
- Internal flights Cairo-Luxor and Aswan-Cairo; all transfers.
- Entrance tickets to sites, temples and museums (including the interior of three pyramids and the GEM).
- English-speaking guide and expert in Egyptian archaeology.
- Basic travel insurance.
- Certificate of completion and, on request, the Student Evaluation Report.

Not included

- Airfare to/from Cairo.
- Egyptian entry visa (approx. USD 30).
- Drinks, tips, personal extras, optional cancellation insurance.

Payment. A deposit of USD 450, which is part of the tuition and is deducted from the total, reserves the place and is due within five days of admission; the balance is due 60 days before the session begins. Payment plans are available on request. The Institute does not offer scholarships or discounts.

Refund policy. If the student cancels, only the USD 450 deposit is refunded, and only if the refund is requested within 20 days of paying it; the balance is not refundable, but everything paid can be converted into credit for any course in the current year or the following season. Everything paid is refunded in full if the Institute cancels the session or if the student's Schengen visa is refused (official refusal document required). Places are not transferable. Full text: Terms and Conditions of Payment on the website.

15. Recommended readings

Recommended, not required. Readings are available in the Institute's library during the course.

- Shaw, I. (ed.) (2000). The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Baines, J. & Málek, J. (2000). Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt. Rev. ed. New York: Facts on File.
- Lehner, M. (1997). The Complete Pyramids. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Wilkinson, R. H. (2000). The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Reeves, N. & Wilkinson, R. H. (1996). The Complete Valley of the Kings. London: Thames & Hudson.

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