Example Paper Topics.

1. How does radiocarbon (\(^{14}\text{C}\)) dating work and what are the potential problems with this absolute dating technique? Illustrate the use of radiocarbon dating with an archaeological case study.

2. What is bone? Answer this question from a materials science perspective and suggest how the material properties of bone influence its preservation in the archaeological record?

3. How do archaeologists reconstruct trade networks in prehistory? What types of archaeological evidence are most appropriate for identifying trade? Use an archaeological case study to illustrate.

4. Equifinality refers to the situation where a given empirical pattern may be generated independently by more than one causal process. In practice, this means that some archaeological phenomena are equally well explained by different (and sometimes contradictory models). Identify a case of equifinality in the archaeological record and critically analyze the evidence in support of each of the competing explanatory models.

5. Survey the variety of theoretical approaches described as “post-processual” archaeology and offer a critical review.