

Introduction to Forensic Anthropology

Rutgers University - Fall 2019 - Anthropology 070:218 - 3 credits

Instructor: Evan Bird, M.A.

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Office Hours: By appointment. (Before or after class)

Class Times: Wednesdays – 5:35-8:35pm (09/04/18-12/11/18)

BIO-206, Douglass Campus

Required Text:

Christensen A.M., Passalacqua, N.V., Bartelink, E.J. (2014) *Forensic Anthropology: Current Methods and Practice*. Elsevier - Academic Press

Supplementary reading material will be provided throughout semester where relevant.

Course Description and Objectives:

Forensic Anthropology is the application of Biological/Physical Anthropology techniques, methods, and theory to the medico-legal (forensic) setting. This field utilizes insights into the evolutionary history and adaptability of our species, primarily through skeletal biology, to assist law enforcement in various contexts including the establishment of positive identifications for human remains and the analysis of skeletal trauma in cases of suspicious and unnatural death. Students will be introduced to the techniques and underlying theory used by anthropologists to recover skeletal remains, reconstruct a biological profile from the skeleton, interpret skeletal trauma, and assist in the identification process as well as developing an introductory understanding of the forensic/medicolegal setting applied in this region of the country [EA2 see <http://anthro.rutgers.edu/undergrad-program/departement-learning-goals>]. Students will also gain practice and instruction on how to prepare research-based professional forensic reports and examination analyses [EA3 & EA4].

Course prerequisites: None.

Course Grading:

Grades for this course will be based on quizzes, midterm and final examinations, and a written project over the semester which will be described prior to assignment. Quizzes will be short, based on the immediately preceding material, and will only have objective questions. Exams are cumulative and will have both objective (i.e., multiple choice) and short essay questions. **No make-up exams will be given, except under extraordinary and documented circumstances.** Breakdown of the final course grade is as follows:

Quiz #1	10%
Quiz #2	10%
Quiz #3	10%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Semester Assessment Project	20%

Schedule:

09/04/18	Introduction – Practice in the Past and Present	Chs. 1 & 2
09/11/18	Osteology & Odontology	Chs. 2 & 3
09/18/18	Skeletal Biology & Forensic Significance	Chs. 2, 3, & 4
09/25/18	Quiz #1 Recovery and Examination	Chs. 6 & 7
10/02/18	Ancestry & “Race”	Ch. 9
10/09/18	Living Stature & Age at Death	Chs. 10 & 11
10/16/18	Biological Sex	Ch. 8
10/23/18	Midterm Exam	
10/30/18	Decomposition, Postmortem Interval, & Taphonomy	Ch. 5
11/06/18	Quiz #2 Forensic Identification and Lab Analysis	Ch. 14
11/13/18	Trauma: Mechanics, Blunt Force & Sharp Force	Ch. 13
11/20/18	No Class (Friday Classes)	
11/27/18	Quiz #3 Trauma: Ballistic, Non-Accidental Injuries in Infants, & Thermal Damage	Ch. 13
12/04/18	Forensic Pathology and the NJ Medical Examiner System. Guest Lecture	
12/11/18	Disease and Skeletal Idiosyncrasy	Chs. 12 & 15
TBD	Final Exam (Skeletal Assessment Assg. Due)	

Skeletal Assessment Project:

This assignment is designed to familiarize students with conducting a thorough examination and analysis of a skeletal assemblage to provide pertinent forensic information including biological

profile and idiosyncratic assessment. Students will be expected to cite specific characteristics from published research to describe pertinent information which may be noted from specific skeletal elements. Students will prepare an analysis in the style and format of a professional forensic report of their findings, as will be discussed during the semester. Additional details will be provided prior to assignment of specific skeletal elements.

COURSE POLICIES:

Academic Integrity

All students must strictly adhere to the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy, which identifies and defines violations including cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and denying others access to information or material. Full definitions of each of these violations, as well as the consequences of violating the Academic Integrity Policy, are available as part of the student handbook. For details see: <http://ctaar.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html#Integrity>. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Further, departmental learning goals can be reviewed at: <https://anthro.rutgers.edu/academics/undergraduate/undergraduate-learning-goals>

Attendance

You are required to attend all class meetings (lecture and recitation). If you expect to miss one or two lectures or one recitation section, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. If you expect to miss more than two lectures or more than one recitation section, you must see the Dean of Students who will verify any special circumstances. If you have reported two or more absences and expect another, use the Absence Reporting System and also make an appointment with the Dean of Students. Please note that notification of the absence must be prior to the absence and retroactive notifications are not acceptable.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. Full disability policies and procedures are at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>.

NOTE: This course will include material of a sensitive and at times graphic nature. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Absolutely no video or photographic recording permitted during lectures. There will be no exceptions.

Course lecture material will not be published online.