

Anthropology 3338G/001: Skeletal Biology



Instructor: Dr. Alexis Dolphin
Class Time: Thursday 1:30 to 4:30pm, SSC 2257
Office Hours: Mondays 11:00am – 12:00pm, SSC 3421
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Office hours/Lab time: Tuesdays 5:30-8:30pm, SSC 2257

Course Description:

The goal of this lab-intensive course is to explore the field of biological anthropology known as Osteology, or the study of human skeletal (and dental) remains. Students will learn standard osteological techniques for identifying individuals and making connections between them and the populations from which they are derived. The methodological skills learned in this course will prove essential to anyone aiming to pursue studies in biological anthropology, bioarchaeology or forensic anthropology.

This course will cover several topic areas including: 1) bone and tooth biology; 2) skeletal and dental growth/development; 3) data collection techniques; 4) estimations of identifying characteristics (e.g. age, sex, stature); and 5) an introduction to population based skeletal analyses (e.g. disease, diet and demography).

In order to build a thorough understanding of each of these topic areas several weeks of this course will be dedicated entirely to building students' familiarity with skeletal anatomy through hands-on work with remains during in-class lab periods. At the completion of this course students will be expected to have mastered techniques for conducting, interpreting, and reporting on osteological data.

Required Text:

White, TD, Black, MT, and Folkens, PA. (2011) Human Osteology (3rd edition). NY: Academic Press

Additional reference materials will be placed on 3-hour reserve at Weldon Library (see list on WebCt).

Course Requirements:

15%	Bell-ringer #1 (January 26 th)
15%	Bell-ringer #2 (February 9 th)
15%	Bell-ringer #3 (March 1 st)
15%	Bell-ringer #4 (March 22 nd)
20%	Essay (April 5 th)
20%	Final Exam

Prerequisites:

Anthropology 2226.

Bell-Ringers (15% each):

There will be four bell-ringers given in this course. The bell-ringer is a timed test meant to assess the practical knowledge gained during the preceding weeks of lectures and labs. The test will consist of 30-40 stations at which students will be asked to identify any of the following: 1) skeletal elements or teeth; 2) landmarks on bones and teeth; 3) side of the body they are derived from; 4) sex and/or age-at-death of the individuals; or similar aspects of the remains derived from material examined throughout the course. This test is meant to assess the student's retention of the materials and methods discussed in previous lectures and labs. Mastering skeletal and dental anatomy is key to your success in the course. Osteology is about developing a tactile art as much as it is about memorization of anatomical features and biological processes. Thus, although your attendance during extra lab time on Tuesday evenings is not mandatory, it is highly recommended for anyone who hopes to do well in this class. Students who fail to attend a bell-ringer will not be allowed to make it up at a later date unless the student has made prior arrangements with the instructor or provides proof of illness. There are absolutely no exceptions (so please don't ask).

Final Paper (20%)

Your 15-page (single-spaced, 12 font, New Times Roman, 1" margin, paginated, title page) final paper will be on a topic of your own choosing. This paper is meant to provide students with an opportunity to dive into a research question/area in greater detail than course discussion/lab time allows. Details regarding the paper will be discussed early in the semester, but please keep in mind that I will expect all students to approve their topic with me by March 1st. You will need a considerable amount of time to prepare adequately for writing these papers as, given that this is a 3000-level course, I will expect all students to know the terminology, methodology, theory, and literature regarding their topic very well. A digital version of each paper must be submitted to Turnitin.com by 4pm on April 5th, 2012. If you would like to also receive in-depth comments on your paper (not just a grade) please indicate this to me by handing-in a hardcopy in class on Thursday April 5th. Students must follow the AJPA style guide.

Final Exam (20%)

There will be one final exam (to be scheduled by the Registrar (worth 20% of final grade) for this course. The content of these exams will be derived primarily from lectures, lab time and the mandatory course readings. The format of exams may include multiple choice, short answer and short essay questions. Students who fail to attend an examination will not be allowed to write a make-up exam (please refer to Academic Policies/Regulations in the UWO Academic Calendar) unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. No electronic devices will be allowed at the exam.

WebCT

This course is supplemented by a WebCT component. It will contain basic information about the class as well as a series of icons which will connect you to course content such as this syllabus, additional reference materials, lectures, a discussion board, announcements, grades etc.

WebCT content is meant to supplement your course experience and not to be used in lieu of doing assigned readings or attending lectures. Students who do not complete readings and attend lectures/lab times should not expect to do well in this course.

A Brief Word on Plagiarism and Your Final Paper

Students should remember that all course work must be written-up independently of their classmates, in their own words, and give credit where it is due using proper citations.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: \

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>

Deadlines and Accommodation:

Occasionally illness or other medical issues make it impossible to meet deadlines or to take exams as scheduled; in such cases adequate documentation must be submitted to Academic Counselling, according to the terms of the Senate policy regarding medical accommodation as specified at:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

You can read more about *Social Science Academic Counseling* at:

<http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/havingproblems.asp>

Providing such documentation is submitted, reasonable effort will be made to accommodate your situation. If such documentation is not provided, a penalty of **5% per day** will be imposed on late laboratory exercises; missed exams will be given a mark of zero. Work submitted **more than 1 week late will not be accepted** and will receive a grade of zero. Note that if you are late in handing in a laboratory exercise, it is your responsibility to ensure that I receive it. The only acceptable way to submit late work is via the wooden Drop Box on the wall to the left of the Anthropology Main Office. Work placed in the box is date stamped by the departmental assistants each day and your work will be secure until I am able to come in and pick it up. Please make sure that the work includes a title page.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Use of Electronic Devices (including laptops):

No electronic devices of any kind (including but not limited to cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, other MP3 players, voice recorders, etc.) will be allowed during tests and examinations. Laptops may only be used during lectures for note taking or other course-related purposes; cell phones, iPods, MP3 players and other such devices are not to be used during class. Voice recorders (digital or tape) are not allowed without express permission. Disruptive use of electronic devices during class or laboratory time may result in a request that you leave the classroom.

Course Outline:

Below is a list of topics to be discussed and of readings required for this course. Depending on class discussions and on any unforeseen events (e.g. snow days) the lectures may deviate slightly from this schedule, but all of the reading assignments will be fair game for the final exam nonetheless. All assigned readings are from **our textbook (*Human Osteology*, White et al. 2011)**.

Lecture	Topic	Bell Ringer	Readings
Jan 12	Introduction + Bone Biology and Growth		Ch. 1, 2 & 3
Jan 19	The Cranium		Ch. 4
Jan 26	The Dentition	X	Ch. 5
Feb 2	Vertebrae, Thorax, and Shoulder Girdle	X	Ch. 6, 7 & 8
Feb 9	The Appendicular Skeleton		Ch. 9, 10, 12 & 13
Feb 16	The Pelvis	X	Ch. 11
Feb 23	READING WEEK		
Mar 1	Estimating Sex and Age-at-Death		Ch. 18
Mar 8	Metric and Non-Metric Variation	X	Ch. 18 & 21
Mar 15	Paleopathology (disease)		Ch. 19
Mar 22	Paleopathology (activity) and Taphonomy		Ch. 19 & 20
Mar 29	Molecular Osteology, Paleodiet, and Paleodemography		Ch. 21 & 22
Apr 5	Field Excavation and Ethics		Ch. 15 & 17 Final Paper due

NOTE:

Bell-ringers will start immediately at the beginning of class, followed by a lecture/lab time related to the new topic for that week