ANTHROPOLOGY 2238B-001:
READING LIFE AND DEATH THROUGH THE HUMAN BODY
Course value: 0.5 credit
January – April 2018

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Instructor: Dr. Andrea Waters-Rist (awaters8@uwo.ca)
Office: SSC 3427
Office hours: Wednesdays, 3:00-5:00 pm, or by appointment

Class time: Wednesdays, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm
Class location: B&GS 0153

Teaching Assistant: Amanda James (ajames94@uwo.ca)
Office: SSC 3407
Office hours: Refer to course site in Owl.

Prerequisites: Any first-year Social Science, Health Science, or Science course.
Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean
to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This
decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are
dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description: While alive our bodily tissues store an enormous amount of information.
These clues can be used to tell a lot about a person’s life and death. This information is explored in
three contexts: Living Individuals, Recently Deceased Individuals (focus on forensic applications),
and Long-Ago Deceased Individuals (focus on archaeological applications).

Scope of the course:
This course explores the enormous amount of information that becomes stored in our bodily
tissues throughout life; information that can then be used to tell a lot about a person’s life, and in
some cases, their death. Did you know your teeth may contain a record of diseases you
experienced as a child? Or that the sport you play may cause distinctive changes to your bones?
Or that chemical markers contained in all of our body tissues can reveal if and where you’ve
moved during your life? DNA further contains a remarkable amount of information about your
sex, genetic diseases, and biological ancestry. Put this together and we can learn a significant
amount about a person, whether alive or dead, useful in a range of disciplines such as forensics, archaeology and anthropology, sociology, psychology, history, and the medical sciences.

In order to appeal to all these disciplines this course will explore the information contained in the human body in three contexts: Living Individuals, Recently Deceased Individuals, with a focus on forensic applications, and Long-Ago Deceased Individuals, with a focus on archaeological applications. By beginning with living individuals, and moving backwards in time to the fossilized remains of our species, students will see how the loss of various tissues impacts the amount of information we are able to recover. Yet, even with just a lone tooth or small bone fragment, even without DNA, what we can discern is a testament to decades of rigorous, multidisciplinary, and innovative research that should inspire students to ask questions and develop research that pushes the boundaries of knowledge within their own discipline.

Whether you are training to become a biological anthropologist, sociologist, medical clinician, forensic specialist, historian, or biochemist, this course will teach you to look at the body as a valuable source of information in variety of ways.

**Learning Outcomes:**
On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Read, summarize and critically evaluate literature from academic and popular sources.
2. Understand the linkages between modern, forensic, and archaeological research about the human body.
3. Learn basic human anatomy and apply this knowledge in a variety of contexts.
4. Understand the applications of different methodological techniques for human identification, individuation, and behaviour reconstruction.
5. Understand the intertwined existence of biology and culture and the value of cross-disciplinary contributions from anthropology, biology, archaeology, sociology, genetics, geology, pathology, kinesiology, and chemistry in understanding the modern or deceased human.

**Grading Breakdown:**
1) Human Anatomy, Biology, and Growth Quiz: 10%
2) Mid-Term Exam: 30%
3) Forensic Decomposition, Postmortem Interval, Cause of Death Quiz: 10%
4) Final Exam: 50%
Student evaluation for this course will be based on two in-class quizzes and two exams. The quizzes will be multiple choice and short answer questions and each is worth 10% of your final grade. The quizzes will require memorization of the key systems and elements in human anatomy (quiz 1), and fundamental processes in forensic research (quiz 2). The midterm will be worth 30% of the course grade. The final exam will be worth 50% of the course grade. Both exams will be completely multiple choice. The mid-term exam will be based upon course content from weeks 1-5. The final exam will be based upon course content from weeks 7 through 13 only, and thus is non-cumulative, however an understanding of the content from weeks 1-5 will be necessary to fully comprehend the content from weeks 7-13.
**Required readings:**
Readings are listed in the weekly schedule below. Students can access all the readings via the OWL system. A few of the book chapters are also available as a downloadable online book via Western libraries.

**University Policies and Information:**
All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding **accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation**. These policies are outlined, with links to the full policies, at:
[http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/course_information/academic_policies.html](http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/course_information/academic_policies.html)

**Course Policies:**

**Use of Electronic Devices:**
Laptops may be used during lectures for note taking or other course-related purposes. Voice recorders are not allowed without express permission. Cell-phones, iPods, MP3 players and other such devices are not permitted to be used during class. Disruptive use of electronic devices during lecture time may result in instruction to leave the classroom. No electronic devices of any kind (including laptops) are allowed during tests and examinations.

**Missed Tests:**
Refer to the link above for policies regarding the make-up of missed quizzes or exams. There will be no exceptions to those policies, and make-up tests/exams will only be offered once the Academic Counselling Office has approved special accommodation.

**OWL Portal:**
This course is supplemented by the OWL leaning management system. On the course site you will find links to course content (including readings), course announcements, lecture slides, and supplementary material.

**Classroom Behaviour:**
Classroom discussion must remain respectful. Students being disrespectful will be asked to leave for the remainder of the class. Repeated disrespectful behaviour will result in the notification to and possible involvement of the Dean of the student’s Home Faculty. Students who do not complete readings and attend all lectures should not expect to do well in this course.

In this class you will read about and see images and videos of dead bodies, in various states of decay. This will only be done for learning purposes, and requires all of us to behave maturely and respectfully. If the idea of seeing images and videos of dead bodies upsets you, this may not be the right course for you. If at any time an image or video is shown that disturbs or upsets you, feel free to look away from the screen and occupy yourself with something else until you feel well enough to reengage with the lecture. You are also free to step out of the room for however long you need.
### Weekly Schedule

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<th>Week</th>
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<td>Week 6: Feb. 14</td>
<td>Midterm Exam (30% of final grade; entire class)</td>
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<td>READING WEEK</td>
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| Week 7: Feb. 28 | The Recently Deceased | - The Postmortem Interval (PMI)  
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| Week 8: Mar. 7 | The Recently Deceased | - Cause and Manner of Death  
- Basics of Bone Trauma  
2. Chapter 1 (Advancing Forensic Taphonomy: Purpose, Theory, and Process, by Sorg and Haglund) in “Advances in Forensic Taphonomy: Method, Theory, and Archaeological Perspectives”, edited by Haglund, WD and Sorg, MH. |
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| Week 9: Mar. 14 | The Recently Deceased | - Estimation of Sex and Age-at-Death  
- Forensic Dentistry | Forensic Decomp., PMI, & Cause of Death Quiz (at start of class; 10% of final mark) | 1. Chapter 3 (Skeletal Age Estimation) in “The Human Skeleton in Forensic Medicine”, 3rd ed., 2013, edited by İşcan and Steyn.  
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| Week 10: Mar. 21 | The Recently Deceased and Archaeological Individual | - Modern and Ancient DNA  
2. Chapter 4 (Genetics, Geography, and Human Variation) in “Human Biology: An Evolutionary and Biocultural Perspective”, 2nd ed., 2012, edited by Stinson, Bogin, O’Rourke.  
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<td>Week 12: Apr. 4</td>
<td>The Archaeological Individual</td>
<td>- Stable Isotopes to Reconstruct Birthplace, Migration and Mobility - Guest lecture by A. James</td>
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3. TBA (a chapter from the book “Resurrecting Pompeii” by Estelle Lazer) |
| Week 13: Apr. 11 | The Archaeological Individual | - Methods to Reconstruct Activity Patterns (long bone shape; muscle attachments; pathological lesions) | -- |

**Final Exam (worth 50% of final grade)** to be scheduled by the Registrar's office in the April exam period

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**General University Policies:**
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**Mental Wellbeing:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.