

# Skeleton Keys: Introduction to Forensic Anthropology

## ANT 3520 – Spring 2018

**Instructor: Raphaela Meloro**

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Office hours: Online Thursday: 3:00 pm – 3:50 p.m.

Online Friday 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Also by appointment.

**TAs:**

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Office Hours:

### **Course Objectives:**

This course provides an introduction to the field of forensic anthropology. Forensic anthropology is an applied area of biological anthropology that focuses on the identification of human skeletal remains in a medicolegal context. This course will introduce you to basic terms and principles of forensic anthropology, focus on concepts and their applications, and present case histories. This is not intended to be a “how-to” course but a general overview of the discipline. Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Define the field of forensic anthropology and its purview
- Have a general understanding of human osteology
- Understand the basic concepts underlying determination of the biological profile, including sex, age, ancestry, and stature
- Describe different types of skeletal trauma, and differentiate between antemortem and postmortem trauma

**\*\*\*Some lectures will include disturbing and graphic images. Consider your reaction to this material before taking this course. You will be responsible for all course material.\*\*\***

### **Course Materials:**

**Required:** Warren MW et al. 2011 Bare Bones: A Survey of Forensic Anthropology. 2nd edition. Kendall-Hunt Publishing.

Additional readings may be provided by the instructor and posted on Canvas.

### **Course Mechanics:**

Because this is an online class, students are expected to be self-motivated. During the fifteen week period the class is in session there will be sixteen modules with one a week, with the exception of week one. All assignments for the modules must be completed during the five day period they are assigned and will be due in full each Friday at 11:59p.m. EST. **DON'T wait till the last minute to complete the assignments.**

The instructions and materials needed for each assignment can be found under the relevant module. Please make sure you read the syllabus and familiarize yourself with Canvas. Students are responsible for all the material in each module and need to view all links posted on the course's website (e.g., lecture videos, films, articles). All of the material is fair game when it comes to quizzes, discussions and activities.

### **Grade Distribution:**

Final grades will be calculated as a percentage of the total available points as follows:

A 93% - 100%    B- 80% - 82%    D+ 67% - 69%

A- 90% - 92%    C+ 77% - 79%    D 63% - 66%

B+ 87% - 89%    C 73% - 76%    D- 60% - 62%

B 83% - 86%    C- 70% - 72%    E 59% or less

Grades ending in a fraction of a percentage point will be rounded to the nearest whole number (ex. a grade of 89.6 becomes a 90.0). Should you have questions, please feel free to consult the University of Florida's current grading policies and procedures at the following website:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### **Assignments:**

Assignments must be turned in by **11:59 p.m. EST on Fridays** for full credit. All assignment due dates are available both in this syllabus and on canvas.

There is one quiz for each of the sixteen modules, plus a syllabus quiz. Each module quiz is multiple choice and worth 10 points while the syllabus quiz is worth 20 points (T = 180 pts). The quizzes make up **45%** of your grade.

Students will also need to complete fourteen online activities. This averages about one a week. The activities range from 5 to 10 points and are approximately **30%** of the total grade (T = 120 pts).

There will be 6 discussion topics throughout the semester. Student must post a substantive original comment, worth 4 points, to the discussion by **Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.** They must then make two substantive responses, worth 3 points each, to other individual's comments by **Friday at 11:59 p.m.** Participation in these discussions is approximately **15%** of the final grade (T = 60 pts).

There will be a five page final paper where each student will synthesize three areas of Forensic Anthropology. The paper is worth 40 points and is **10%** of the final grade. Additional instructions will be provided on Canvas.

There may be opportunities for extra credit at the discretion of the instructor.

**Online Attendance and Late Policy:**

For the discussion topics, the original Discussion post is due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. EST. Two points will be deducted if a post is late, and another two points if it is over 24 hours late. All other assignments for a given week must be submitted by the Friday deadline. No partial credit will be given for late quizzes, activities, or papers unless the student has an excused absence. Only students with DOCUMENTED excused absences may turn in work after the Friday deadline, including quizzes, discussions and activities. Students must notify the instructor at least 48 hours before the absence if possible.

If you are absent for a non-disability related reason and are unable to notify the instructor before the absence, you must provide the instructor with the necessary paperwork to have it excused within two weeks of your return to class. If an absence is unexcused you may not make up the work for any assignments missed.

**Academic Honesty:**

Cheating and plagiarism, intentional or otherwise, during the course will not be tolerated. Plagiarism includes copying text or other material from any source without proper attribution. Please use your own words on all assignments, and use proper citations if you are presenting someone else's ideas. Students found cheating will receive a score of zero (0) points for the assignment. Disciplinary action will follow university policy as outlined by the Dean of Students. If you are not sure if something is plagiarism please ask!

See <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php> for more information on student academic honesty, rights, responsibilities, and behavior consequences.

**Accommodations:**

If you have a documented disability for which you need accommodations please provide me with the letter from the Disability Resource Center within the first week of class. I encourage you to meet with me or email me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations. If you have a documented disability of any kind you should make arrangements with the Disability Resource Center. This is located at 0001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall) on the UF campus. The Disability Resource Center can also be contacted by telephone at 352-392-8565 or via email at [accessuf@dso.ufl.edu](mailto:accessuf@dso.ufl.edu).

**Miscellaneous:**

If you are experiencing personal problems that are interfering with your studies, you are encouraged to take advantage of the available university resources:

UF Counseling and Wellness Center: 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575

Student Mental Health: Student Health Care Center, (352) 392-1171

Sexual Assault Recovery Services: Student Health Care Center, (352) 392-1161

Thank you to Amanda, Katie, and Sam for letting me use their wording on this Syllabus.

Week	Topic	What to Read	What to Watch	Due
<b>Introduction to Canvas</b>				
Week 1: Jan 8 – Jan 12	Introduction and Ground Rules: what to expect from an online course; syllabus review; course policies	Syllabus “Start Here” module	Canvas Overview Video	
<b>Module 1: The History of Forensic Science</b>				
Week 1: Jan 8 – Jan 12	What is Forensic Anthropology?	Chapter 2 of Bare Bones	Lecture: What is Forensic Anthropology	Discussion 1
Week 1: Jan 8 – Jan 12	History of Forensic Anthropology at UF (and beyond!)	Chapter 2	Lecture: History of Forensic Anthropology at UF	Mod 1 Quiz
<b>Module 2: The medicolegal system</b>				
Week 1: Jan 8 – Jan 12	Medicolegal Aspects of Death	Chapter 1	Lecture: Medicolegal Aspects of Death	Mod 2 Quiz Activity 1: Medicolegal matching
<b>Module 3: Forensic Anthropology in the Field</b>				
Week 2: Jan 15 – Jan 19	Recovery of Human Remains I: Site Location and Site Survey	articles on CSI effect (online) Chapter 3,	Lecture: Recovery of Human Remains I	Discussion 2 Syllabus Quiz
Week 2: Jan 15 – Jan 19	Recovery of Human Remains II: Mapping, Excavation, and Documentation.	Chapter 3	Lecture: Recovery of Human Remains II	Mod 3 quiz Activity 2: Recovery
<b>Module 4: Forensic anthropology in the laboratory</b>				
Week 3: Jan 22 – Jan 26	Processing Remains into Evidence	Chapter 3	Lecture: Processing Remains into Evidence	Mod 4: quiz
Week 3: Jan 22 – Jan 26	Laboratory Protocols, Procedures, and Quality Assurance	Supplementary “Lab SOP” (online)	Lecture: Laboratory Protocols...	Activity 3: SOP Discussion Tree
<b>Module 5: Taphonomy – from biosphere to lithosphere</b>				
Week 4: Jan 29 – Feb 2	What Happens After Death? Part I	Chapter 4 Stock et al. 2017 article	Lecture: What Happens after death? Part 1	Mod 5 Quiz Discussion 3
Week 4: Jan 29 – Feb 2	What Happens After Death? Part II	Chapter 4 practice activity (online)	Lecture: What Happens After Death II	Activity 4: Taphonomy Matching exercise

<b>Module 6: Anatomy, osteology, measurement, and statistics</b>				
Week 5: Feb 5 – Feb 9	Skeletal Anatomy and Osteology	Chapter 5, practice activity (online)	Lecture: Skeletal Anatomy and Osteology	Mod 6 Quiz
Week 5: Feb 5 – Feb 9	Osteometry	Chapter 5	Lecture: Osteometry	Activity 5: Osteology Matching
<b>Module 7: Group Characteristics I: Biological sex</b>				
Week 6: Feb 12 – Feb 16	Sexual Dimorphism, Birth, and Locomotion	Chapter 6	Lecture: Sexual Dimorphism...	Mod 7 Quiz
Week 6: Feb 12 – Feb 16	Methods of Sex Discrimination	Chapter 6	Lecture: Methods of Sex Discrimination	Activity 6: Short Essay on Biological Sex
<b>Module 8: Group Characteristics II: Age-at-death</b>				
Week 7: Feb 19 – Feb 23	Estimating Age in Children	Chapter 8	Lecture: Estimating Age in Children	Mod 8 Quiz
Week 7: Feb 19 – Feb 23	Estimating Age in Adults	Chapter 8	Lecture: Estimating Age in Children	Activity 7: Age matching
Week 7: Feb 19 – Feb 23	Methods in age Estimation	Chapter 8	Lecture: Methods in Age Estimation	
<b>Module 9: Group Characteristics III: Stature</b>				
Week 8: Feb 26 – Mar 2	Living vs. Forensic Stature; Methods of Stature Estimation	Chapter 9, Ousley 1995 (online) Janz et al 1995 article	Lecture: Stature	Mod 9 Quiz Activity 8: Stature
<b>Module 10: Group Characteristics IV: "Race" ...fact or fiction?</b>				
Week 9: Mar 12 – Mar 16	Race fact or fiction	Chapter 7 PBS website, Sauer 1992 (online)	Lecture: "Race" Fact or Fiction?	Mod 10 Quiz
Week 9: Mar 12 – Mar 16	Clinal Variation and Population Affinities	Chapter 7	Lecture: Clinal Variation...	Activity 9: Sorting people
Week 9: Mar 12 – Mar 16	Determination of Ancestry: Do anthropologists cheat?	Chapter 7	Lecture: Determination of Ancestry	Discussion 4
<b>Module 11: Individual characteristics and personal identification</b>				
Week 10: Mar 19 – Mar 23	Individuating Skeletal Characteristics	Chapter 10	Lecture: Individuating Skeletal Characteristics	Mod 11 Quiz

Week 10: Mar 19 – Mar 23	Ante and Postmortem Radiographic Comparison	Chapter 10, practice activity (online)	Lecture: Antemortem and Postmortem...	Activity 10: Radiographic Comparison
Week 10: Mar 19 – Mar 23	Personal Identification in Action	Chapter 10	Video Finding Anastasia	
<b>Module 12: Forensic Art</b>				
Week 11: Mar 26 – Mar 30	Forensic Reconstructions: Art or science?	Chapter 11	Lecture: Forensic Reconstructions; Video forensic Files Saving Face	Mod 12 Quiz Activity 11: Art vs Science Discussion 5
<b>Module 13: Trauma</b>				
Week 12: Apr 2 – Apr 6	Trauma and Cause of Death: Ante- vs. Postmortem	Chapter 12	Lecture: Trauma and Cause of Death I	
Week 12: Apr 2 – Apr 6	Trauma and Cause of Death: Blunt- vs. Sharp-force	Chapter 12	Lecture: Trauma and Cause of Death II	Mod 13 Quiz
Week 12: Apr 2 – Apr 6	Trauma and Cause of Death: Ballistics and Gunshots	Chapter 12 Langley 2007 Article	Lecture: Trauma and Cause of Death III	Activity 12: Trauma Matching
<b>Module 14: Cremation</b>				
Week 13: Apr 9 – Apr 13	Burned Bodies and Cremated Remains	Chapter 13	Lecture: Burned Bodies and Cremated Remains	Mod 14 Quiz
Week 13: Apr 9 – Apr 13	What Survives Cremation?	Chapter 13	Lecture: What Survives Cremation?	Activity 13: Cremation artifacts Discussion 6
<b>Module 15: Mass fatalities</b>				
Week 14: Apr 16 – Apr 20	Mass Fatality Case History I: ValuJet Flight	Chapter 14	Lecture: Mass Fatality Case History I	
Week 14: Apr 16 – Apr 20	Mass Fatality Case History II: World Trade Center	Chapter 14	Lecture: Mass Fatality Case History II	Mod 15 Quiz
Week 14: Apr 16 – Apr 20	Mass Fatality Case History III: Hurricane Katrina	Chapter 14	Lecture: Mass Fatality Case History III	Activity 14: Mass Disaster response
<b>Module 16: Career paths and applications of forensic anthropology</b>				
Week 15: Apr 23 – Apr 25	Human Rights Missions	Chapter 15	Lecture: Human Rights Missions	Mod 16 Quiz
Week 15: Apr 23 – Apr 25	Military Identifications	Chapter 16	JPAC Video links	Final Paper Due