

ANTH 369: Introduction to Forensic Anthropology

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Winter Session 23

100% online course - 3 weeks

Course description

Science is our best tool for making sense of an uncertain world. No other approach can generate such reliable knowledge. As a bonus, it has a built-in method for detecting and correcting error. When science is applied in a legal context, it does more than satisfy our curiosity about the universe or help develop new technology. As scientists, we can use a variety of methods and tools developed over time to provide a professional, unbiased perspective on death and violence. This course will introduce you to the field of forensic anthropology, its main concepts, and their application in the broader medicolegal system. The material is based on up-to-date methods and directions in forensic anthropology, both within the United States and internationally. This course is based on scientific practice, not what is often portrayed in the media. Please note that some lectures may include graphic and disturbing images. You must consider your reaction **before** each module; you are responsible for **all** of the material covered.

Course objectives

- Identify and recognize methods of identification and evidence collection related to human remains and associated artifacts in the forensic context.
- Identify and distinguish reliable, practical, and scientific methods of forensic analysis.
- Apply knowledge of skeletal (and other) analyses to real world situations within the forensic context.
- Analyze cases and apply knowledge of material learned to actual materials.
- Synthesize multiple lines of evidence in the forensic context.
- Recognize ethical principles and codes of conduct in forensic anthropology and apply them to case studies.

Readings

All required readings will be posted on Blackboard. These will be either journal articles ('articles online') or from a case studies text ('Hard Evidence'). It is advised, but not required, that you purchase or rent the following text for assistance with course topics:

- *Forensic Anthropology: Current Methods and Practice*. 2014. Angi Christensen, Nicholas Passalacqua, and Eric Bartelink. (TEXT)
- Other readings will be provided in Blackboard.

Course structure: Blackboard

This is an online course which uses Blackboard, a web site that will be used as a closed interactive environment for the students and instructor of this class. Many necessary items will be available throughout the term on this site including: lectures, grades (broken down by item), video links, assignments, and quizzes. At designated times throughout the course, we will participate in a blend of self-paced activities using Blackboard. Activities consist of timed quizzes, exams, and assignments with a deadline and closing date/time. At a minimum, you will need the following software/hardware to participate in this course:

- Computer with an updated operating system (e.g. Windows, Mac, Linux)
- Updated Internet browsers (Apple Safari, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox). See Blackboard's Browser Checker page to see if your browser and operating system are compatible with Blackboard.
- DSL or Cable Internet connection or a connection speed no less than 6 Mbps.
- Media player such as, QuickTime or Windows Media Player.
- Adobe Reader or alternative PDF reader (free)
- Java plugin (free)
- Any other specialized software or basic software (e.g., Microsoft Office, Adobe Photoshop). SIUE students can download MS Office at no charge.

Technology capabilities

Students in an online course should be able to:

- Use a word processor, such as MS Word, to compose assignments and
- communicate with others in class
- Attach files to emails or course areas
- Navigate websites and course materials
- Reach out to tech support staff when issues arise and troubleshoot to resolve problems

Student responsibilities

By registering for this online course, you commit yourself to self-motivated study, participation in online course activities, and the submission of all assignments and activities on time. Furthermore, you commit to accessing the course website and checking your SIUE email at least once a day. You also commit to devoting at least as much time to this online course as to a comparable traditional class on campus. In other words, since this is a 3-credit hour course offered during a 3-week session, you commit to spend a several hours per week on this class. Lectures are recorded directly onto audio files within Powerpoint Shows. To access the audio for each slide, you will need to download the presentation, then open. Be sure you have access to the necessary software to do so. Some Chromebooks have difficulty with the audio. You must plan for this potential complication right away! Recorded lectures are approximately 40-50 minutes each.

Grad Item(s)	Points	Grade Scale (Points)
Assignments (x4)	25 points each=100 points	A= 378-420
Quizzes (x6)	20 points each=120 points	B= 336-377
Exams (x2)	100 points each=200 points	C= 294-335
Total	420 points	D= 252-293
		F= 0-251

Recorded Lectures

There will be numerous recorded lectures (26) you will need to view throughout the course. Links to these will be posted in the corresponding week. Most will be lectures recorded in PowerPoint with audio bits recorded. You are expected to take notes during the videos, as you will see this material on the quizzes and/or a writing assignment. Among these videos will be short videos of me in the lab, demonstrating things on skeletal materials. These latter videos are not required, but are very short in duration of time.

Quizzes

There will be 5 quizzes for the course. The purpose is to help you concentrate on the material presented in this class. Quizzes will be a mix of matching and multiple-choice questions. They will be online and available on Blackboard, under the corresponding week, with the topic listed. Although this is an online course, you should prepare for the quizzes in the same manner you would in a traditional-style class. Quizzes will be open throughout the duration of the course, but don't save them all for the end of the course. The quizzes are not timed, but you will need to finish in one attempt.

Assignments

There will be 4 assignments associated with lecture, videos, and perhaps individual research. These will give students an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, personal interpretation, and practical applications of the topics covered. Guidelines and links for each assignment will be posted on Blackboard. Assignments will be open the duration of the course. These assignments will include photos that you will need to interpret and discuss. Make sure you are thorough and thoughtful in your discussions.

Exams

There will be 2 non-cumulative exams for this course. The format for the exams will be mostly multiple-choice, with some fill in the blank questions. The exam will be administered in the same program as the quizzes. For the fill in the blank, spelling is critical, as the program will grade only a correctly spelled answer. Make sure you do not capitalize any of the fill in the blank answers! There is no date scheduled for the exam, but be sure you are prepared for it when you open it up. The exams are not timed, but you will need to finish in one attempt.

Academic and Other Student Services

As an enrolled SIUE student, you have a variety of support available to you, including:

- Lovejoy Library Resources
- Academic Success Sessions
- Tutoring Resource Center
- The Writing Center
- Academic Advising
- Financial Aid
- Campus Events
- Counseling Services

Student Accommodations

Students needing accommodations because of medical diagnosis or major life impairment will need to register with Accessible Campus Community & Equitable Student Support (ACCESS) and complete an intake process before accommodations will be given. Students who believe they have a diagnosis, but do not have documentation should contact ACCESS for assistance and/or appropriate referral. The ACCESS office is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1270. You can also reach the office by email at myaccess@siue.edu or by calling 618.650.3726. For more information on policies, procedures, or necessary forms, please visit the ACCESS website at www.siue.edu/access.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with university policies. University policy states: “Normally a student who plagiarizes shall receive a grade of F in the course in which the act occurs. The offense shall also be reported to the Provost” (see <http://www.siue.edu/policies/li6.shtml>). University policy discusses additional academic sanctions including suspension and expulsion from the University.

- **Cheating** in any capacity will not be tolerated in this course. Cheating will be punished to the maximum extent.
- **Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. It is defined in the Macmillan Dictionary as “the process of taking another person’s work, ideas, or words, and using them as if they were your own.” When paraphrasing from another source, at the very least the student should change the wording, sentence syntax, and order of ideas presented in the paper. Ideally, the student will integrate ideas from multiple sources while providing critical commentary on the topic in a way that clearly identifies whether words and ideas are those of the student or are from another source. I like technology, and I will run a check with your responses through a computer program.

*The course schedule below is a recommended schedule. The order is ideal, but you will need to decide when you watch the lectures, and how many you will watch each day.

Course Schedule

Topic	Readings	Graded Items
The medicolegal system	TEXT: Chapter 1 Video: Coroners and Medical Examiners	Assignment 1: Medicolegal system
Methods	TEXT: Chapter 3	Quiz 1: Medicolegal system and methods
Forensic relevance	TEXT: Chapter 4	
The human skeleton	TEXT: Chapter 2	Quiz 2: The human skeleton
Crime scene investigation and recovery	TEXT: Chapter 6 Recovery methods for cremated and comingled remains Scene investigation and recovery (online)	
Postmortem examinations		
Forensic anthropology exams	TEXT: Chapter 7	
Biological profile: estimating sex	TEXT: Chapter 8 Non-metric subadult sex estimation (article online)	Quiz 3: Crime scene and exams
Biological profile: estimating age	TEXT: Chapter 10	Assignment 2: Sex and age estimation
Biological profile: estimating stature	TEXT: Chapter 11 Revision of the Fully technique for estimating statures (article online)	
Biological profile: estimating ancestry	TEXT: Chapter 9 Cranial nonmetric variation and estimating ancestry (article online) Estimation of ancestry using dental morphological characteristics (online article)	Quiz 4: Biological profile
Intro to trauma	Trauma (online article)	Exam 1: Medicolegal system to biological profile

Blunt force trauma	TEXT: Chapter 13	
Sharp force trauma	TEXT: Chapter 13	
Projectile trauma	TEXT: Chapter 13	Assignment 3: Trauma and pathology
Pathology	TEXT: Chapter 12 On the Interpretation of Health From Skeletal Remains (online article)	Quiz 5: Trauma
Bone healing and repair		
Positive ID	TEXT: Chapter 14	
Forensic DNA	The Identification of the Romanov's (online article)	
Forensic odontology	Forensic odontology (articles online)	
Time since death		
Forensic taphonomy	TEXT: Chapter 5 Estimating the Timing of Long Bone Fractures (taphonomy) (online article) A Death in Paradise (online article)	
Forensic entomology		Quiz 6: Taphonomy, TSD, scavenging
Burial detection and remote sensing	The Use of Electromagnetic Induction in Locating Graves and Mapping Cemeteries (article online)	Assignment 4: Taphonomy and entomology
International investigations	TEXT: Chapter 15 Excavation and Study of Skeletal Remains from a World War I Mass Grave (article online)	
Ethics in forensic anthropology	Hard Evidence: An Incidental Finding	Exam 2: Trauma to ethics