

ANTH 3322 Topics in Anthropology: Forensic Anthropology

2023/24 Term 1

Lecture time: Wednesday 12:30 – 14:15 (6/9 – 29/11) UCA312

Tutorial time: Wednesday 17:30 – 18:15 (6/9 – 29/11) UCC206

Instructor: Chris Cheung (christina.cheung@cuhk.edu.hk)

TA: ??

Office hours: Mondays 15:00 – 16:00 NAH 322 (CC);

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Textbook: Byers, SN (2017) Introduction to Forensic Anthropology. Routledge.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cuhk-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4694526>

Course description: Interest in the field of forensic anthropology has been heightened in the last decade through the success of forensic-themed television shows and popular novels. This course will introduce students to the field of forensic anthropology – a scientific discipline that involves the application of methods from biological anthropology and archaeology to the identification, recovery, and analysis of skeletal remains from crime scenes, mass disasters, and unexplained death. Through lectures and in-class assignments, students will learn about the methods for recognizing and recovering evidence that allows for the determination of time since death, manner and cause of death, and the identification of individuals.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Have a foundational understanding of basic skeletal biology, and are able to identify the bones and specific features of various skeletal elements of the adult and subadult human skeletons.
- Learn about how osteological methods can be used to create a biological profile, and help identify possible cause and manner of death.
- Gain new perspectives into the strengths and weaknesses of standard forensic anthropology methods.
- Understand the ethical issues that arise when working with human remains from archaeological, humanitarian, and medico-legal contexts.

Course structure and learning activities:

One 1 hour 45 min lecture and one 45-min tutorial per week for one semester. Tutorial will take various forms, including a bone lab where students will have hands-on experience working with (archaeological) human remains, and an optional field trip to visit the Fu Shan Public Mortuary.

Course assessment and polices:

The final grade for the course is based on:

1) In-class assignments	10% x 3	30%
2) Group presentation	10%	10%
3) Midterm Exam	20%	20%
4) Lab Report	10%	10%
5) Final Exam	30%	30%

In-class assignments (10% x 3)

There are three in-class assignments. Each assignment will consist of written exercise to be completed during tutorial and will be based on laboratory methods commonly used in forensic anthropology. Students may work together.

Group presentation (10%)

During the second or third tutorial, students will be asked to form small groups of no more than three people per group. Each group may pick a case study (archaeological or forensic) of your choice to present on. Students are expected to summarize and critique on the methods applied on each case study. Each presentation should be around 15 mins.

Lab report (10%)

Students will write a short report (2 – 3 pages) on the activities carried out during the lab session. More direction will be provided in class and during the lab session.

Midterm and final exams (20 + 30%)

The exams will be based heavily on the lecture material, and your notes from the in-class lectures will be your primary study materials. Reading the associated chapter(s) from the textbook is expected.

Submission and academic honesty

As required by the university, from Sept. 2008, students must submit a soft copy of their computer-generated text assignments to VeriGuide at a specified URL. The system will issue a receipt containing a declaration of honesty statement. Students should sign the receipt, print a hard copy of their assignment, and submit the hard copy and the receipt to teachers for grading. The university says that assignments without the receipt will not be graded.

Please check the website “Honesty in Academic Works” at:
<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

for more information on plagiarism and on how to submit papers through VeriGuide.

Grade descriptors

Grade	Overall course
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Weekly schedule (this syllabus is subject to change)

Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Chapters
1	Sept 6	1. Introduction to Forensic Anthropology	1, 3, 4
2	13	2. Human Osteology	2
3	20	3. Estimating Time Since Death	5 and 6
4	27	4. Sex Determination	8
5	Oct 4	5. Age Determination	9
6	11	6. Stature Determination	10
7	18	7. Ancestry Determination	7
8	25	8. Cause and Manner of Death	11 and 12
9	Nov 1	9. Cause and Manner of Death	13 and 14
10	08	10. Ante-Mortem Skeletal Conditions	15
11	15	11. Post-Mortem Skeletal Conditions	16
12	22	12. Lab Day (field trip date TBA)	17 and 18
13	29	Overview and summary	19
	TBA	Final Exam	

Topics for tutorials:

Week 1: General introduction

Week 2: Bone lab (with casts)

Week 3: *No tutorial*

Week 4 Assignment – Estimating Sex

Week 5: Assignment – Estimating Age

Week 6: Assignment – Estimating Stature

Week 7: Class Debate

Week 8: Mid-term

Week 9: Student presentations

Week 10: Student presentations

Week 11: Student presentations

Week 12: Bone lab

Week 13: Overview