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Spring 1-2016

ANTY 413.01: Forensic and Mortuary Archaeology

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Anthropology 413

Forensic and Mortuary Archaeology



Instructor: Dr. Corey Ragsdale
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Office hours: TR 2:00 to 3:30

Course Goals:

The primary objective of this course is to familiarize students with field and laboratory procedures used in mortuary and forensic archaeology. In the first portion of the course we will 1) review the literature on mortuary ritual and the theoretical foundations of current approaches; 2) demonstrate the variation in mortuary behavior across cultures, and through time; 3) introduce methods used by archaeologists to generate and interpret mortuary data; and 4) familiarize students with the legal and ethical issues related to mortuary archaeology and the broader issue of repatriation. During the second portion of the course we will apply laboratory and field methods to designated skeletal collections. This portion of the course includes a field recovery exercise, followed by laboratory analyses and reporting.

Required Readings:

Pearson MP. 2000. *The Archaeology of Death and Burial* (Texas A&M University Anthropology Series).
Dupras TL, Schultz JJ, Wheeler SM, and Williams LJ. 2012. *Forensic Recovery of Human Remains: Archaeological Approaches*, second edition. CRC Press.

Optional:

White T and Folkens P: *The Human Bone Manual* (Academic Press) or White, Black, and Folkens. *Human Osteology, 3rd Edition* (Academic Press).

Grading:

Grades will be based on the following:

Laboratory Reports (8)-20%

Field Exercise/Report-20%

Midterm Exam-30%

Final Report-30%

Class participation and laboratory reports:

You are expected to attend class and contribute to class discussions on a regular basis, and to apply yourself conscientiously to all laboratory exercises undertaken alone or with others. You will encounter photographs of human remains in the readings and lectures, and we will use skeletal remains in class

sessions. You are expected to handle these with the utmost respect and care, and to conduct yourself in a dignified manner in the presence of human remains.

You will be required to turn in each lab ONE WEEK after the day of the exercise. These reports must be typed.

Lectures will not be repeated. A doctor's note or letter from the registrar is required for ALL CASES in which a quiz. NO EXCEPTIONS. An upcoming absence due to a death in the family, military/ROTC orders, or university athletics can be accommodated with ample time (at least one week before), and official documentation.

Midterm exam:

The midterm exam will be based on everything covered in the first section of the course. This includes ALL assigned readings. The exam will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answer questions. A review session will be scheduled the week of the exam.

Final reports:

You will be required to submit a report at the end of the semester based on an assigned skeleton in the UMT collection. This report should include results of analyses obtained by the student throughout the semester. Graduate student requirement: additionally, graduate students must write a separate paper related to a topic discussed throughout the course. Graduate students are also required to give a short presentation on their paper at the end of the semester. More details will be provided in class.

Field exercise:

There will be a field exercise during the 13th week of class. During the week of the exercise, class will not be held THURSDAY. The exercise will take place on SATURDAY. Students should plan to be in the field the whole day, and adjust their schedule accordingly. There are absolutely no make-ups for this exercise. You will be required to complete a laboratory exercise the following week. Your participation in the exercise and completion of the lab account for **20%** of your total grade. Field notes from the exercise must be turned in along with the lab (Lab 10). By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to participate in a one-day field event that takes place on a Saturday.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Mortuary Practices and Forensic Archaeology (1/26-1/28)

- Pearson: Chapters 1 and 2
- Dupras: Chapters 1 and 2
- Carr C (1995) Mortuary Practices: Their Social, Philosophical-Religious, Circumstantial, and Physical Determinants. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 2:105-200.

Week 2: Landscape and Mortuary Ritual (2/7-2/9)

- Pearson: Chapters 6 and 9
- Buikstra, JE and D Charles (1999) Centering the Ancestors: Cemeteries, Mounds, and Sacred Landscapes of the Ancient North American Midcontinent. In Ashmore, W. and B. Knapp (eds.) *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives*. Oxford: Blackwell. Pp. 210-228.

Week 3: The Human Skeleton (2/9-2/11)

- Dupras: Chapter 3
- White, Folkens, and Black (optional)

Week 4: Age (2/16-2/18)

- Pearson: Chapter 5
- Stoodley 2000. *From the Cradle to the Grave: Age Organization in the Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Rite*.
- **Lab 1: Age**

Week 5: Sex and Gender (2/23-2/25)

- Pearson: Chapter 5
- Rega, E (1997) Age, Gender, and Biological Reality in the Early Bronze Age Cemetery at Mokrin. Moore, J and E. Scott (eds). *Invisible People and Processes: Writing Gender and Childhood into European Archaeology*. London: Leicester University Press. Pp 229-247.
- **Lab 2: Sex**

Week 6: Craniometrics and Non-Metrics (3/1-3/3)

- Christensen AF. 2010. Colonization and microevolution in Formative Oaxaca, Mexico. *World Archaeology*: 30, Issue 2.
- Relethford J. 1994. Craniometric variation among modern human populations. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 95: pp 53-62.
- **Lab 3: Cranial metrics and non-metrics**

Week 7: Trauma and Pathology (3/8-3/10)

- Merbs CF. 1989. Trauma. In: Iscan MY, Kennedy KAR (eds) *Reconstruction of Life from the Skeleton*. Wiley-Liss. 161-190.
- Zuckerman et al. 2015. Adapt or die: three case studies in which the failure to adopt advances from other fields has compromised paleopathology.
- **Lab 4: Trauma and pathology**

Week 8: Context and Taphonomic Change (3/15-3/17)

- Pearson: Chapter 3
- Dupras: Chapter 4
- Weiberg et al. 2008. Estimating the Timing of Long Bone Fractures: Correlation Between the Postmortem Interval, Bone Moisture Content, and Blunt Force Trauma Fracture Characteristics. *Journal of Forensic Science* 53.
- **Lab 5: Taphonomy**

Week 9: Laws, Ethics, Indigenous Points of View (3/22-3/24)

MIDTERM EXAM DUE Thursday, 3/24

- Pearson: Chapter 8
- Walker, PL (2008) Bioarchaeological Ethics: A Historical Perspective on the Value of Human Remains. In MA Katzenberg and SR Saunders (eds): *Biological Anthropology of the Human Skeleton*. 2nd Edition. New York: Wiley.
- **Lab 6: Kennewick Man**

Week 10 **SPRING BREAK-NO CLASSES** (3/29-3/31)

*SAA Meetings (4/6-4/10)

Week 11: Archaeology in the Forensic Context (4/5-4/7)

- Dupras: Chapter 8
- Hagulnd WD. 2001. Archaeology and Forensic Death Investigations. *Historical Archaeology*: 35.
- Scott DD and Connor M. 2001. The Role and Future of Archaeology in Forensic Science. *Archaeology and Forensic Death Investigations*. *Historical Archaeology*: 35, No. 1.

Week 12: Detecting Burials (4/12-4/14)

- Dupras: Chapters 5 and 6

- Schultz JJ. 2007. Using Ground-Penetrating Radar to Locate Clandestine Graves of Homicide Victims Forming Forensic Archaeology Partnerships With Law Enforcement. *Homicide Studies*: 11, No 1.
- Pringle JK, Ruffell A, Jervis JR, Donnelly L, McKinley J, Hansen J, Morgan R, Pirrie D, and Harrison M. 2012. The use of geoscience methods for terrestrial forensic searches. *Earth-Science Reviews*: 114, No. 1-2.
- **Lab 7: Detecting Burials**

Week 13: Mapping (4/19-4/21)

- Dupras: Chapter 7
- Bigman 2012. The Use of Electromagnetic Induction in Locating Graves and Mapping Cemeteries: an Example from Native North America. *Archaeological Prospection* 19: 31-39.
- **Lab 8: Mapping**

Week 14: Excavating Human Remains (4/26-4/28)

- Dupras: Chapter 10
- *NO CLASS THURSDAY: FIELD EXERCISE SATURDAY

Week 15: International Investigations (5/3-5/5)

- Skinner M, Alempijevic D, and Djuric-Srejic M. 2003. Guidelines for International Forensic Bio-archaeology Monitors of Mass Grave Exhumations. *Forensic Science International*: 134.
- Haglund WD, Connor M, and Scott DD. 2001. The Archaeology of Contemporary Mass Graves. *Historical Archaeology*: 35, No. 1.

FINAL REPORTS/ FIELD EXERCISE REPORTS DUE Thursday, 5/5