

Department of Anthropology

ANTHRO 2242B-650 - Forensic Anthropology in Fact and Fiction

BRIEF COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2027

Date: July 13, 2026

Instructor and course information:

Instructor: Dr. Andrea Waters-Rist

Method of delivery: Online and asynchronous

Credit value: 0.5

Antirequisites: None

Prerequisites: None

Course Description:

There are many TV shows, films, books, and other popular culture mediums that depict forensic science. Have you ever wondered if the depictions are accurate? Would you like to know more about what is and is not possible in a real forensic case? If so, this course is for you. We will focus on forensic anthropology, the study of human skeletal remains in medicolegal contexts. Think of the books by Kathy Reichs that led to the TV show "Bones". We will explore fact and fiction in the popular culture of forensic anthropology with the aim of understanding (a) core scientific principles, (b) common narrative devices, and (c) the effects of fictional forensic portrayals on public perception, technological standards, and ethical paradigms.

A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course's OWL Brightspace site before the first day of class.

Course Materials:

Journal articles, book chapters and academic websites and videos via the course's on-line OWL Brightspace site. You are not required to purchase any books, supplies, or other items for this course.

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on the following:

Weekly multiple-choice quizzes	10%
Discussion Forum Participation	5%
Research a Career Assignment	15%
Laboratory Assignment	10%
Multimedia Project	30%
Final Exam (Online)	30%

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