

ANTHROPOLOGY 3311G-001/9111B

Bioarchaeology: Practice & Theory

COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2020

Instructor: Dr. Jay Stock (he/him)

Email: jstock@uwo.ca

Credit value: 0.5 credit

This course is cross-listed with graduate and undergraduate students.

Mode of delivery: For 2020/2021 this course will be conducted online, synchronously, using Zoom videoconferencing technology, with discussions to take place weekly during the scheduled synchronous class time.

Synchronous class time: Wednesdays 2:30-5:30 p.m. EST.

Calendar Course Description: An introduction to current theoretical and methodological issues in bioarchaeology. Use of ancient human, animal, and plant tissues to reconstruct relationships among biology, culture and environment in international contexts is emphasized. Topics include: diet, demography, disease, identity, mobility, landscape, childhood, gender, ideology, political economy, violence, work, urbanism, and globalization.

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: Anthropology 2226A/B or Anthropology 2229F/G or instructor's permission.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Syllabus:

This course introduces students to the field of bioarchaeology. In North America, Bioarchaeology is defined as the study of human remains (skeletal and mummified) from archaeological sites. In the UK and other parts of the world it is defined as the study of biological remains, plant, animal and human, from archaeological sites. While we will explore this breadth, the main focus of the course will be on 'human' bioarchaeology. Emphasis will be placed on approaches to the interpretation of the lives of people in the past through skeletal analysis, including: demography, habitual behavior, diet, growth, health and disease, and social identity. We will also put these aspects of prehistoric lives into broader context through consideration of the ethics of bioarchaeology, how identity is expressed in the skeleton, the relationship between bioarchaeology and forensics, and bioarchaeology in the public realm. The relationship between practical and theoretical aspects of bioarchaeology will be explored in every lecture.

Each week will include a synchronous lecture format, and an asynchronous seminar using 'VoiceThread' where we will explore topics in more detail. Thorough preparation is important for the discussion sections, to ensure an active exchange of ideas.

There is no better way to understand the people of the past than to learn about them from their mortal remains. Bioarchaeology gets to the very essence of life in the past and what it means to be human.

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

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- understand and apply methods from other disciplines to this inherently interdisciplinary science
- appreciate the interrelations between biology and culture
- utilize the findings of bioarchaeology in order to inform our understanding of diseases today
- understand the practice of modern bioarchaeology and how it has evolved
- effectively communicate verbally and in writing how to integrate theory and method in bioarchaeological practice and interpretation

Course Materials:

The textbook is the most thorough and complete Bioarchaeology text available, written by one of the leading scholars in the field. Material from the text is supplemented by articles that are key references that have helped to shape the discipline. It is available in The Book Store at Western.

- Larsen, C.S. (2015). Bioarchaeology. Interpreting Behavior from the Human Skeleton, Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Electronic versions of the book can also be purchased: [Link One](#) or [Link Two](#)

Also, registered students will be able to access additional course readings through the course site in OWL before the first day of class.

Evaluation:

Undergraduate Grading:

Undergraduate student evaluation for this course will be based on participation, two annotated bibliography assignments, one 3500-word research paper and a final exam. Work will be spread throughout the term. Details below.

Annotated Bibliographies – 20%

The two short annotated readings assignments will require students to find three references that are relevant to the topic outlined below. The references must come from valid academic sources (e.g. not any old web site) and be related to each other in some way. The assignment is to do a short synopsis of the three references and a brief analysis in 3 double spaced pages. The first one is due on Feb 3rd and the second one on March 3rd. They are to be submitted electronically and are due by 11:55 pm. More information can be found in the Annotated Bibs tab on OWL.

Research Paper – 40%

Topics for the research paper must be related to one of the lecture themes and will be selected in consultation with the instructor (in office hours or by email) before reading week. The paper will be formatted as a manuscript to be submitted to the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*. See the PDF in the Research Paper tab on OWL for specific instructions and further details.

The paper is due March 31st. Papers are to be submitted to OWL by 11:55pm. *Students must submit and receive a passing grade on this paper in order to pass this course.*

Final Exam – 30%

The final exam will be a take-home exam consisting of a series of 3 essay questions. It will be scheduled during the designated final exam period.

Participation/Attendance – 10%

The discussion sections held in the third hour of class will explore the lecture topic of that day in detail, guided by questions. Students will be expected to have done the readings and to be prepared to critically discuss the material. The class participation grade will be assigned on attendance and thoughtful participation in classroom discussions.

Graduate Grading:

Graduate Annotated Bibliography – 20%

The graduate students will prepare an annotated bibliography of 20 references that are relevant to one of the topics in the second half of the course. This should include an introduction that states the topic and its relevance, short summaries of the references and a synthesis. This assignment is due February 24th.

Graduate In-Class Presentation – 20%

The graduate students will present a 30 minute presentation to the class on the topic covered for their annotated bibliography. The presentation will take place on the appropriate date as outlined in the weekly topic grid.

Graduate Research Paper – 40%

The graduate students will prepare a 5000 word research paper on a bioarchaeological topic that is relevant to their thesis research and is different from the topic covered in the annotated bibliography/presentation. Due date to be determined.

Graduate Participation – 20%

The graduate students will assist the instructor by engaging constructively in the voice-thread discussions each week.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com).

Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course

In order to pass an essay course, the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course.

In order to pass this course, students must submit and receive a passing grade on this research paper.

Statement on Seeking Special Accommodations:

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please see your academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds.

Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined in Western's academic policies by clicking on this link: [Western's academic policies](#).

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