# ANG5742: Problems in Forensic Anthropology

*Department of Anthropology*
*College of Sciences, University of Central Florida*

***COURSE SYLLABUS- Spring 2020***

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| Instructor: | *John J. Schultz, Ph.D.* | | |
| Office: | *Phillips Hall 409T* | *Class Meeting Days:* | *Monday* |
| Phone: | *407-823-1180* | *Class Meeting Hours:* | *3:00-5:50pm* |
| E-Mail: | *john.schultz@ucf.edu* | *Class Location:* | *MSB 149* |
| Office Hours: | *Monday 1:00-2:50pm; or by appointment* | | |

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**University Course Catalogue Description**

Current issues and topics in forensic anthropology.

**Course Objectives**

After completing this course students will develop a basic proficiency in the following areas:

- ***History of Forensic Anthropology***
- ***Taphonomy***
  - Understanding the theoretical basis and history of forensic taphonomy
  - Recognizing the different stages of human decomposition
  - Recognizing the environmental factors affecting postmortem change to bone including alterations through both flora and faunal impacts
  - Recognizing and identifying the different stages of heat alteration to bone and the commercial cremation process
  - Establishment of a postmortem interval based on taphonomic changes to bone
- ***Trauma***
  - Understanding basic bone biomechanics
  - *Recognizing Blunt and Gunshot trauma*
  - Evaluating the timing of trauma to bone (is the damage perimortem, or postmortem)
- ***Ethics and Legal Considerations in Forensic Anthropology***

**Course Description**

This is an advanced forensic anthropology course focusing on both taphonomic alterations to bone and trauma-based patterns of injury and healing (where applicable). It is expected that each student is proficient in human osteology, including small fragment identification as well as basic laboratory methods of skeletal analysis. This course will increase the student's knowledge of two fundamental areas of forensic casework (trauma and taphonomic analysis) and will provide the foundation for continuing studies in ANG 6740C Advanced Forensic Anthropology.

**Course Prerequisites**

Graduate student in the Anthropology MA program and completion of a Human Osteology Class

**Required Textbook**

There is no required textbook.

**Class Readings**

Refer to course reading list for the required readings.

**Basis for Final Grade**

Your final grade will be based on a total of 400 possible points and will be derived from class participation, leading two class discussions, and writing two papers: one on an approved taphonomic topic of your choice and one on an approved trauma topic of your choice. The requirements for this course are weighted as follows:

| Assessment | Points | Percent of Final Grade |
|---|---|---|
| **Academic Activity Assignment** | 1 | 0.25% |
| **Taphonomy** | | |
| Presentation | 50 | 12.5% |
| Paper | 100 | 25% |
| **Trauma** | | |
| Presentation | 50 | 12.5% |
| Paper | 100 | 25% |
| **Class Participation** | 9 | 2.25% |
| **Leading Two Class Discussions** | 30 | 7.5% |
| **Four Short Case Reports** | 60 | 15% |

**Class Participation** (9 points)

This is a graduate level course, and as such it is expected that each student will participate in class each week. You will be expected to have read all of the required readings and contribute to the class discussion. **Grades will be based on the respectful exchange of thought and ideas and on the contribution's relevance to the weekly topic.**

**Leading Class Discussion** (30 points)

Each student will be expected to facilitate two class discussions: on one taphonomic topic and one trauma topic. Topics will be selected the first week of class.

Two to three required readings are already chosen for the discussion that provide foundational information for the topics. Your role as the weekly student leader will be select two to three additional pertinent articles as required readings and post the reference information on Canvas at least one week prior to the planned discussion. The articles can be pertinent research and cases studies to supplement the class discussion. It is a good idea to have Dr. Schultz review your selected articles ahead of time to confirm that they are appropriate for the discussion topics.

**Short Case Reports** (60 points)

You will be required to complete four short case reports, 15 points each, with appropriate case file documentation. Each assigned case will consist of interpreting and describing traumatic injuries to the skeleton. Report details will be discussed in class.

**Required Papers and Presentations** (150 points each for a total of 300 points)

You will be required to write two fully referenced (AJPA style) literature review papers. Each paper is to be double-spaced with 1" margins, utilizing Time New Roman font and is not to exceed 25 pages (including cover page, literature cited, figures and tables). You may select a topic in each category that interests you. The topic may be the same as your discussion topic, or may be on another topic we cover in class. We will discuss further requirements for the papers in class. In addition, you will be required to present both papers as PPT presentations. We will discuss further requirements for the PPT presentations in class.

**Academic Activity Assignment – What I expect to achieve by completing this class.**

Starting with the fall 2014 semester, verification of student engagement is required to support UCF's compliance with a federal financial aid regulation that must be followed for all classes. The regulation states that students who receive federal student aid must be academically engaged in each course in which they are enrolled. Without verification of this engagement, students will not receive their student aid. Institutions must now verify that every student enrolled in every course has met this standard. Everyone is required to post a statement, even if you do not require federal aid, which explains what you expect to achieve by completing this class.

**All postings must be completed by January 10 (11:59 pm). You will receive one point for completing the assignment. However, you will receive a deduction of 2 points if the posting is not completed by January 10.**

**Grading Scale** The **+/-** system will be used in this class.

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|---|---|---|---|
| **A** | = 94-100 | **C** | = 74-76 |
| **A-** | = 90-93 | **C-** | = 70-73 |
| **B+** | = 87-89 | **D+** | = 67-69 |
| **B** | = 84-86 | **D** | = 64-66 |
| **B-** | = 80-83 | **D-** | = 60-63 |
| **C+** | = 77-79 | **F** | = **<** 60 |

**Course Policies:** Grades

**Late Assignments:** Late assignments are not accepted unless there is a medical issue or family death. If possible, you need to inform Dr. Schultz of the issue ahead of time so he can confirm with you that an assignment extension will be provided.

**Paper Requirements:** Due dates for outlines and papers are clearly marked on the schedule. If you must miss a class (see attendance policy below), you may send me your assignment via email BEFORE class begins. No assignments will be accepted after that time. Should you miss a deadline due to a valid emergency, I will require an acceptable written excuse from a physician or written proof of a personal or family crisis such as a death certificate.

**Grades of "Incomplete":** Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected and DOCUMENTED medical emergencies prevent a student in good standing in the course from completing the remaining work. I am the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

**Final Grades:** I do not make individual allowances for final grades. If you are doing poorly in the class make arrangement to speak with me early in the semester so we can discuss ways to improve study and comprehension skills.

**Course Policies:** Technology and Media

**Email:** I prefer students to email my UCF account directly when there are questions or when sending assignments. I check my UCF email regularly and you can generally expect a response the day of the email or the next weekday. I may only check email once during the weekend. If you do not receive a response over the weekend, you can expect a response Monday morning.

**Laptop Usage:** Using a laptop to take notes is a privilege, not a right. You are allowed to use a laptop to take course notes, However, you are not allowed to use the laptop for anything else such as internet surfing, chatting, or checking your email during class time.

**Course Policies:** Student Expectations

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance is mandatory and will be tracked weekly. I realize that sometimes life gets in the way of classes and you many need to miss a class. However, you should still be prepared for class in advance. If it becomes necessary for you to miss a class, you will be given the opportunity to make up the work by turning in a typed 5 page fully-referenced (AJPA style) paper at the next class that summarized the readings that we discussed in the class period that you missed. There will be a penalty of 15 points deducted from your total class points if you do not complete the assignment. Please contact me before class if you will not be present for a particular class session. In addition to attending each class meeting, class participation is very important in graduate school. Most of our courses follow a seminar format. Participation refers to your ability to ask questions and/or direct comments to stimulate a class discussion. This does not mean students will be graded on how much they speak, but rather on how well they are prepared and involved in the class.

**Professionalism Policy:** Per university policy and classroom etiquette: mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom discussions. Also, texting is not appropriate during class time. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom so as to not disrupt the learning environment if this becomes a problem. Please arrive on time for all class

meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a 5% reduction in their final class grade.

**University Writing Center:** The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates and graduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you've written (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at http://www.uwc.ucf.edu, stop by MOD 608, or call 407-823-2197.

**Copyright:** This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

**Third-Party Software and FERPA:** During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need not make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

## Core Policy Statements

### Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

- *Unauthorized assistance*: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
- *Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means*: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.
- *Commercial Use of Academic Material*: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
- *Falsifying or misrepresenting*the student's own academic work.
- *Plagiarism*: Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.
- *Multiple Submissions*: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.

- *Helping another violate*academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult The Center for Academic Integrity.

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices".

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating
Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, The Golden Rule. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade.

## Course Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need disability-related access in this course should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services(Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student.

## Campus Safety Statement

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise in our class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of the surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
- Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Please make a note of the guide's physical location and consider reviewing the online version at http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html.
- Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
- If there is a medical emergency during class, we may need to access a first aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those items are located in this building, see http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/workplacesafety.html(click on link from menu on left).
- To stay informed about emergency situations, sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to my.ucf.eduand logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the tool bar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on your Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert," fill out the information, including your e-mail

address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."

- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.
- To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video. You CAN Survive an Active Shooter

## Deployed Active Duty Military Students

If you are a deployed active duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that unique status, please contact your instructor to discuss your circumstances.

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| Course Schedule | | | | |
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| **Week** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Trauma Case** | **Facilitator** |
| *1* | *Jan 6* | Class Introduction and Writing Short Reports | | N/A |
| 2 | Jan 13 | Introduction to Forensic Anthropology; Evaluating Timing of Injury | | Dr. Schultz & 1 Student |
| 3 | Jan 20 | **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** | | *No class* |
| 4 | Jan 27 | Trauma: Gunshot Wounds and Blunt Force Trauma | | 2 Students |
| 5 | Feb 3 | Sharp Force Trauma and Saw Wounds | Case 1 | 2 Student |
| 6 | Feb 10 | Trauma Case studies | | 2 Students |
| 7 | Feb 17 | ***Trauma Presentations*** | | N/A |
| 8 | Feb 24 | Time Since Death and Decomposition | | 1 Student |
| 9 | Mar 2 | The Effects of Burial Environment and Subaerial Weathering | Case 2 | 1 Student |
| 10 | Mar 9 | **Spring Break (March 9-14)** | | *No Class* |
| 11 | Mar 16 | Forensic Significance Based on Taphonomic Modifications | | 1 Student |
| 12 | Mar 23 | Animal Damage and Dispersal | | 1 Student |
| 13 | Mar 30 | Bone Staining and Recovery Methods | Case 3 | 1 Student |
| 14 | April 6 | Thermal Modifications and Cremations | | 1 Student |
| 15 | April 13 | Miscellaneous Taphonomy Research | | 1 Student |
| 16 | April 20 | Ethics and Legal Considerations | Case 4 | Dr. Schultz |
| 17 | April 27 | ***Taphonomy Presentations*** | | N/A |

**Important UCF Deadlines for Spring 2019**

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|---|---|
| January 9, 2019 (11:59 PM) | Drop/Swap |
| January 12, 2019 (11:59 PM) | Add |
| March 20, 2019 (11:59 PM) | Withdrawal |
| April 20, 2019 (11:59 PM) | Grade Forgiveness |