

# ANT3520: Skeleton Keys: Forensic Identification

## Summer B 2025

Summer 2025 | 3.00 credits

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### I. General Information

**Meeting days and times:**

**Class location:** Online

**Instructor(s):**

**Name:** Maria Sellers

**Office Building/Number:** Turlington B325

**Email:** [mlocke.sellers@ufl.edu](mailto:mlocke.sellers@ufl.edu)

**Office Hours:** Wednesday 9:00 AM-12:00 PM ET or by appointment

**Teaching Assistant(s):**

**Name:** Kalpana Ghimire (she/her)

**Office Building/Number:** Online

**Email:** [kalpanaghimire@ufl.edu](mailto:kalpanaghimire@ufl.edu)

**Office Hours:** Friday 12:00 PM-3:00 PM via email or Canvas

**Name:** Avirup Sinha

**Office Building/Number:** Zoom

**Email:** [avirupsinha@ufl.edu](mailto:avirupsinha@ufl.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 AM-11:30 AM ET

### Course Description

***\*\*\*Some lectures will include disturbing and graphic images. Consider your reaction to this material before taking this course. You will be responsible for all course material.\*\*\****

This course provides an introduction to the field of forensic anthropology. Forensic anthropology is an applied area of biological anthropology that focuses on the identification of human skeletal remains in a medicolegal context. This course will introduce you to basic terms and principles of forensic anthropology, focus on concepts and their applications, and present case histories.

In this class, we will survey of forensic anthropology, an applied field of biological anthropology, focusing the wider scope of skeletal biology on problems of medicolegal significance, primarily in determining personal identity and cause of death from human remains.

### Prerequisites

Prereq: Sophomore standing or higher.

**General Education Designation:** None.

## **Course Materials**

- **Required:** Warren MW et al. 2011 Bare Bones: A Survey of Forensic Anthropology. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Kendall Hunt Publishing.

The first four chapters (1-4) have been uploaded to Canvas to allow you additional time to obtain the textbook, but no subsequent chapters will be uploaded hereafter. You must have obtained a copy of the textbook no later than **July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025** to stay up to date with your assigned readings.

Additional readings will be provided by the instructor and posted on Canvas. Required readings are listed below in the course schedule. All graded assignments will only reference required materials.

Optional readings and videos are also provided in each module to give you additional avenues to learn about forensic anthropology and its specific applications, but will not be required to complete graded assignments or exams successfully.

## **II. Course Goals**

### **Course Objectives**

In this course we will:

- Define the field of forensic anthropology and its purview
- Have a general understanding of human osteology
- Understand the basic concepts underlying determination of the biological profile, including sex, age, ancestry, and stature
- Describe different types of skeletal trauma, and differentiate between antemortem and postmortem trauma

### **Course Structure**

To meet the above-stated objectives, the course is structured in a series of 16 modules. Each module is structured to contain lecture video material, requires weekly reading from the Bare Bones text, and has graded assignments linked to the module topic. These modules are partitioned into four main sections:

- 1) Introduction to the Course and Forensic Anthropology
- 2) The Biological Profile and Personal Identification
- 3) Skeletal Trauma and Burned Bone
- 4) Applications and the Profession of Forensic Anthropology.

## ***Section 1 (Modules 1-6): Introduction to the Course and Forensic Anthropology***

The first two modules describe the field of forensic anthropology – historically and the current science – as well as the larger medicolegal system. In this section, the purpose and the place of forensic anthropology within this larger system will be described. The third and fourth modules more specifically describe the duties of the forensic anthropologist in the field and in the laboratory. Module 5 focuses on taphonomy, which discusses the variety of processes that can alter the body after death, such as decomposition. The sixth module (osteology and osteometry) introduces a much more nuanced look into the anatomy of human bones.

## ***Section 2 (Modules 7-12): The Biological Profile and Personal Identification***

The sixth module lays the foundation of the remaining modules in this section, as forensic anthropologists analyze the variation of the human skeleton to help identify individuals, which can be done using the biological profile – basically, a list of an individual's biological demographic descriptors consisting of their sex, age, ancestry, and stature – as well as idiosyncratic skeletal features. Aspects of the biological profile and how we can recognize these aspects in the skeleton are covered in Modules 7 through 10. Idiosyncratic skeletal features and how they are used to personally identify an individual from their skeletal remains are the topic of Module 11, and Module 12 shows how forensic art can aid personal identification efforts.

## ***Section 3 (Modules 13 and 14): Interpretation of Skeletal Trauma and Burned Bone***

While Section 2 shows how forensic anthropologists can interpret features of the skeleton to assist with the identification of human remains. The interpretation of skeletal trauma and burned bone can help answer important questions such as, what happened to this individual? When did it happen – before they died, or around the time of death? What sort of implement may have caused the injury to bone?

## ***Section 4 (Modules 15 and 16): Applications and the Profession of Forensic Anthropology***

The final section of this course is presented in Modules 15 and 16 with discussions of the application of forensic anthropology in various contexts (such as with responses to mass fatalities, human rights investigations, and recovering/identifying the remains of the war dead) and the potential, various career paths that forensic anthropologists may pursue.

### III. Graded Work

**Online attendance and Late Policy:** **Late work will not be accepted without official documentation.** It is the student's responsibility to provide the instructor with the appropriate documentation and meet with the instructor to devise a schedule for completing the missed work. If possible, the student must notify the instructor that they will miss an exam before the examination period begins. **No make-ups will be accepted after two weeks past the original exam/assignment/quiz if practicable.** If a student misses an exam, quiz, or assignment without making the appropriate arrangements with the instructor, they will be assigned a grade of E (0 points). Note that the format of the make-up exam(s) may differ from that of regularly scheduled exams (e.g., primarily composed of essay questions). Documentation for late or missed work, including exams, should be provided within 48 hours of the excused period of absence.

**Grading:** There will be three (3) exams worth 100 points each (300pts total). Exams are not cumulative and contribute equally to your final grade. Six (6) assignments worth 10 points each will be due via Canvas (60 pts total). A case report will be worth 40 points. *If you would like to contest a grade, you must do so within one week of that grade being posted.* After that, all grades are final. Careful reading and attention to detail is key to your success in this course. With that in mind, include this skeleton joke on question 11 of the syllabus quiz for a point of extra credit: Why did the skeleton read the syllabus? They wanted *tibia* good student! Final grades will be calculated as a percentage of the total possible points (400) and graded using the following scale:

Component	Points	% of Grade
Exam 1	100	25%
Exam 2	100	25%
Exam 3	100	25%
Assignments	60	15%
Case Report	40	10%

**Exams (3 Exams, 100 points each) (300 points):** Exams are to be taken on the scheduled day (see below). Each exam is worth 100 points. Exams will be a combination of matching, true/false, multiple choice, and short answer. Exam material includes lectures, the textbook, and additional required reading materials and/or videos. Study guides for exams will be provided one week before the exam.

**Assignments (6 Assignments, 10 points each) (60 points):** Six short assignments will be due by 11:59 pm EDT on days indicated on the Course Schedule (see below). Each assignment is worth 10 points. All assignments should be turned in via Canvas by 11:59 pm EDT. The assignments vary and include activities such as interpreting a field map and discussions of the reading that was assigned to be completed on or before that day. All instructions for the assignments will be clearly stated in the assignment page on Canvas. If there is an error with submitting to Canvas, students should email the assignment to the instructor or grader before the deadline. Students are responsible for ensuring that their submission to Canvas is the correct and completed document.

**Case Report (40 points):** Students must write case report summing up a skeletal analysis using provided analytical documents and images. The paper must be font size 12 Times New Roman, single spaced, and 1-inch margins. This document is due on Canvas no later than August 8h, 2024 at 11:59 pm EDT. This is worth up to forty (40) points. See Canvas for rubric and instructional pdf for additional details.

**TOTAL: 400 points**

#### Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Number Grade
A	100-93.00
A-	92.99-90.00
B+	89.99-87.00
B	86.99-83.00
B-	82.99-80.00
C+	79.99-77.00
C	76.99-73.00
C-	72.99-70.00
D+	69.99-67.00
D	66.99-63.00
D-	62.99-60.00
E	59.99-0

Further information on current UF grading policies for assigning letter grades can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

**Cheating on any assignments will not be tolerated.** Students found cheating will receive a score of zero (0) points for the assignment. Disciplinary action will follow university policy as outlined by the Dean of Students. See <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/> or more information on student academic honesty, rights, responsibilities, and behavioral consequence.

#### IV. Calendar

Date	Day	Topic	Readings/Preparation	Work Due
June 30, 2025	Monday	Syllabus Introduction	Syllabus	
July 1, 2025	Tuesday	Module 1- What is Forensic Anthropology and its History	Chapter 2	
July 2, 2025	Wednesday	Module 2- The Medicolegal System	Chapter 1	

Date	Day	Topic	Readings/Preparation	Work Due
July 3, 2025	Thursday	Module 3: Forensic Anthropology in the Field	Chapter 3	<b>Assignment #1: Syllabus Quiz</b>
July 4, 2025	Friday	HOLIDAY- NO CLASS		
July 7, 2025	Monday	Module 4- Forensic Anthropology in the Laboratory	Chapter 3	
July 8, 2025	Tuesday	Module 4- Forensic Anthropology in the Laboratory	Chapter 3	
July 9, 2025	Wednesday	Module 5- Taphonomy: From Biosphere to Lithosphere	Chapter 4, Stock <i>et al.</i> 2017	
July 10, 2025	Thursday	Module 6- Anatomy, Osteology, Measurement, & Statistics	Chapter 5, Human vs. Nonhuman Guide	
July 11, 2025	Friday	<b>Exam #1 (Covers July 1- July 11; Modules 1-6)</b>	Study Guide	<b>Assignment #2, Exam #1</b>
July 14, 2025	Monday	Module 6- Anatomy, Osteology, Measurement, & Statistics	Chapter 5, Human vs. Nonhuman Guide	
July 15, 2025	Tuesday	Module 7- Group Characteristics I: Sex	Chapter 6, Spradley and Jantz 2011	
July 16, 2025	Wednesday	Module 8- Group Characteristics II: Age	Chapter 8	
July 17, 2025	Thursday	Module 8- Group Characteristics II: Age	Chapter 8	
July 18, 2025	Friday	Module 9- Group Characteristics III: Stature	Chapter 9	<b>Assignment #3</b>
July 21, 2025	Monday	Module 10- Group Characteristics IV: Race, Fact or Fiction	Chapter 7, Sauer 1992, Bethard and DiGangi 2020	

Date	Day	Topic	Readings/Preparation	Work Due
July 22, 2025	Tuesday	Module 10- Group Characteristics IV: Race, Fact or Fiction	Chapter 7, Sauer 1992, Bethard and DiGangi 2020	<b>**Extra Credit Assignment**</b>
July 23, 2025	Wednesday	Module 11- Individual Characteristics and Personal Identification	Chapter 10	
July 24, 2025	Thursday	Module 11- Individual Characteristics and Personal Identification	Chapter 10	
July 25, 2025	Friday	<b>Exam #2 (Covers July 14- July 25; Modules 6-11)</b>	Study Guide	<b>Assignment #4, Exam #2</b>
July 28, 2025	Monday	Module 12- Forensic Art	Chapter 11	
July 29, 2025	Tuesday	Module 13- Trauma & Causes of Death	Chapter 12	
July 30, 2025	Wednesday	Module 13- Trauma & Causes of Death	Chapter 12	
July 31, 2025	Thursday	Module 14- Burned Bodies and Cremation	Chapter 13	
August 1, 2025	Friday	Module 14- Burned Bodies and Cremation	Chapter 13	<b>Assignment #5</b>
August 4, 2025	Monday	Module 15- Mass Fatalities	Chapter 14	
August 5, 2025	Tuesday	Module 15- Mass Fatalities	Chapter 14	
August 6, 2025	Wednesday	Module 16- Career Paths & Applications of Forensic Anthropology	Chapters 15 and 16	
August 7, 2025	Thursday	<b>Finalize and Submit Case Report</b>		<b>Case Report</b>
August 8, 2025	Friday	<b>Exam #3 (Covers July 28- August 8; Modules 12-16)</b>	Study Guide	<b>Assignment #6, Exam #3</b>

## **V. University Policies and Resources**

### **Attendance policy**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

### **Students requiring accommodation**

Students who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting

<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

### **UF course evaluation process**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluer.com>

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at

<https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### **University Honesty Policy**

University of Florida students are bound by the Honor Pledge. On all work submitted for credit by a student, the following pledge is required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Student Honor Code and Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code, as well as the process for reported allegations and sanctions that may be implemented. All potential violations of the code will be reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. If a student is found responsible for an Honor Code violation in this course, the instructor will enter a Grade Adjustment sanction which may be up to or including failure of the course. For additional information, see <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.

### **In-class recording**

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.



A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party-note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

### **Procedure for conflict resolution**

Any classroom issues, disagreements or grade disputes should be discussed first between the instructor and the student. If the problem cannot be resolved, please contact John Krigbaum ([krigbaum@ufl.edu](mailto:krigbaum@ufl.edu), (352) 294-7540). Be prepared to provide documentation of the problem, as well as all graded materials for the semester. Issues that cannot be resolved departmentally will be referred to the University Ombuds Office (<http://www.ombuds.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1308) or the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1261).

### **Resources available to students**

#### ***Health and Wellness***

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- University Police Department: Visit [UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

- GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call [352-273-4450](#).

### *Academic Resources*

- E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at [352-392-4357](#) or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).
- [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, [352-392-1601](#). Career assistance and counseling services.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call [866-281-6309](#) or email [ask@ufl.libanswers.com](mailto:ask@ufl.libanswers.com) for more information.
- [Teaching Center](#): 1317 Turlington Hall, Call [352-392-2010](#), or to make a private appointment: [352-392-6420](#). Email contact: [teaching-center@ufl.edu](mailto:teaching-center@ufl.edu). General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio](#): Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, [352-846-1138](#) | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; [Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information](#).
- Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): [View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information](#).