

**ANTHROP 2FF3 HUMAN SKELETAL BIOLOGY AND BIOARCHAEOLOGY
Winter 2021**

Course Contacts

Instructor: Dr. L. Elizabeth Doyle

Lecture: Tu 11:30AM - 1:20PM*

Email: doylel6@mcmaster.ca

Lab: Tu 1:30PM - 2:20PM*
; 2:30PM - 3:20PM*

Teaching Assistant: Hayley Welsh

TA Email: welshhc@mcmaster.ca

*Virtual Classroom with option for asynchronous access

Office hours will be specified on A2L under Course Overview

Email Contact: Emails to the instructor must come from your McMaster email address and include [ANTHROP 2FF3](#) in the subject line. (Otherwise they are likely to get lost!)

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Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of human skeletal anatomy and skeletal biology taught in a combination of lectures and laboratory exercises for students who are interested in further studies in biological anthropology. We will cover the primary morphology of the entire human skeleton, including diagnostic features for parts of major elements; basic techniques for documenting and analyzing skeletal remains; sources of human cranial, dental, and post-cranial variation; and methods for estimating age at death, sex as assigned at birth, and body size. Basic pathology and trauma, physiology, histology, and taphonomy will also be covered, with specific reference to how they apply in bioarchaeology and human biology research.

Because human osteology is, first and foremost, a discipline that relies heavily on the ability to identify, orient, and side individual elements and parts thereof, this course strongly emphasizes practical exercises. It is expected that all students will participate in lab activities.

***Content warning:** The assigned readings, lecture materials, and laboratory materials all include images of skeletal remains, some of them from archaeological contexts. Efforts have been made to exercise discretion in which images are displayed, depending on the pedagogical aims of each lesson. We will discuss principles of ethical practice in human osteology at the start of term, and will observe them throughout the term.

Due to the delayed start of classes provided by the University, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on Avenue to Learn will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Identify, orient, and side the major elements (bones) of the human skeleton in whole and partial form, based on diagnostic features;
- Inventory a skeletal assemblage and estimate the minimum number of individuals present (MNI);
- Apply methods used to estimate age-at-death, sex as assigned at birth, and living stature from skeletal elements;
- Identify characteristic types of alterations to bone tissue that can be caused by pathological (disease), traumatic (injury), and taphonomic (postmortem) processes;

- Describe the types of information that can be derived from skeletal remains and articulate inherent limitations of this type of evidence.

Required Materials and Texts

White, T.D. & Folkens, P.A. (2005). *Human Bone Manual*. Burlington: Elsevier Academic Press.

Class Format & Instructor Availability

Lectures

This course is designed to be attended in either synchronous or asynchronous formats. It is strongly recommended that you do your best to take advantage of opportunities to connect with your professor, teaching assistant, and classmates.

Lectures will be recorded synchronously on Teams with closed captioning*, and will be available in the following locations for asynchronous access with an automatically generated transcript:

- On our class's MS Stream channel (linked on A2L under the Lectures module)
- Embedded on A2L (under the Lectures module)

*Alternative videoconferencing platforms, such as Zoom, may be used if appropriate to the class's needs.

Practical Laboratory Sessions

Human osteology relies heavily on applied experience in order to be able to successfully identify and analyze individual skeletal elements and their component diagnostic features. Even in an online learning environment, iterative practical experience will be key in preparing you for physical osteological work. You will be assigned to a laboratory group and are expected to participate in weekly laboratory activities facilitated by your TA and instructor. These will guide you in developing the fundamental skills of human osteology.

What labs will involve

Labs will include activities focussed on identifying, orienting, and siding skeletal elements by their diagnostic features, and later on assembling a biological profile (osteobiography) for a set of human skeletal remains. You will compile your notes and sketches into a laboratory notebook that you will turn in at the end of the term for 5% of your total course grade.

Labs will be held synchronously with an asynchronous option

All laboratory activities are best done with your laboratory group and teaching assistant, but they can be completed asynchronously.

Laboratory meetings will be held on **MS Teams** in order to take advantage of its security, web chat, and live captioning features. **MS Teams** is especially useful for its asynchronous chat channel functionality. We may use **Zoom** on an ad hoc basis for breakout room use, as needed.

Each laboratory group will be assigned a Teams channel, where you can collaborate synchronously or asynchronously with your assigned lab group.

Laboratory work will additionally make use of the following free web-accessible platforms:

- Sketchfab: <https://sketchfab.com/> (for 3D models)
- Google Drive: Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, and Jamboard

Accessibility

- MS Teams provides live automatic captioning.
- MS Stream also provides an automatically generated transcript.
- Additional accommodations will be arranged as needed with SAS.
- You can also individually arrange live transcription of lab and lecture meetings by setting up a free account with Otter.ai

Instructor and TA Contact

Dr Doyle and your TA are available through the following avenues:

- Via the course's MS Teams channel or direct chat. Tag us using @username for direct notification.
- Via email (please see rules for email contact, below - these will be adhered to strictly).
- Individual video conference: by appointment. Please use email to request a time.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Quiz 1 (20%), class time, Tuesday Feb 2*
2. Quiz 2 (20%), class time, Tuesday Feb 22*
3. Quiz 3 (20%), class time, March 23*

4. Osteobiography (10%), due by 17:00 Eastern on April 13
5. Lab Notebook (5%), due by 17:00 Eastern on April 13
6. Final Exam (25%), held during registrar's exam period

* for details on reasonable accommodations for scheduling barriers to synchronous quiz attendance, see below.

Course Evaluation – Details

Assessments for this course will focus predominantly on practical knowledge, with secondary emphasis on comprehension of skeletal biology, methodological theory, and procedures.

Quizzes (3 x 20% = 60%): Three time-limited quizzes will be held throughout the term. They will focus mainly on practical application (identification, orientation, and siding; identification and interpretation of diagnostic features), with secondary emphasis on skeletal biology, theory, and procedural knowledge. Question formats will be mainly diagrams and written answers. Quiz 1 will cover all materials from Week 1 to Week 3; Quiz 2 will cover materials from Week 2 to the end of Week 5, with greatest emphasis on Weeks 4 and 5; Quiz 3 will cover only Weeks 7 through 10 (Axial skeleton, Cranium, and Dentition). **Please note that these quizzes are individual assessments.** Questions will be drawn randomly from a question bank, and quizzes will be examined for evidence of collaboration.

*Quizzes will be held during class time; however, class members who are unable to attend synchronously due to time zone or other reasonable barriers (such as an SAS-recognized accommodation, work, or caregiving responsibilities) may request asynchronous access.

Osteobiography (10%): Weeks 7 through 13 will focus on the process of analyzing a skeletal assemblage, from taking inventory through to assembling a biological profile. This will culminate in a short case-study assignment in which you will be given a range of virtual skeletal material and asked to compile an osteobiography. This is a team assignment that you will complete with your lab group.

Lab Notebook (5%): Sketching, making labelled diagrams, and other forms of active learning are amongst the most effective strategies for learning skeletal anatomy and biology. You will compile your notes and sketches throughout the term into a well-organized laboratory notebook that you will turn in at the end of the term for a 5% participation grade.

Final Exam (25%): The final exam will be cumulative, and will test your knowledge of practical identification and analysis, skeletal biology, and

methodological theory and procedure. Question formats will be mainly diagrams and written answers. The final exam will be held during the registrar's exam period.

Email and Tech Support Contact

Dr Doyle's Email Commitment

I will do my best to provide a timely response to email communications. During the week, I will generally get back to you within 48h. Emails sent during weekends or after 5pm will generally not receive a response until at least the next business day.

Rules for Email Contact

Please help me provide timely responses to email communications by **reserving email for real emergencies**.

Email that does not follow these rules may not receive a timely response.

- Use your **McMaster email address** for all course-related communications. (This will avoid your message being caught in a spam filter.)
- **ALWAYS** put ANTHROP 2FF3 in the subject line. (Seriously, this is critical.)
- **Reserve direct email for personal concerns ONLY** (that is: personal emergencies).
- **Show that you have tried to troubleshoot first!** Troubleshooting is an incredibly valuable professional skill - don't underestimate it! (See below under "Tech Support and Other Matters")

Tech Support and Other Matters

Learning online can be challenging - plan ahead for technical issues! You may be learning new technologies or working with technological barriers like a spotty internet connection. This course has been designed with that in mind: Dr Doyle has worked to streamline the technology as much as possible, and to design assessments with the possibility of poor Internet connections in mind. Although Avenue 2 Learn is a robust platform with a dedicated support team, **it is normal to encounter the occasional technological problem. This is an opportunity for you to practice the valuable professional skill of troubleshooting!**

What To Do if You Encounter Technical Problems

Do not panic! Follow the below steps to troubleshoot:

1. **Document the problem:** ESPECIALLY if you are attempting to submit an assignment on deadline. Describe it in detail and **take screenshots that include your desktop clock as a time-stamp.**
2. Check the **Avenue To Learn Support Wiki:**
<https://wiki.mcmaster.ca/avenue/>
3. Check the manufacturer's help documents!
<https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/learners/learners.htm> A2L is McMaster's local version of Brightspace Desire2Learn (D2L), therefore many of its functions and quirks will be the same.
4. Contact the Avenue2Learn help desk directly (during business hours):
<https://avenue.mcmaster.ca/support.html>
5. If all else has failed ... proceed to contact your professor or TA!

After Troubleshooting: contact your TA or prof

If you decide to contact Dr Doyle or your TA directly for help with resolving a problem (e.g. clarification on a course component, or help with a tech problem you have encountered), demonstrate that you have attempted to trouble-shoot first:

- **Describe at least 3 things that you have already tried, and why they didn't work.** (E.g., you checked the syllabus for the answer; you read the assignment guide; you posted your question to the appropriate discussion board; you searched the University website for more information; you reviewed the A2L help pages and Googled the problem; you contacted the A2L help desk).
- **Describe the problem in precise terms.** Include screenshots to show your screen if it is a tech problem.
- If you cannot do either of the above, your TA and/or Dr Doyle will ask you to do so.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1: (2021-01-11 to 15)

TOPIC: Orientation to class & expectations; anatomical terminology

LAB: Anatomical orientation

READINGS: Chapter 6 (Anatomical Terminology)

Note: this week will be devoted to meeting your classmates and professor, and getting oriented to the course platform, activities, and expectations. It is expected that you will participate if at all possible. Note that both synchronous and asynchronous options are available.

Week 2 (2021-01-18 to 22)

TOPIC: Skeletal Biology (joints, basic structure, growth & development)

LAB: Upper Limb I (Pectoral girdle and long bones)

READINGS: Chapters 11 (Shoulder Girdle) and 12 (Arm)

Note: Jan 19th is Add/Drop Deadline

Week 3 (2021-01-25 to 29)

TOPIC: Intro to Field Procedures (based on chapter 2)

LAB: Upper Limb 2 (Carpus and digits)

READINGS: Chapter 13 The Hand.

Suggested: Chapter 2

Week 4 (2021-02-01 to 5)

TOPIC: **Quiz 1 (20%)** ; Lower Limb and estimating stature

LAB: Lower Limb 1 (Pelvic girdle and long bones)

READINGS: Chapters 14 (Pelvic Girdle) and 15 (Leg)

Week 5 (2021-02-08 to 12)

TOPIC: Lower limb 2 (Tarsus, metatarsus, and digits)

LAB: Lower limb 2 (Tarsus, metatarsus, and digits)

READINGS: Chapter 16 (Foot)

Week 6 (2021-02-15 to 19)

READING WEEK - No Class

Week 7 (2021-02-22 to 26)

TOPIC: Quiz 2 (20%)

LAB: Axial skeleton (vertebrae and ribs)

READINGS: Chapters 9 (Hyoid and Vertebrae); 10 (Thorax)

Week 8 (2021-03-01 to 05)

TOPIC: Craniofacial anatomy, development and variation (1)

LAB: Cranium 1: Vault

READINGS: Chapter 7 pp. 75-104 (up to subsection 7.10.4, siding the occipital)

Week 9 (2021-03-08 to 12)

TOPIC: Craniofacial anatomy, development and variation (2)

LAB: Cranium 2: Face

READINGS: Chapter 7, pp. 104-126

Week 10 (2021-03-15 to 19)

TOPIC: Dental Anthropology

LAB: Cranium 3: Dentition

READINGS: Chapter 8 (Dentition)

Notes: Mar 19 (Fri) is Last day to withdraw from class without penalty

Week 11 (2021-03-22 to 26)

TOPIC: Quiz 3 (20%) ; Sex Estimation

LAB: Sex estimation

READINGS: Chapter 19, pp. 385-400 (sections 19.4, 19.5)

Week 12 (2021-03-29 to 2021-04-02)

TOPIC: Age Estimation

LAB: Age estimation

READINGS: Chapter 19, pp. 359-384

Notes: osteobiography assignment goes live.

Week 13 (2021-04-05 to 09)

TOPIC: Taphonomy, Pathology, Trauma and Biological Variation

LAB: Osteobiographies

READINGS: Chapter 17 (Pathology) ; Chapter 5 (Postmortem Skeletal Modification); *Suggested: Chapter 19.7 & 19.8*

Notes: pre-final exam restriction period;

Week 14 (2021-04-12 to 14 * last class on Wednesday)

TOPIC: Course review

LAB: Course review

READINGS: None

DEADLINE: Submit lab notebook (5%) and osteobiography (10%) by 17:00h on Tuesday the 13th.

EXAM PERIOD: Thursday April 15 to Friday April 30

Course Policies

Assignment Submissions

It is expected that all assignments will be submitted as PDF files to that assignment's dropbox on Avenue to Learn (A2L) **Assignments submitted by e-mail will not be accepted.**

If you run into technical problems when submitting an assignment or exam, take a screenshot that shows your submission screen and desktop clock as a timestamp! Then visit the Avenue to Learn Support page for help.

Late Submissions

For winter 2021 there will be a 48h grace period before late penalties are applied for written assignments only (does not apply to tests or exams). This means that you can submit your assignment up to 48h after a deadline, without losing points.

A late penalty of 2 points (2% of the total course grade) will be deducted from an assignment's total per 24-hour period (or part thereof late) for assignments, up to 72 hours (including weekends). After 72 hours, a grade of 0 is allocated.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

It is your responsibility to complete all work by the deadline at which it is to be handed in. Extensions will not be available without one of: a McMaster Student Absence Forms (MSAF) if applicable; OR written certification approved by your

Faculty office. If you experience an interruption to your attendance that warrants relief, please try to alert Dr Doyle as soon as possible to arrange make-up work.

Please note that policies concerning the use of MSAFs (McMaster Student Absence Forms) have changed (see <https://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>).

Note that MSAF's cannot be used for:

- **Any coursework worth 25% or more.**
- Absences lasting longer than 3 days

If you require relief for an assessment worth 25%+ or for longer than 3 days, you must contact your faculty office, with documentation, if you wish to apply for a faculty-issued MSAF.

Please note – **all deferred and makeup exams will be in essay format.**

Assignment Reappraisal

Your assignments are marked by your TA using a grading rubric provided by the instructor, which is based on the criteria outlined in each assignment guide.

Grades are not awarded based on demonstrated effort, but on demonstrated achievement. It is normal for a student's average grade in university classes to be somewhat lower than their average grade in high school.

If you disagree with a grade that you have received, please follow the below steps:

1. **Wait 24h after viewing your mark.** Re-read your assignment with a cooler head and consider the rubric, your TA's feedback, and grading criteria outlined in the assignment guide.
2. **Seek more feedback:** If you require more information about your grade, contact the grading TA and ask for further feedback.
3. **Formally request a re-appraisal:** Write a 300-word (max) statement, explaining why you believe the grader's assessment was mistaken, and submit it to Dr Doyle along with the original assignment (with TA feedback). **Your statement must directly reference the rubric.** We assess your work based on its demonstrated quality, not based on effort expended. Thus, we need you to engage directly with the feedback you have been given in order to show that the original grading was incorrect.
4. Dr Doyle will re-assess your work using the same rubric as the TA grader.

Please note that requesting a re-appraisal does not guarantee that your mark will go up. Most re-appraisals do not produce a different mark than the original assessment, and some produce a lower mark.

If, after reappraisal by the instructor, you still disagree with an assessment, you may apply for a **re-read** via the McMaster Secretariat website:

<https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/re-read/>

Grades

Marking rubrics and final grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE	Qualitative Scale (Unofficial)
90-100	A+	In general, quantitative & categorical grade ranges reflect the following qualitative scale:
85-90	A	
80-84	A-	80% to 100% (A- to A+): Exceptional performance: strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
77-79	B+	
73-76	B	
70-72	B-	68% to 79% (B- to B+): Competent performance: evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
67-69	C+	
63-66	C	50% to 67% (D to C+): Adequate performance: understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material; acceptable but uninspired work, not seriously faulty but lacking style and vigour.
60-62	C-	
57-59	D+	
53-56	D	
50-52	D-	00% to 49% (F): Inadequate performance: little or no evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.
0-49	F	

Avenue to Learn & Lecture Recording

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Some real-time lecture sessions may be recorded. Attendees will be warned prior to recording.

Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism in written work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please visit: www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Online Elements

This course includes on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is

dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Course Modification

The instructor and university **reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term.** The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members,

whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

