

Anthropology 3X03 – Zooarchaeology

Office: Chester New Hall Rm. 508
Office hours: Wednesday 1:30-2:30, or by appointment

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Classes: Monday 10:30-11:30, Wednesday 9:30-11:30, KTH B122.

The course is about the archaeological analysis and interpretation of animal bones. The focus will be on the practical aspects of identifying different classes of animal bone and on the issues involved in moving from the recovery and identification of faunal specimens to the interpretation of their implications for subsistence practices, environmental conditions, and broader patterns of culture and history.

TEXT:

O'Connor, Terry

2000 *The Archaeology of Animal Bones*. College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE VALUES:

Fauna Identification Project	- 20 %
Fauna Identification Examination	- 15 %
Individual Research Project/Research Paper	- 20%
Critical Analysis and Evaluation of Case Study	- 45 %

Fauna Identification Project: Students will identify faunal specimens from assemblages recovered from the Walker site, a Neutral Iroquoian village. Students will work in groups, but each student will be responsible for a set number of identifications, and each must submit a report listing, summarizing and interpreting the contexts of the entire assemblage(s) examined by their group.

Fauna Identification Examination: A short in-class examination will test familiarity with and ability to identify a series of comparative and archaeological faunal specimens.

Individual Research Project/Research Paper: Each student must choose a specific practical lab project or comparative research project from a number of available options. Practical projects may include sorting and analysis of archaeologically recovered faunal material, preparation and labeling of a comparative faunal specimen, or a specific lab analysis application. Research papers will involve a comparative analysis and evaluation of 2-3 journal articles that focus on specific topics in zooarchaeology, such as taphonomy, recovery effects, quantification, osteometric analysis, or seasonality determination.

Case Study Evaluation: The major project of the course will consist of the summary analysis and evaluation of a published monograph-length analysis and interpretation of archaeologically recovered faunal remains. There are many report series available in the library, and MA and PhD theses that focus on the analysis and interpretation of faunal material are commonly available online. Each student must submit their chosen report for approval, to ensure it is of adequate scope for this assignment. The

purpose of the assignment is to apply everything learned in the course to assess the nature, limitations, and relative effectiveness of the application of zooarchaeological research methods in a particular case study. The length of the paper will depend on the nature of the report and the detail of its summary and analysis, but 10-15 pages should be adequate in most cases, and papers must not exceed 20 typewritten double-spaced pages. The paper will be due one week following the end of classes.

Penalty deductions of 1 % of the COURSE grade per day late apply to all late and missed assignments unless an MSAF is submitted.

WEEKLY TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS

- Jan. 7-9:** Introduction: the identification, analysis, and interpretation of faunal specimens in archaeology.
- Jan. 14-16:** The bases of variability in animal bones. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 1-2.
- Jan. 21-23:** Taphonomy and recovery. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 3-4.
- Jan. 28-30:** Identification. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 5.
- Feb. 4-6:** Quantification. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 6-7.
- Feb. 11-13:** Age, seasonality, and pathologies. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 8-9.
- Feb. 18-20:** Mid-term recess.
- Feb. 25-27:** Measurement. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 10.
- March 4-6:** Interpretation: environment and the lives of hunter-fisher-gatherers.
Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 11-12.
- March 11-13:** Interpretation: management, domestication, and distribution. Reading:
O'Connor (2000) Ch. 13-15.
- March 18-20:** Emerging directions: biomolecular and biochemical approaches
- March 25-27:** Emerging directions: synthesis.
- April 1-3:** Review: issues in contemporary zooarchaeology.
- April 8:** Overview: elements of critical analysis.

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.

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 his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

- The MSAF should be used for medical and non-medical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e. no documentation required)
- Rules governing the MSAF are as follows:
 - The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days.
 - The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight.
 - The 'one MSAF per term' limit is retained.
 - As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate their relief.
- Policy: The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work or here:
[http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work)