

Anthropology 3X03 - Zooarchaeology

Instructor: Aubrey Cannon

E-mail: cannona@mcmaster.ca

Office: Virtual Office

Classes: Tuesday 9:30-11:20, Thursday 9:30-10:20

Office hours: Zoom virtual office hours - Thursday 11:30-12:30, or by appointment.

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.

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.

Classes: Will be scheduled synchronous lectures, faunal identification sessions, and discussions of readings and assignments. The platform will be Zoom, with links for access located on Avenue to Learn. Thursday lectures will be recorded and posted on Avenue to Learn. Tuesday in-class faunal identification sessions and discussions will not be recorded.

TEXT:

O'Connor, Terry

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

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE VALUES:

| | |
|--|--------|
| Faunal Specimen Preparation/Research Paper | - 20 % |
| Fauna Identification Sessions | - 15 % |
| Fauna Identification Project/Research Paper | - 20 % |
| Critical Analysis and Evaluation of Case Study | - 45 % |

Faunal Specimen Preparation/Research Paper: Each student must either prepare and label a faunal osteological comparative specimen, or, as an alternative, write a research paper. The specimen must be a whole or near-whole specimen of a mammal, bird, or fish that can be purchased in any major grocery store (e.g. rabbit, stewing hen, or whole fish). **No other specimens will be allowed for this assignment.** Instructions and ongoing support will be provided to help in preparing the osteological specimen at home. **The specimen must be prepared according to instructions to minimize any risks. No more than boiling or steaming, soaking in an enzyme-based laundry presoak and light scraping with a small paring knife will be required.** 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. A more detailed outline and due dates will be provided.

Fauna Identification Sessions: Recorded videos available on Avenue to Learn will demonstrate the forms and characteristics of select mammal, bird and fish skeletal anatomies. Periodic identification sessions will be conducted in class, in which students working in breakout groups and drawing on

available sources will develop identifications of a select set of specimens shown in photographs on Avenue to Learn. Further opportunity will be available in class to work out any differences or discuss any remaining unidentified specimens. This way it should be possible to identify most specimens correctly, but there may be a few that are harder. In some cases, students may disagree on the correct identification, but a clear consensus will be expected in most cases. Anyone not participating in class can do the identifications on their own if they like. All identifications can be made or revised outside of class, but final submissions are due by 11:30 pm on the day in which the session takes place. The points awarded for each session will depend on the number of bones correctly identified. The combined percentage will be based on all the bones correctly identified among the total included through all the sessions (5-6 sessions, 4-6 bones per session).

Fauna Identification Project: If circumstances allow for the on-campus pick-up of prepared faunal assemblages, students will identify faunal specimens from an archaeological assemblage recovered from an Iroquoian village site. Students will work individually at home using online catalogues and manuals to identify bones in individual assemblages, which will be made available for students to pick up either on campus or at Sustainable Archaeology McMaster at McMaster Innovation Park. Specific instructions will be provided. Each student must submit an Excel spreadsheet listing their identifications, and a report tabulating, summarizing and interpreting the contents of their assemblage. This assignment will take place after Reading Week in the second half of the course. As an alternative, it may be necessary for students to write a research paper involving 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. The option to write a paper as an alternative to the faunal identification project is available regardless of circumstances. More detailed outlines and due dates will be provided.

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 online. MA and PhD theses that focus on the analysis and interpretation of faunal material are also 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. A more detailed outline will be provided.

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. 12-14:** Introduction: the identification, analysis, and interpretation of faunal specimens in archaeology.
- Jan. 19-21:** 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. 26-28:** Identification. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 5.

- Feb. 2-4:** Quantification. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 6-7.
- Feb. 9-11:** Age, seasonality, and pathologies. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 8-9.
- Feb. 16-18:** Mid-term recess.
- Feb. 23-25:** Measurement. Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 10.
- March 2-4:** Interpretation: environment and the lives of hunter-fisher-gatherers.
Reading: O'Connor (2000) Ch. 11-12.
- March 9-11:** Interpretation: management, domestication, and distribution. Reading:
O'Connor (2000) Ch. 13-15.
- March 16-18:** Emerging directions: biomolecular and biochemical approaches.
- March 23-25:** Emerging directions: synthesis.
- March 30-April 1:** Review: issues in contemporary zooarchaeology.
- April 6-8:** Overview: elements of critical analysis.
- April 13:** Workshop on final paper preparation.

University Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

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 behaviour 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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.

improper collaboration in group work.

copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use 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.

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.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

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.

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.