

### **Anthropology 3X03 – Zooarchaeology**

Office: Chester New Hall Rm. 508  
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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 Cleveland 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 sectioning and ageing of clam shell specimens. 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.

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 biochemistry approaches.
- March 25-27:** Emerging directions: synthesis.
- April 1:** Critical evaluation.
- April 3:** Good Friday – Classes Cancelled
- April 8:** Overview.

**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.**

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and 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 kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own for which other credit has been obtained. (*Insert specific course information, e.g., style guide*)
2. Improper collaboration in group work. (*Insert specific course information*)
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

## 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.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

\*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link

(Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010)