

ANTHROP 4R03 ADVANCED BIOARCHAEOLOGY AND SKELETAL BIOLOGY Fall 2020

Course Contacts

Instructor: Dr. L. Elizabeth Doyle

Email: doylel6@mcmaster.ca

Office: Remote only for Fall 2020

Office Hours: By appointment, online

Lecture: Th 8:30AM - 11:20AM
Virtual Classroom *see Class Format
for details

Email Contact: Please see the "Rules for Email Contact" policy. **Emails to the instructor must come from your McMaster email address and include ANTHROP 4R03 in the subject line.** (Otherwise they are likely to get lost!)

[Course Contacts](#)

[Course Description](#)

[Course Objectives](#)

[Required Materials and Texts](#)

[Class Format & Instructor Availability](#)

[Teaching Assistants and Tutorials](#)

[Course Evaluation – Overview](#)

[Course Evaluation – Details](#)

[Email and Tech Support Contact](#)

[Dr Doyle's Email Commitment](#)

[Rules for Email Contact](#)

[Tech Support and Other Matters](#)

[What To Do if You Encounter Technical Problems](#)

[After Troubleshooting: contact your prof](#)

[Weekly Course Schedule](#)

[Course Policies](#)

[Assignment Submissions](#)

[Late Submissions](#)

[Extension Policy](#)

[Assignment Reappraisal](#)

[If you disagree with a grade that you have received, please follow the below steps:](#)

[Grades](#)

[Avenue to Learn & Lecture Recording](#)

[Turnitin.com](#)

[University Policies](#)

[Academic Integrity Statement](#)

[Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#)

[Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances \(RISO\)](#)

[Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy](#)

[Privacy Protection](#)

[Online Elements](#)

[Online Proctoring](#)

[Copyright and Recording](#)

[Course Modification](#)

[Conduct Expectations](#)

[Extreme Circumstances](#)

Course Description

This course is designed for students who are interested in skeletal biology and the diverse fields of anthropological research that depend on the study of human skeletal and dental remains. Those who plan to pursue a career in biological anthropology or a research-related field will especially benefit from this course.

The course will follow a lecture-seminar format to explore the theory and method underpinning the study of ancient human population demography, social structures, biological relationships, and health and disease across the life course. In the process, students will develop their knowledge of research design and methods in biological anthropology, along with the ability to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches.

This course will offer opportunities for you to hone a number of key professional skill sets, such as written and oral communication, literature research, project management, and teamwork. In particular, you will demonstrate your learning through a topical research project with multiple practical components, including: drafting a proposal; writing an in-depth literature review; and presenting findings in an oral-visual format. **Feedback will be offered at key points in the project trajectory.**

Course Objectives

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

- Describe methods used in major areas of inquiry in biological anthropology;
- Identify and articulate ethical, theoretical, and methodological challenges posed by the nature of skeletal samples and research;
- Demonstrate professional transferable skills, including:
 - team working and project management
 - professional writing
 - group facilitation
 - design & delivery of presentations in diverse media (visual and/or oral)

Required Materials and Texts

- **Required Readings:** A reading list will be posted to the course website at the beginning of term. Some readings will be designated required, others will be suggested. The precise readings selected each week will be partly dependent on the choice of the presenters for that week.
- **Recommended Text:** DiGangi & Moore 2013, *Research Methods in Skeletal Biology* (available in downloadable format from McMaster Library)

The course reading list and a folder of articles will be posted to the course's Avenue 2 Learn site.

Class Format & Instructor Availability

Lectures

The Fall 2020 iteration of ANTHROP 4R03 will be fully online. Class time allocation will be flexible, but in general will feature synchronous or blended activities. Lectures and readings will be provided asynchronously via the course website on Avenue2Learn. **Class meetings will be held on Microsoft Teams. Some portions will be recorded for asynchronous access. You can access MS Teams and Stream via your university account at <https://office365.mcmaster.ca/>**

This is a lecture-seminar class, which means that **you are expected to do the assigned readings and other work beforehand and come to class prepared to discuss them.** Class time will involve short lectures (<1h), free-form discussion, and self-guided work, with breaks as needed.

Some weekly readings have been assigned by the instructor. Additional readings will be assigned by presenters based on their selected topics. Guest speakers, documentaries, and other media may be introduced to stimulate class discussions.

Instructor Availability

Dr Doyle is available by appointment. Please email to request a time.

Teaching Assistants and Tutorials

This course has no TA.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Reflection Summaries (5 x 1%), due from Sept 17-Nov 19, class time
2. Journal Club (15%), due from Sept 24-Nov 12, class time
3. Term Project: Proposal & source list (10%), due Oct 08 at 17:00h Eastern
4. Term Project: Presentation (20%), due Nov 19-Dec 03, class time
5. Term Project: Final Paper (25%), due Dec 04 at 17:00h Eastern
6. Final Exam (25%), take-home distributed Dec 10, due Dec 13 at 17:00h Eastern

Course Evaluation – Details

Reflection Summary (5%, 5 x 1, participation only)

Each student must submit five reflection summaries over the course of term. Each should be a 1-2 page reflection on one week's readings and lecture discussion, to be submitted, at latest, at the beginning of the following week's class. Preparing your reflection summary will help you to develop questions & thoughts on a given topic, and may also help you prepare for your term project. Your journal club week **is** eligible for your Reflection Summary.

Journal Club presentation (15%), due dates between Sept 24 and Nov 12.

Journal Club article review and discussion facilitation (15%). Starting in Week 3, a portion of the class will consist of a journal club. Journal clubs are semi-formal reading groups in which one member selects a reading, gives a brief presentation on it, and leads a short discussion with the rest of the class. Journal clubs provide an excellent way to develop your confidence in reading and discussing scholarly literature in a group -- a key capability in any knowledge-based career path.

Each week, up to 3 class members will each select an article from the reading list for that week. Each presenter will summarize their article for the class in 10 minutes, and then lead a 15-30 minute discussion with questions based on the reading. Asynchronous and alternative formats for journal club descriptions are available if needed. If the presenter wishes to use a reading that is not from the reading list, they may propose an alternative at least one week before their presentation date. Any alternative reading must be: a published scholarly work (no journal pre-prints); available in e-format

through University library subscription; preferably not longer than 10-12 pages.

Research Method Review & Presentation (scaffolded term project, 55% total):

Project to be performed individually, with option to work in groups. The Research Method Review and Presentation represents the bulk of the work that you will do in this class. The format is similar to that of a literature review for an honours or Master's thesis. In brief, you will select a method or class of methods (e.g. palaeodemographic modelling; reassociation & analysis of commingled remains; morphometric biodistance; inference of habitual behaviours; histological age-estimation methods; dietary stable isotopes) and produce a paper that explores the history, current applications, and contemporary issues (theoretical, methodological, ethical) affecting that field of research.

The Term Project has three components (see full assignment guide for details):

Proposal & List of Sources (10%), due Oct 08 at 17:00h Eastern:

(shared) The proposal should identify the field of inquiry that you intend to explore, potential issues you will analyze, and provide a brief description of its relevance to contemporary biological anthropology. Provide 5-10 recent (post 2012) sources, with annotations that summarize each one and illustrate why it will be useful to your project.

***Work Plan, due Oct 08 at 17:00h Eastern, with Proposal & Sources: This component of the proposal is needed only if you are working in a group!**

A 2-3 page document that lays out the distribution of labour, communication methods, milestones, timelines & roles of each group member in making it happen. Will be assessed on thoroughness, representation of division of labour & communication strategy, identified milestones & realistic timelines. Gantt charts are appreciated.

Presentation (20%) (in-class, dates between Nov 19, 26, and Dec 3rd): A poster presentation or 15-minute oral presentation

of your findings, followed by a 20-30 minute discussion facilitated by the presenter(s). Assessment based on: demonstrated comprehension of topic; quality of information provided; organization and narrative flow of presentation; time management; quality of questions and follow-up probing during discussion facilitation.

Final Paper (25%), due Dec 04 at 17:00h Eastern: (*for groups, 10% shared work, 15% individual). Final paper should be 15-20 pages for an individual, up to 20-30 pages for groups depending on the number of partners (format: 1.5pt spacing, 12pt font). Should contain an introduction/background section, body sections (each written by one group member) that explore contemporary issues, and a conclusion. See

assignment guide for details. Citations and bibliography should be in Chicago author-date.

Final Exam (25%): Take-home exam, distributed on Dec 10 at 09:00h Eastern, due on Dec 13 at 17:00h Eastern.

Email and Tech Support Contact

Dr Doyle's Email Commitment

Please help me provide timely responses to email communications by **using class time, class discussion board, and appointments to ask questions & raise issues about course material, due dates, technical issues, etc.** Reserve email for real emergencies.

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

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 your course title and section in the subject line. (Seriously, this is critical.)**
- **Reserve direct email for personal concerns ONLY** (that is: personal emergencies).
- **For questions about course policies and technological issues: Show that you have tried to troubleshoot first!** Troubleshooting is an incredibly valuable professional skill - don't underestimate it! **Include a description in your email of the steps you have already taken to try to solve your problem.** (See below under "After Troubleshooting")

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 Avenue2Learn 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!

After Troubleshooting: contact your prof

- **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, Dr Doyle will ask you to do so.

Weekly Course Schedule

Week 1 (Sept 10)

Topics: Introductions, course overview, and orientation to the tech; in-class review and assessment of human osteology & osteological methods

Readings: None.

Notes: Review course expectations & initial sign up for journal club dates

Week 2 (Sept 17)

Topics: Unifying theories of anthropology and bioarchaeology; the nature of skeletal populations; problems of age estimation and palaeodemography

Readings: See reading list.

Notes: Practice journal club & discussion on demography & age estimation

Week 3 (Sept 24)

Topic: A brief introduction to anthropological statistics & hypothesis-testing;

Workshop on critiquing research & workshop on writing research proposals

Notes: Journal club starts next week. Review expectations & requirements. * First presenter(s) please indicate their chosen paper to Dr Doyle.

Upcoming due date: Peer review of project ideas next week - prepare to bring a rough topic and some sources!

Readings: see reading list

Week 4 (Oct 01)

Topic: Sex & gender in bioarchaeology + **Project Ideas Peer Review Day**

Notes: First Journal Club with discussion; peer review of project outlines and preliminary reference lists. Note this exercise is intended to help you kick start your project proposal!

*Next week's presenter(s) please indicate their chosen paper to Dr Doyle.

Readings: selected by presenters

Week 5 (Oct 08)

Topic: Birth, childhood & growth

Notes: Intro & Journal Club with discussion.

*Next week's presenter(s) please indicate their chosen paper to Dr Doyle.

Readings: selected by presenter(s).

**THURSDAY Oct 08 DEADLINE (project proposal & sources list),
17:00h Eastern**

Week 6 (Oct 15)

No class - Midterm break

Week 7 (Oct 22)

Topic: Stress and Disease

Notes: Lecture + journal club.

*Next week's presenter(s) please indicate their chosen paper to Dr Doyle.

Readings: selected from reading list

Week 8 (Oct 29)

Topic: On Shape: morphometric & geometric approaches

Notes: Journal Club + midterm check in on format & content of course

Readings: selected from reading list

Week 9 (Nov 05)

Topic: Ethics in skeletal biology and bioarchaeology

Notes: Journal club and possible guest AMA

*Next week's presenter(s) please indicate their chosen paper to Dr Doyle.

Readings: selected from reading list

Week 10 (Nov 12)

Topics: Molecular methods : stable isotopes and aDNA

Notes: Final Journal Club + review expectations for presentations. Assign presentation order for Week 11

Readings: selected from reading list

Week 11 (Nov 19)

In-class Presentations * slide decks to be submitted in PDF format by beginning of class.

Week 12 (Nov 26)

In-class Presentations * slide decks to be submitted in PDF format by beginning of class.

Week 13 (Dec 03)

In-class Presentations * slide decks to be submitted in PDF format by beginning of class.

FINAL EXAM: Take-home exam distributed automatically at 09:00h on Dec 10, due Dec 13 by 17:00h Eastern.

Course Policies

Assignment Submissions

All assignments will be submitted as PDF files to Avenue2Learn. **Please convert all assignment files to PDF format for submission.** (This includes powerpoint slide decks, Word documents, Google docs, text files, images, etc.) **File formats other than PDF will not be accepted unless explicitly stated otherwise for the assignment in question.**

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

Late penalties: 20% off 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.

Please note that resubmission of an assignment (for example if the initial submission is in a non-accepted format such as .docx) will be considered a late assignment.

Extension Policy

Whenever possible, for upper-division courses I allow **one free extension per student (no questions asked)**. Unlike with MSAFs, this policy is not limited to assignments worth more than 25%. If you invoke this policy, you do not need to use an MSAF for your first extension (see <https://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>).

If you think that you will require an extension, **contact me well before the due date if possible.**

CAVEATS TO THE "ONE FREE EXTENSION" POLICY

Extensions requested after a deadline will not be granted unless:

- The student and instructor have been in communication about the issue

- Documentation is provided (for unforeseen emergencies)
- An MSAF has been requested.

No extension will be granted for longer than one cumulative week after the original deadline except under extenuating circumstances. This is to prevent course work from piling up to the point that it becomes undoable.

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

Assignment Reappraisal

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

1. **Wait 24h.** Re-read your assignment with a cooler head and consider the grading criteria outlined in the assignment guide.
2. **Seek more feedback:** If you require more information about your grade, contact Dr Doyle and ask for further feedback.
3. **Formally request a re-grade:** Write a 300-word (max) statement, explaining why you believe the assessment was mistaken, and submit it to Dr Doyle along with the original assignment. **Dr Doyle will re-assess your work using the same rubric.**

If, after reappraisal 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

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

67-69	C+	capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
63-66	C	
60-62	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.
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 of the real-time lecture sessions may be recorded. Attendees will be warned prior to the 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. 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.

