

ZOOARCHAEOLOGY

ANTH 4210L

Fall 2020 Syllabus

Course Information

Instructor: Dr. Suzanne Pilaar Birch, Associate Professor, Anthropology and Geography
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I will make every effort to respond to emails within 24 hours of receipt on weekdays. Please email both of us if possible (copied on the same email) to ensure a timely response.

Course Overview

Food, foe, friend: animals play all these roles, and more, in their relationship to humans, in the past as well as the present. Zooarchaeology is the study of animal remains (bones, teeth, and shells) in the archaeological record. This course will explore how zooarchaeology allows us to reconstruct ancient human-animal-environmental interactions and will cover a range of topics and analytical techniques.

The course will be separated into three parts consisting of 14 modules in total. Each module will be 1 week in length with the exception of the first and last modules.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify the basic components of animal skeletons/remains found at archaeological sites
2. Be able to read, synthesize, and evaluate zooarchaeological literature within the broader context of ongoing research and with reference to a broad range of topics
3. Have a strong command of the possible applications and relevance of zooarchaeological research for the study of the collective human past as well as present and future

Textbook

The textbook is “An Introduction to Zooarchaeology” by Diane Gifford-Gonzalez. A PDF version of the book is on eLC.

Additional readings will also be included and will be uploaded on eLC.

Assessments and Grading

Exams (300 points)

You will have the opportunity to demonstrate your comprehension of the course learning objectives through three exams worth 100 points each. The first two exams will be available for 24 hours on September 24 (Module 5) and October 29 (Module 10). The final exam will be available throughout the final exam period, December 11-17. You will have 3 hours to complete each exam once you have started and you can only submit one attempt.

Quizzes (150 points)

In modules without exams (Modules 1-4, 6-9, 11-13) there will be one quiz, for a total of 11 quizzes. These quizzes are specifically related to the readings to ensure that we are all “on the same page”. Each quiz has five questions for a total of 15 points per quiz. The quizzes will be released each Monday at 12:00 AM and are due Thursday evening by 11:59 PM. It is recommended that you complete the quizzes as you do the readings. They are not timed, but you can only submit one attempt. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped for a total of 10 graded quizzes.

Assignments (140 points)

During each module, you will complete an assignment related to the course material: this includes exercises such as video responses, brief essays, carrying out online research, creating a presentation, or participating in a practical exercise. Assignments will be released each Monday at 12:00 AM and are due Tuesday evening by 11:59 PM. Each assignment is worth 10 points.

Forum Posts (60 points)

In order to foster a classroom experience online, you must make at least two posts per module in the forum, plus an initial introduction during the first module, for a total of 28 posts worth 2 points each (56 points) and the introduction worth 4 points. Out of the total of 28 posts, everyone should initiate at least 3 “topic” posts themselves. The other posts may be responses to classmate’s posts throughout the semester (and you can comment more than once on a single topic). Furthermore, posts should be somewhat substantive (i.e. more than one sentence) and on-topic.

Late/Makeup Policy

I generally do not accept late assignments or quizzes or allow makeups. Due to the online nature of the course, it is important to try and keep on schedule, or you may quickly fall behind. All quizzes, assignments, and tests are available for an extended period of time with recommended and required completion deadlines. However, on the last day of the class I will allow each student to either submit an assignment that they missed the first time around OR re-do an assignment if they feel they can improve it. There are no late or makeup quizzes or exams.

Final Grade Scale

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--------|----|-------|----|-------|---|-------|
| A | 93-100 | B+ | 87-89 | C+ | 77-79 | D | 61-69 |
| A- | 90-92 | B | 83-86 | C | 73-76 | | |
| | | B- | 80-82 | C- | 70-72 | F | 0-59 |

Academic Resources

Academic Honesty Policy: A Culture of Honesty Earns a Degree of Respect

Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty must be reported to the Office for the Vice President of Research by the instructor and may result in a failing grade or other repercussions. Visit <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/> for the full policy.

Student Support

Disability Resource Center Please inform me if you may require modification of any of these course procedures and are registered with the DRC. For more information you can contact the Disability Resource Center at (706) 542-8719 or visit <http://drc.uga.edu>.

Office of Student Care and Outreach If you require a hardship withdrawal or are in need of other assistance, visit <https://sco.uga.edu/>.

Important Dates

First day of class: August 20

Add/drop ends: August 26

Exam 1: Sept 24

Withdrawal deadline: October 27

Exam 2: Oct 29

Thanksgiving Break: November 25-27

Last Day of Class: December 4

Final Exam Available: December 7-17

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Schedule

The course is divided into three parts and 14 modules. Each module is 1 week in length with the exception of the first and last modules due to the setup of the semester schedule. Please note all recommended and required completion dates on eLC. Modules end on Friday evenings at 11:59PM. New modules begin Monday mornings at 12:00 AM. As of the start of the semester, there will be two attendance-optional in-person review sessions led by the TA offered during class time during the weeks of Module 5 and 10.

Part 1: Fundamentals of Zooarchaeology

Module 1 (Aug 20-28) An Introduction to Zooarchaeology

Reading: Chapters 1, 2, 3

Lecture 1 Zooarchaeology: What is it and why study it?

Lecture 2 Theory and Context in Zooarchaeology

Lecture 3 Quantitative and Qualitative Zooarchaeology

Quiz 1

Assignment 1

Forum Posts (Introduction + 2 posts)

Module 2 (Aug 31-Sept 4) The Vertebrate Skeleton and Invertebrate Remains

Reading: Chapters 4, 5

Lecture 4 Osteology 101: All About Bones

Lecture 5 Basic Anatomy and Identification

Quiz 2

Assignment 2

Forum Posts

Module 3 (Sept 7-11) Ageing, Sexing, and Quantifying Animal Bones

Reading: Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9

Lecture 6 Ageing and Sexing Animal Bones

Lecture 7 Measurement and Recording

Quiz 3

Assignment 3

Forum Posts

Module 4 (Sept 14-18) Taphonomy

Reading: Chapters 11, 12, 13, 16

Lecture 8 From Field to Lab: Recovery Methods and Preservation Bias

Lecture 9 Animal Actors and Natural Effects on Bone Assemblages

Quiz 4

Assignment 4

Forum Posts

Module 5 (Sept 21-25) Biomolecular Zooarchaeology

Reading: Chapter 23.1 and 23.2 only

Lecture 10 Stable Isotope Analysis

Lecture 11 Ancient (& modern) DNA

Assignment 5

Forum Posts

***Tuesday:** *Optional in person review session with TA, 10-11 AM*

*** Thursday:** *Exam 1*

Part 2: Themes in Zooarchaeological Research

Module 6 (Sept 28-Oct 2) Scavenging, Hunting and Husbandry: Economic Considerations

Reading: Chapters 14, 15, 17

Lecture 12 Human modification of bone

Lecture 13 Determining the roles of multiple actors

Assignment 6

Quiz 5

Forum Posts

Module 7 (Oct 5-9) Paleoenvironmental Reconstruction

Reading: Posted reading

Lecture 14 The role of microfauna and invertebrates

Lecture 15 Reconstructing past environments

Assignment 7

Quiz 6

Forum Posts

Module 8 (Oct 12-16) Seasonality, Mobility, and Migration

Reading: Chapter 24

Lecture 16 Behavioral ecology and models for mobility

Lecture 17 Determining seasonality and mobility from faunal remains

Assignment 8

Quiz 7

Forum Posts

Module 9 (Oct 19-23) Domestication

Reading: Posted reading

Lecture 18 The process of domestication: morphological and genetic changes

Lecture 19 Documenting the spread of domesticates

Assignment 9

Quiz 8

Forum Posts

Module 10 (Oct 26-30) Pastoralism and Agricultural Lifestyles

Reading: Chapter 22

Lecture 20 Species diversity and demographics

Lecture 21 Secondary products and herding practices

Assignment 10

**Tuesday: Optional in person review session with TA, 10-11 AM*

**Thursday: Exam 2*

Part 3: Zooarchaeology

Module 11 (Nov 2-6) Social Zooarchaeology: Cooking, Feasting, Ritual, and Sacrifice

Reading: Chapter 25

Lecture 22 Method and theory in social zooarchaeology

Lecture 23 Case studies in social zooarchaeology

Assignment 11

Quiz 9

Forum Posts

Module 12 (Nov 9-13) Urban and Historical Zooarchaeology

Reading: Posted reading

Lecture 24 Method and theory in urban and historical zooarchaeology

Lecture 25 Case studies in urban and historical zooarchaeology

Assignment 12

Quiz 10

Forum Posts

Module 13 (Nov 16-20) Data Standards and Data Sharing in Zooarchaeology

Reading: Chapter 26 and additional posted reading (Kansa et al.)

Lecture 26 Data standards, recording, and digitization of collections

Lecture 27 Data sharing and the future of zooarchaeological practice

Assignment 13

Quiz 11

Forum Posts

Module 14 (Nov 23-Dec 4) Applied Zooarchaeology and Conservation Paleobiology

Reading: Chapter 23.3 and additional posted reading (Wolverton et al.)

Lecture 28 What is applied zooarchaeology?

Lecture 29 Rewilding and de-extinction

Lecture 30 New research directions, theory development, and applications

Assignment 14

Forum Posts

Final Exam Period (Dec 11-17)

EXAM 3