Forensic Anthropology Field Methods

Instructors: Drs. Hamilton and Spradley
Class Dates: Class component: March 7 - May 12, 2017 (Arranged); Field component: May 15 - May 19, 2017 (ORPL, FARF, and ELA 226)
Class Time: 8:00 am - 5:30 pm daily (unless otherwise indicated)
Locations: Osteological Research and Processing Laboratory (ORPL), Forensic Anthropology Research Facility (FARF), and Evans Liberal Arts (ELA) 226

Course Description: This course is an intensive forensic anthropological field methods class held at FARF, an outdoor human decomposition facility located on the grounds of Freeman Ranch. Students will participate in the excavation of donated human remains from the Willed Body Donation program and will learn to locate, excavate, and recover human remains, associated personal effects, and other evidentiary materials from outdoor scenes and burial contexts. Topics and activities covered include clandestine graves, surface scatters, archaeological excavation techniques, evidence documentation, mapping techniques, photography, and biosafety procedures.

Course Goals and Objectives: Students will be trained in standard methods and techniques used to locate, document, excavate, and recover human remains, personal effects, and other associated materials to ensure legal credibility for all recoveries.

Required Textbook for All Students:
Dupras TL, Schultz JJ, and Williams U. 2005. Forensic Recovery of Human Remains: Archaeological Approaches. Boca Raton: CRC Press (available as a free online e-book at Texas State University’s library link). IMPORTANT: You must read your textbook in its entirety before the field component of this class begins, in order to be prepared for the topics and field exercises we will be engaging in.

Additional Required Readings for All Students:


CiFA’s Standard and Guidance for Forensic Archaeologists (access at link)
http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS&GForensics_2.pdf


Assessment of Student Learning:
Undergraduate Students: Field exercise grades will be based on a portfolio turned in by the student consisting of individual field notes and an individual formal field report; quizzes based on readings.

Graduate Students: Graduate students will turn in the same items as the undergraduate students. However, graduate students will be graded on additional items (see grading scale on next page). Graduate students will be required to fulfill the roll of Field Team Leaders during all phases of the excavation and display professionalism in leadership. They will be responsible for insuring that all assigned undergraduate team members rotate through required tasks including site staging, photography, note taking, site mapping, screening, excavation, evidence bagging, and skeletal inventory. Furthermore, graduate students must take daily field notes on all aspects of site management and personnel activities, and at the end of the course are required to turn in a Site Excavation Report that will be graded. Additional readings are required for graduate credit, and there will be quizzes based on the readings.

Each student will turn in individual field notes and a formal field report. The following items may be turned in as a group: field map, group photographs, and a final group presentation.
Grade Distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate Grading</th>
<th>Graduate Grading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burial Excavation Portfolio: 30%</td>
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<td>Participation: 40%</td>
<td>Leadership Skills: 15%</td>
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<td>Final Group Presentation: 10%</td>
<td>Professionalism: 10%</td>
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<td>Quizzes: 20%</td>
<td>Site Excavation Report: 15%</td>
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Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change depending on weather):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March 7 - May 12 (class component)</th>
<th>Dates and times arranged; Reading schedule will be assigned over TRACS, and quizzes over the textbook, assigned chapters, and articles will be given out via TRACS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, May 15</td>
<td>(9am) ORPL: Welcome and introductions; line searching, mapping, setting up grids, excavation techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue, May 16</td>
<td>(9am) ORPL: Burial detection; initiate burial excavation</td>
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<td>Wed, May 17</td>
<td>(8am) FARF: Burial excavation. Lunch discussion: talking to the media</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu, May 18</td>
<td>(8am) FARF: Burial excavation, equipment clean-up and body reburial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri, May 19</td>
<td>(9am) ELA 226: Work on group burial projects; Final presentations (lunch provided)</td>
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*Bring your lunch during the field exercise component. Prior to driving to FARF, you can put your lunch in the kitchen at ORPL. We will return from the field every day at 12:00 to ORPL so you can wash your hands and eat lunch (in that order!).

Appropriate Clothing:
On days we are in the field, you MUST wear long pants, above-the-ankle boots, and sleeved shirts (long or short). No tank tops allowed. If you are not dressed appropriately, you will not be permitted to enter FARF, and you will be sent home to change. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Minimum Personal Equipment you will need to bring during field days:

- 2 felt-tip black Sharpies (fine point, not ultra-fine), 2 mechanical pencils
- gridded notepad (available from the University Bookstore or an art/office supply store)
- backpack (day pack size)
- boots (above the ankle)
- leather/durable gloves
- hat
- bandana
- sunglasses
- change of clothes
- water bottle/canteen
- pocket knife
- bug repellent
- sun screen
- ChapStick