

**I. Synopsis:**

Human history and prehistory have been shaped in many ways by disease processes that leave their mark in the skeletal, archaeological and historical records. The skeletal marks of disease and injury provide clues to changing environmental, social, political and other cultural realities affecting the evolution of human society and culture. In other words, our biographies are written in our bones—the role of the anthropologist is to read and translate these so-called “osteobiographies.”

**II. Format:**

The first part of the course will cover the basics of osteology, bone as a living tissue, methodology in paleopathology, and diagnosis of pathology from skeletal and preserved soft tissue.

The rest of the course will focus on the “so what?” of paleopathology—the implications of pathology for larger historical and sociocultural processes, including emerging diseases that threaten the world today.

As a 400/500 level course, expect this to be demanding both on your energy and your intellect. As much as possible, I would like to maintain a seminar format. Although I will be helping you with much of the essentials, you will also be playing active roles in the course, through class discussions, reading presentations, project presentations, etc.. As mentioned below, the course content and readings can be very technical and demanding. It is essential, therefore, that you be actively involved in every aspect of this course. If you are not prepared to do so, I suggest you not take this course.

**III. The following themes will be developed in the course.**

- The history of paleopathology.
- Osteobiography and bioarchaeology: Bone as a living tissue and as an enduring record of lives past.
- Diagnosing health and illness from the osteological, fossil and molecular records.
- Work, wear and bone change.
- Reconstructing health, disease and illness through the biological, historical, prehistorical, archaeological, artistic, etc., records.
- Sociocultural and technological change and their implications for health.
- Ethnicity, class, gender and the osteological record.
- Using the past to address today’s and tomorrow’s problems such as emerging diseases, the health consequences of technological and economic change, etc.

**IV. Readings:** See ANGEL for reading guides.

- Clark Spencer Larsen—*Bioarchaeology: Interpreting Behavior from the Human Skeleton*.
- Charlotte Roberts—*The Archaeology of Disease, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.*”
- Other Readings will be placed on reserve.
- **Student Policies Webpage.** Don’t flunk this course or get tossed out of school because you “didn’t know...” You can find them at: <http://www.brockport.edu/policies/index.php>.
- The Larsen text deals with the expanding field of *bioarchaeology*—the use of physical anthropological analysis of skeletal materials to reconstruct the details of people’s lives. This is a very technical field—and working through some of the issues can be a challenge—even for me. *Bioarchaeology* goes into the techniques used by bioarchaeologists to tease out the mysteries of life and death. It is, to be blunt, one of the toughest textbooks in the field, and even I have to

work hard to pull everything together. But don’t lose heart. A lot of this course will focus on how to read—and master—difficult reading materials and concepts. *The Archaeology of Disease* is more user-friendly and focuses on the archaeological contexts for disease, especially in the UK.

**V. Assignments, Exams, Project, Grading:**

- **Assignments:** Throughout the semester you will be given reading and other assignments with specific due dates. Some assignments are generic (Everyone does them). Others—especially those relating to the project—are individualized. Each assignment will have a due date. You are expected to complete the assignment by that date and to come to class prepared to discuss the outcomes of the assignment. If you have having trouble with an assignment, let me know and I will try to help you. If, however, you are not adequately prepared (in my judgment) for a particular class, you will be sent away and an absence will be recorded for that day.
- **Content tests (60%):** There are *three* content tests that cover the readings and lectures. You will get detailed study guides with sample questions.
- **Project (30%):** You will be working on a multi-step course project throughout the semester. This will involve (1) identifying a research theme, (2) developing an annotated bibliography, (3) preparing case studies relevant to your theme and presenting them in class and (4) using the accumulated materials to prepare a final research paper or comparable project. You must complete each step of the project on time to pass the course.
- **Class Participation (10%).**

**VI. ANGEL**

- Course materials, assignments, guides, handouts, etc., will be posted on ANGEL: Look for the link [SPRING 2009 - ANT452-582 // Ancient Disease // Section 01](#)
- **Assignments:** Assignments will be posted on ANGEL. These may include exercises, virtual mini-labs, etc.
- **Study guides:** Each week a study guide covering the relevant readings and class materials will be posted. These will help you focus your readings and link them with the class content.
- **Handouts:** Periodically, handouts will be posted. These handouts relate to the materials covered in class. They may include (1) illustrations, diagrams, charts, etc, referred to in class, (2) in-class exercises that we will be working on in class, (3) guides to movies and videos covered in class, and (3) preparatory exercises. **Important: You must download and print these handouts and bring them to class on the assigned dates.**

**VII. Policies: Warning—Bad cop zone ahead!**

- **Attendance/Personal days:** You must be prepared to play an active role in the course on a week-by-week basis. In addition, lectures and presentations are based on case studies that cannot be easily looked up elsewhere. You are thus allowed a maximum of four (4) Personal/Sick days without penalty. However, to qualify, you must notify me as soon as possible ahead of time that you will be absent. If you do not notify me, the absence



will count as an unexcused absence, with the appropriate penalty. One letter grade will be deducted from the final grade for each absence beyond 2. Under rare circumstances, additional absences will be excused *only* for documented major emergencies beyond your control—the validity of which will be determined by me—and *provided that you make up the missed material*. If you anticipate difficulty attending classes don't take this course.

- **Writing:** As college students you should use appropriate spelling, grammar, syntax, word usage, verb form, paragraphing and punctuation. If you lack these skills you should get outside help from the Student Learning Center in B-10 Cooper.
- **Study time:** This is a demanding course. Devote at least six hours/week to course work outside of class, plus additional time before examinations and in completing written projects.
- **Getting help when you need it:** Small problems can be kept small if caught in time. If you have any difficulty please call me, e-mail me or drop by my office (C-10 Cooper) before you fall behind.
- **Withdrawals/Incompletes:** See attached Grading Standards and the student handbook: *Student Policies*.
- **Academic honesty:** Familiarize yourself with College policies on academic honesty/dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is fraud and will be treated accordingly. Any student engaging in academic

dishonesty while conducting course-related business risk failing the course and will be referred to the administration for further disciplinary action. See the student handbook: *Student Policies*.

- **Behavior:** This course is for mature adults only. If you don't fit that description drop the course now. *The following will not be tolerated and may result in your being removed from the course with a grade of E and possible additional disciplinary action by the college:* (1) disturbing other members of the class; (2) damaging or illegally removing college or public property (including library materials) while conducting course business; (3) failing to follow laboratory guidelines regarding handling of laboratory materials; (4) violations of other college policies relating to academic honesty.

### VIII. Special needs:

Students with documented disabilities may be entitled to specific accommodations. SUNY Brockport's Office for Student with Disabilities makes this determination. Please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at (585) 395-5409 or osdoffic@brockport.edu to inquire about obtaining an official letter to the course instructor detailing any approved accommodations. The student is responsible for providing the course instructor with an official letter. Faculty work as a team with the Office for Students with Disabilities to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

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## ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT EVALUATION ver 12/30/04

The following standards are intended to provide students with clearly defined expectations regarding course performance and to provide potential evaluators (graduate schools, employers, etc.) with a basis for interpreting student grades in all Anthropology courses at SUNY Brockport. Upon request from the student a copy of these guidelines will be made available to prospective employers and/or graduate admissions committees so that interested parties will understand the basis upon which letter grades in Anthropology courses are determined.

[Note: The College recognizes +/- grades (A-, C+, etc.). The award of a + or - within a grade range will reflect the degree to which the student meets the standards within a grade range.]

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF A,** A grade of **A** represents the highest level of performance. It requires that the student understand virtually all of the concepts and data of the course coupled with the ability to integrate these data and concepts and to develop new insights (at least for the student) from them. These guidelines also apply to papers. In addition, it is expected that an A paper will be virtually flawless in organization, grammar and style. Consistent performance at this level in different courses indicates that the student should be expected to perform well in a variety of high-pressure situations, such as graduate school, executive positions, professional training programs, etc. (Allowable grades: A, A-)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF B,** A grade of **B** represents the ability to perform at a level clearly above that expected of the average undergraduate in the mastery of course materials. Thus it represents work that is both good and respectable. It requires that the student understand virtually all of the concepts and data of the course coupled with the ability to integrate them in a meaningful whole. These standards also apply to papers. In addition, **B** papers are organized in a manner that is both sound and clear, with few stylistic or grammatical errors. Consistent performance at the **B** level reflects the ability to work consistently toward a thorough mastery of the subject matter. By these standards, the grade of **B** is a sign of academic reliability, indicative of an ability to handle graduate level work as well as an ability to perform effectively in many post-graduate occupations. (Allowable grades: B+, B, B-)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF C,** A grade of **C** represents the level of work expected of the average undergraduate. It requires that the student understand the basic concepts of the course work as well as their implications. Except in certain selective courses, a majority of the students will generally attain C level work. These guidelines also apply to papers. In addition, C level papers are clearly organized, although some grammatical and stylistic errors may interfere with communication. Consistent C level performance indicates the ability to obtain respectable liberal arts education coupled with the ability to handle the basic expectations of the college graduate. It also indicates that the student has been able to keep up with the basic requirements of the course. (Allowable grades: C+, C, C-). [Note: Some programs accept only courses that have a minimum grade of C. The grade of C- may not count in such programs.]

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF D,** A grade of **D** represents passing, but unacceptable work. It requires that the student understand the most basic concepts of the course and the use of the concepts accurately. As a passing grade, it is not to be awarded unless the student actually demonstrates a passing knowledge of the course materials. D level papers demonstrate a basic knowledge of the topic under investigation, although they are marred by one or more of the following: poor writing style, grammatical errors, and ineffective organization. (Allowable grades: D+, D, D-)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADE OF E,** The grade of **E** represents an inability to meet minimal criteria for D. No credit is awarded. (Allowable grade: E)

**POLICIES REGARDING ACADEMIC HONESTY, INCOMPLETE GRADES, AND WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE.** The Department of Anthropology strictly adheres to the policies detailed in *Student policies*. Please familiarize yourself with these policies

**EXPECTATIONS REGARDING WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS, PAPERS, ETC..** Students taking courses at all levels are expected to evidence a writing competency comparable to that provided in ENL 112 College Composition or the equivalent. Students lacking this ability should be concurrently enrolled in College Composition or in a remedial course recommended by the College. In addition, students in upper division courses are expected to be able to formulate problems, utilize available library resources in researching these problems, and to write standard term papers. Students experiencing difficulties in these skills are advised to consult with their instructor for assistance and guidance.