

INSTRUCTOR

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Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30AM – 11:30AM, Thursday 10:00AM – 12:00PM, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

FS 460/660 Forensic Taphonomy (3)

Processes associated with the decomposition and preservation of organic materials with an emphasis placed on human remains. *Prerequisites: CH 323/L. Concurrent registration in FS 460L required.*

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Each student will finish this class with the ability to:

- Identify and discuss processes of decomposition (Program Learning Objective 3)
- Define and discuss the effect of environmental variables on decomposition (Program Learning Objective 3)
- Discuss the application of taphonomy to medicolegal death investigation (Program Learning Outcome 3)
- Discuss the value of common and recently developed techniques in forensic taphonomy (Program Learning Outcome 4)

REQUIRED TEXT

You are required to purchase the Student License for a statistics software package:

GraphPad Prism 7*. <https://www.graphpad.com/>

Instructions for purchasing the Student License are found at

<https://www.graphpad.com/how-to-buy/student/>

All other reading materials will be provided.

* See me if you do not have a computer.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE*Oral Presentations*

Each student will be required to deliver two oral presentations. Each presentation will be a maximum of 15 minutes and will comprise a review of a recent publication in forensic taphonomy. Publications must be from the peer-reviewed literature and approved by the instructor.

Carcass Collection

Each student must submit 5 images of carcasses observed in nature. Carcasses must be animals, e.g. mammals, insects, reptiles, fish. Images can be captured via smartphone and submitted via email.

Time-Lapse Video

Graduate students must develop and present a time-lapse video of swine carcass decomposition. These images may be captured as part of FS 660L.

Activity	Points
Oral Presentations	200 @ 100 points presentation ⁻¹
Carcass Collection	250 @ 50 points carcass ⁻¹
Time-Lapse Video [†]	100
Total	450/550

The grading scale is:

100% - 90%	A
89% - 80%	B
79% - 70%	C
69% - 60%	D
≤ 59%	F

[†] Graduate Students Only

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week	Monday	Chapter	Subject	Notes
1	16 Jan		Introduction, syllabus & roster review Medicolegal Death Investigation	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
2	23 Jan		Introduction to Decomposition	
3	30 Jan		Introduction to Forensic Taphonomy	
4	6 Feb		Cadaver Decomposition: Lecture	
5	13 Feb		NO CLASS	AAFS Meeting – New Orleans
6	20 Feb		Cadaver Decomposition: Lecture	Presidents' Day
7	27 Feb		Cadaver Decomposition: Observation	
8	6 Mar		Cadaver Decomposition: Observation	
9	13 Mar		Oral Presentation 1	
10	20 Mar		NO CLASS	Spring Recess
11	27 Mar		Cause and Manner of Death	Prince Kuhio Day
12	3 Apr		Postmortem Microbiology	
13	10 Apr		Postmortem Interval	Good Friday
14	17 Apr		Volatile Organic Compounds <i>Guest Lecturer: Dr. Katelynn Perrault, PhD</i>	OSAC – Washington DC
15	24 Apr		Current Issues in Forensic Taphonomy	
16	1 May		Oral Presentation 2	
17	9 May		Finals Week – Time Lapse Video	

ADDITIONAL DIVISIONAL AND UNIVERSITY POLICES

Electronic Devices

Use of music devices and cell phones is prohibited during all Natural Science and Mathematics classes at Chaminade, unless specifically permitted by your instructor. Use of cellphones and music devices in laboratories is a safety issue. In addition, use of cellphones and music devices in any class is discourteous and may lead to suspicion of academic misconduct. Students who cannot comply with this rule will be asked to leave class and may be subject to laboratory safety violation fines. You will be asked to leave class and marked absent if you do not comply. This will negatively affect your grade. Please refer any questions to the Dean of Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

ADAA Statement

Pursuant to several federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all qualified students with disabilities are protected from discrimination on basis of disability and are eligible for reasonable accommodations or modifications in the academic environment to enable them to enjoy equal access to academic programs, services, or activities. If a student would like to determine if they meet the criteria for accommodations, they should contact the Counseling Center at 808-735-4845 for further information.

Attendance & Tardiness

Students are expected to attend regularly all courses for which they are registered. Students should notify their instructors when illness or other extenuating circumstances prevents them from attending class and make arrangements to complete missed assignments. Notification may be done by emailing the instructor's Chaminade email address, calling the instructor's campus extension or by leaving a message with the instructor's division office (Natural Sciences and Mathematics +1 (808) 440-4204). It is the instructor's prerogative to modify deadlines of course requirements accordingly. Any student who stops attending a course without officially **withdrawing** may receive a failing grade.

Unexcused absences equivalent to more than a week of classes may lead to a grade reduction for the course. Any unexcused absence of two consecutive weeks or more may result in being **withdrawn** from the course by the instructor, although the instructor is not required to **withdraw** students in that scenario. Repeated absences put students at risk of failing grades.

Policy on Make-Up Tests

Make-up exams will not be given, due to the team-oriented structure of Zam Time. You are required to inform your Zam Team and Dr. Carter of your absence as soon as possible.

Policy on Communication

The University provides a Chaminade email address for all students. Official Chaminade communications will be sent to the students' Chaminade email address and instructors will use only this email to communicate with students. It is the responsibility of the student to check their email frequently. Report email-related problems to the Helpdesk at 808-735-4855 or helpdesk@chaminade.edu.

Laboratory Safety Information

The following guidelines are established to provide instructions in maintaining safety for students, staff, and faculty while using any of the science laboratories at Chaminade University. The Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM), along with the University Environmental Safety Office are responsible for enforcing the regulations set forth in the current Student Handbook. Queries should be addressed to: Dean of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (808) 440-4204; Environmental Safety Officer (808) 739-4811

Title IX Declaration

Chaminade University of Honolulu recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. Sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse will NOT be tolerated at CUH. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, I am interested in promoting a safe and healthy environment, and should I learn of any sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you want to speak to a confidential source you may contact the following:

- Chaminade Counseling Center (808) 735-4845.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to have read and to abide by the "Student Rules of Conduct" which are available in your copy of Chaminade University's Student Handbook. Cheating in the form of plagiarism, collusion, deception and will not be tolerated and will negatively affect your grade.

The instructor may modify elements of this syllabus according to the operational needs of the class.