

INSTRUCTOR

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:30AM – 11:00AM and 3:00PM – 5:00PM, Friday 9:30AM – 11:00AM, or by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

FS 460L Forensic Taphonomy Laboratory (1)

Quantitative and qualitative methods for investigating decomposition and its application in medicolegal death investigation. *Concurrent registration in FS 460 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)
- Design and conduct a decomposition study (Program Learning Outcome 1)
- Measure decomposition (Program Learning Outcome 4)
- Analyze and interpret data generated by a decomposition study (Program Learning Outcome 1, 2)

REQUIRED TEXT

You are required to acquire access to Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets. All other materials will be provided.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE*Carcass Decomposition Study*

You will be assigned decomposition metrics to measure. You are responsible for managing your datasets. Decomposition metrics may include:

- Mass Loss
- Total Body Score [Megyesi et al. (2005) and Keough et al. (2017)]
- Skin pH
- Skin Eh
- Skin Temperature
- Larval Mass pH
- Larval Mass Eh
- Larval Mass Temperature
- Ambient Temperature
- Ambient Relative Humidity

You will be required to progress through the following Milestones: Collect, Organize, Analyze, Present your dataset. You will earn 25 points at the completion of each of these milestones.

Oral Presentations

You will be required to deliver an oral presentation at the end of the semester. This presentation will be a maximum of 15 minutes. This presentation will comprise your interpretation of your decomposition dataset.

| Activity | Points |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Attendance | 120 @ 10 points per class |
| Experimental Dataset | 100 @ 25 points per milestone |
| Oral Presentation | 100 |
| Total | 320 |

The grading scale is:

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

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

| Week | Monday | Subject | Notes |
|-------------|---------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | 15 Jan | Class Cancelled | Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. |
| 2 | 22 Jan | Introduction, Syllabus Review, Orientation | |
| 3 | 29 Jan | Team Assignments & Measurements | |
| 4 | 5 Feb | Mass Loss and Total Body Score | |
| 5 | 12 Feb | Accumulated Degree Days and Humidity | |
| 6 | 19 Feb | Class Cancelled | AAFS 2018 – Seattle |
| 7 | 26 Feb | Skin pH, Skin Eh, Soil pH | |
| 8 | 5 Mar | Forensic Entomology – Collection | |
| 9 | 12 Mar | Class Cancelled | OSAC – Chicago |
| 10 | 19 Mar | Forensic Entomology - Preservation | |
| 11 | 26 Mar | Class Cancelled | Spring Recess |
| 12 | 2 Apr | Final Experimental Preparation | |
| 13 | 9 Apr | Experimental – Day 0 | |
| 14 | 16 Apr | Experimental – Day 7 | |
| 15 | 23 Apr | Experimental – Day 14 | |
| 16 | 30 Apr | Data Presentations | Dead Week |

ADDITIONAL DIVISIONAL AND UNIVERSITY POLICES*Academic Integrity*

Students are expected to follow the Forensic Sciences Code of Conduct. In addition, students are expected to read and abide by the Student Rules of Conduct which are available in your copy of the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty, in any form, will not be tolerated.

Absences

- A planned, excused absence must be communicated to the instructor at least one week prior to class. Necessary arrangements will be made to meet student learning objectives.
- Unexcused absences for two consecutive weeks may result in being withdrawn from the course by the instructor.
- An unplanned, excusable absence must be communicated to the instructor within one week of the missed class. Necessary arrangements will be made to meet student learning objectives.
 - Excused absences include but are not limited to
 - Documented illness or illness
 - Documented family emergency – parent or guardian communication required
 - Determination of other valid excuses for missed classes is at the sole discretion of the instructor.

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.

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 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.

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 Chaminade Counseling Center at (808) 735-4845.

Electronic Devices

Use of music devices is prohibited during all Natural Science and Mathematics classes at Chaminade, unless specifically permitted by your instructor. Use of music devices in laboratories is a safety issue. In addition, use of 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.

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