

INSTRUCTOR

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Office Hours Mondays, 3:00PM – 4:30PM
Tuesdays, 10:00AM – 1:00PM
Fridays, 3:00PM – 4:30PM

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)

MARIANIST CHARACTERISTICS

This class represents one component of your education at Chaminade University of Honolulu. An education in the Marianist Tradition is marked by five principles and you should take every opportunity possible to reflect upon the role of these characteristics in your education and development:

1. Education for formation in faith
2. Provide an integral, quality education
3. Educate in family spirit
4. Educate for service, justice and peace
5. Educate for adaptation and change

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:

- Photographs
- 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 & Accumulated Degree Days
- Ambient Relative Humidity

You are required to submit an organized dataset in Microsoft Excel format. This is an all-or-nothing assignment where you earn 100 points for an acceptable dataset or zero points for an unacceptable dataset.

Image Scoring

We will conduct a research project in conjunction with Dr. Agathe Ribereau-Gayon at University College London. This project requires us to score images of the carcasses that we decomposed. Images will be de-identified to minimize cognitive bias. Scoring will be conducted during the last two lab periods; Megyesi scoring first, followed by Keough scoring. The submission of each set of scores will yield 100 points per set.

Activity	Points
Attendance	140 @ 10 points per class
Experimental Dataset	100
Image Scoring	200 @ 100 points per system
Total	440

The grading scale is:	100% - 90%	A
	89% - 80%	B
	79% - 70%	C
	69% - 60%	D
	≤ 59%	F

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Subject	Notes
1	16 Jan	Introduction, Orientation	
2	23 Jan	Experimental Overview, Availability, Site Visit	
3	30 Jan	Probe Training – pH and Eh	
4	6 Feb	Total Body Score Training – Keough	
5	13 Feb	Total Body Score Training – Megyesi	
6	20 Feb	Class Cancelled	AAFS – Baltimore, MD
7	27 Feb	Site Preparation, Confirm Availability, Site Visit	
8	6 Mar	Taphonomy Experiment	
9	13 Mar	Taphonomy Experiment	
10	20 Mar	Taphonomy Experiment	
11	27 Mar	Class Cancelled	Spring Break
12	3 Apr	Data Organization	Sullivan Library Lab
13	10 Apr	Data Analysis	Sullivan Library Lab
14	17 Apr	Forensic Entomology – Preservation & Collections	
15	24 Apr	Image Scoring – Megyesi	
16	1 May	Image Scoring - Keough	Lab Finals 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 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.