

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CANTON, NEW YORK**



MASTER SYLLABUS

**COURSE NUMBER – COURSE NAME
JUST 370 – Forensic Taphonomy**

Created by: Carrie LeGarde

Updated by: Carrie LeGarde

School of Science, Health, and Criminal Justice

Department: Criminal Justice

Semester/Year: Fall 2021

- A. **TITLE:** Forensic Taphonomy
- B. **COURSE NUMBER:** JUST 370
- C. **CREDIT HOURS:** (Hours of Lecture, Laboratory, Recitation, Tutorial, Activity)

Credit Hours: 3
Lecture Hours: 3 per week
Lab Hours: per week
 Other: per week

Course Length: 15 Weeks

- D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** Yes No

- E. **GER CATEGORY:** None: Yes: GER
If course satisfies more than one: GER

- F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall Spring Fall & Spring

- G. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is an introduction to forensic taphonomy, including an overview of forensic anthropology and archaeology. The course provides a history of forensic anthropology, archaeology, and taphonomy, as well as current challenges and future directions. Specific topics to be covered include the depositional environment, postmortem modifications affecting human remains, and estimating the postmortem interval.

- H. **PRE-REQUISITES:** None Yes If yes, list below:

45 credit hours or permission of the instructor.

CO-REQUISITES: None Yes If yes, list below:

I. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: (see key below)

By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

<u>Course Student Learning Outcome</u> <u>[SLO]</u>	<u>Program Student Learning Outcome</u> <u>[PSLO]</u>	<u>GER</u> <u>[If Applicable]</u>	<u>ISLO & SUBSETS</u>	
a. Define forensic anthropology, archaeology, and taphonomy.			2-Crit Think ISLO ISLO	CA Subsets Subsets Subsets
b. Understand general postmortem processes..			2-Crit Think ISLO ISLO	CA Subsets Subsets Subsets
c. Describe postmortem processes.			2-Crit Think ISLO ISLO	CA Subsets Subsets Subsets
d. Demonstrate an understanding of the depositional environment.			2-Crit Think ISLO ISLO	CA Subsets Subsets Subsets
e. Understand and apply the postmortem interval.			2-Crit Think ISLO ISLO	CA Subsets Subsets Subsets
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KEY	<u>Institutional Student Learning Outcomes [ISLO 1 – 5]</u>
ISLO #	ISLO & Subsets
1	Communication Skills Oral [O], Written [W]
2	Critical Thinking <i>Critical Analysis [CA], Inquiry & Analysis [IA], Problem Solving [PS]</i>
3	Foundational Skills <i>Information Management [IM], Quantitative Lit./Reasoning [QTR]</i>
4	Social Responsibility <i>Ethical Reasoning [ER], Global Learning [GL], Intercultural Knowledge [IK], Teamwork [T]</i>
5	Industry, Professional, Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

*Include program objectives if applicable. Please consult with Program Coordinator

J. **APPLIED LEARNING COMPONENT:** Yes No

If YES, select one or more of the following categories:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom/Lab | <input type="checkbox"/> Civic Engagement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internship | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Works/Senior Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Placement | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practicum | <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service Learning | (program, class, project) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Service | |

K. **TEXTS:**

Schotsmans, E.M.J., Marquez-Grant, N., & Forbes, S.L. 2017. Taphoomy of Human Remains: Forensic Analysis of the Dead and the Depositional Environment. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Ltd. ISBN 9781118953327.

L. **REFERENCES:**

Christensen, A.M., Passalacqua, N.V., & Bartelink, E.J. (Eds). 2014. Forensic Anthropology: Current Methods and Practice. San Diego, CA: Elsevier Inc.
Haglund, W. D. & Sorg, M. H. 1997. Forensic Taphonomy: The Postmortem Fate of Human Remains. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
Haglund, W. D. & Sorg, M. H. (Eds). 2001. Advances in Forensic Taphonomy: Method, Theory, and Archaeological Perspectives. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
Pokines, J., & Symes, S.A. (Eds). 2013. Manual of Forensic Taphonomy. New York, NY: CRC Press. [Free Library EBSCO E-book]
Tersigni-Tarrant, M.A. & Shirley, N.R. (Eds). 2013. Forensic Anthropology: An Introduction. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press. [Free Library EBSCO E-book]

M. **EQUIPMENT:** None Needed:

N. **GRADING METHOD:** A-F

O. **SUGGESTED MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**

Quizzes, exams, papers, assignments/discussion boards

P. **DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:**

- I. Introduction to taphonomy
 - a. Definitions of taphonomy
 - b. History of forensic archaeology and taphonomy
 - c. Link between forensic anthropology and taphonomy
- II. History of forensic anthropology
 - a. Development of the field of forensic anthropology
 - b. Forensic anthropology research facilities
- III. General postmortem processes

- a. Postmortem changes in the human body
- b. Taphonomic alterations to hair, nails, and teeth
- IV. The depositional environment
 - a. Bone weathering
 - b. Aquatic environments
 - c. Animal scavenging
 - d. Forensic entomology and botany
- V. Postmortem modifications to the body
 - a. Chemical changes
 - b. Thermal alterations
 - c. Peri- vs post-mortem trauma
 - d. Effects of recovery methods
- VI. The postmortem interval
 - a. Estimating time and circumstances since death
 - b. Confounding variables

Q. LABORATORY OUTLINE: None Yes