Potential changes in light of the COVID-19 pandemic

Please note that information regarding teaching, learning and assessment in this module handbook endeavours to be as accurate as possible. However, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the changeable nature of the situation and the possibility of updates in government guidance, there may need to be changes during the course of the year. UCL will keep current students updated of any changes to teaching, learning and assessment on https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/. This also include Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which may help you with any queries that you may have.

ARCL0115: Variation and Evolution of the Human Skull

2022-23, Term 1
MSc BAFA Core Module
15 Credits

Co-ordinator: Dr. Rebecca Watts
r.watts@ucl.ac.uk

Room 204b, 2nd Floor Institute of Archaeology
Drop-in Hours: Tuesdays 14.00 – 16.00

Please refer to the online IoA Student Handbook (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook) and IoA Study Skills Guide (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide) for instructions on coursework submission, IoA referencing guidelines and marking criteria, as well as UCL policies on penalties for late submission, overlength work and academic misconduct.
1. MODULE OVERVIEW

MODULE DESCRIPTION
This half-unit module, taught in Term 1, gives a detailed introduction to the methodology used in the study of the skull in archaeology and physical anthropology, and the main current issues in research. It provides an anatomical background to the skull, as well as morphological variation, changes with age and development, and pathology, dealing specifically with the remains of Late Pleistocene and Holocene hominids, especially anatomically modern humans, but including Neanderthals. The week-by-week schedule is given below.

MODULE AIMS
This module introduces students to the study of the skull in archaeology and physical anthropology, and the main current issues in research. It provides an anatomical background to the skull, as well as morphological variation, sexual dimorphism, changes with age and development, and cranial pathology. It deals specifically with the remains of Late Pleistocene and Holocene anatomically modern humans.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
On successful completion of the module, in addition to specialist knowledge and skills, students should have developed skills of observation and inference, critical reflection and application of acquired knowledge.

It is intended that this module will provide students with the skills required to plan a research project, under the supervision of a more experienced researcher. When they have successfully completed the module, students should:

- be able to identify confidently all the bones of the skull in both adult and juvenile remains
- be able to label the main features and landmarks of the skull
- have an understanding of variation in size and shape of the skull, and its interpretation in terms of sexual dimorphism, growth and modern human origins
- to be able to take the most commonly used skull measurements and have a working knowledge of the main statistical methods used to interpret them
- have an understanding of development of the skull and its role in estimating age-at-death
- be able to recognise the most common types of pathological lesions and developmental anomalies in the skull and discuss the ways in which they may be interpreted.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT
This course is assessed by means of:

(a) one essay of 2,500 words, which will contribute 60% to the final grade for the course. Due on MONDAY 21st of November 2022.

(b) one practical examination, to be held on THURSDAY 8th December 2022, which will contribute 40% to the final grade for the course

COMMUNICATION
- Moodle is the main hub for this course.
- Important information will be posted by staff in the Announcements section of the Moodle page and you will automatically receive an email notification for these.
- Please post any general queries relating to module content, assessments and administration in the MS Teams Module forum (or via email if you prefer). The forum will be checked regularly.
- For personal queries, please contact the co-ordinator by email.
WEEK-BY-WEEK SUMMARY
Lectures will take place on Tuesdays between 11:00-12:00 in room 433, 16 Taviton Street. Practical classes will take place on Thursdays in room 308 of the Institute of archaeology at the following times:

**Group A**: 10:00-12:00, **Group B**: 13:00-15:00

You will join ONE of two practical groups. Prior to the first session a list will be circulated, asking you to indicate any times that you CANNOT do. You will then be assigned to a group and the list will be circulated via Teams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Practical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Craniology and Terminology</td>
<td>Norma lateralis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What Defines a Human Skull?</td>
<td>Norma verticalis and occipitalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Origins and Dispersals of Modern Humans</td>
<td>Norma frontalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>How Skulls Vary in Size and Shape</td>
<td>Norma basilaris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Essay Writing Seminar</td>
<td>Endocranial landmarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Reading week</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Development of the Skull</td>
<td>Individual cranial bones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Development of the Face</td>
<td>Individual facial bones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cranial Pathology</td>
<td>Non-adult skull bones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cranial Modification</td>
<td><strong>Practical examination</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Facial Reconstruction</td>
<td>Skull measurements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WEEKLY MODULE PLAN
The module is taught through lectures and practical classes. Students will be required to undertake set readings, and complete pre-class activities in order to be able to actively participate. Each week, on Monday, the lecture slides for that weeks’ lecture will be made available.

WORKLOAD
This is a 15-credit module which equates to 150 hours of learning time including session preparation, background reading, and researching and writing your assignments. With that in mind you should expect to organise your time in roughly this way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 hours</td>
<td><strong>Staff-led teaching sessions (lectures, practical sessions)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 hours</td>
<td><strong>Self-guided session preparation (reading, listening, note-taking and online activities), about 5 hours a week</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 hours</td>
<td><strong>Reading for, and writing, the research essay</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 hours</td>
<td><strong>Preparing for the Practical Examination</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. ASSESSMENT

Each assignment and possible approaches to it will be discussed in class, in advance of the submission deadline. If students are unclear about the nature of an assignment, they should discuss this with the Module Co-ordinator in advance (via drop-in hours or class Moodle forum). You will receive feedback on your written coursework via Moodle and have the opportunity to discuss your marks and feedback with the co-ordinator in their office hours.

For more details see the ‘Assessment’ section on Moodle. The IoA marking criteria can be found in the IoA Student Handbook (Section 12: Information on assessment) and the IoA Study Skills Guide provides useful guidance on writing different types of assignment.

Please note that late submission, exceeding the maximum word count and academic misconduct (plagiarism) will be penalized and can significantly reduce the mark awarded for the assignment and/or overall module result. Serious offences will be punishable by death. On requirements, please do consult https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook/12-information-assessment with sections 12.8: submission deadlines, 12.10: word count, 12.12-14: academic integrity.

ASSESSMENT 1: ESSAY (60%)
Word length: 2,500 words
Deadline: 21st November 2022

Choose one of the following titles. They are all carefully focused questions which have substantial literature and evidence, giving you the best chance to write a good essay. Write the title at the start of your essay and DO NOT CHANGE IT IN ANY WAY. One of the things we test you on in the essay is your ability to focus on a defined question and attempt to answer it.

1) Using evidence from published studies, discuss how the development of the chondrocranium may be used to estimate age-at-death for non-adult individuals.
2) Is there evidence that an evolutionary trend in human skull morphology has taken place over the past 10,000 years? Use published examples to justify your answer.
3) How accurate are analyses of the human cranium in estimating biological sex? Outline some of the limitations which may affect the accuracy of various methods.
4) Anatomical skeletal collections contain large numbers of known-age and -sex individuals, which are considered crucial for developing and testing anthropological methods. However, their use has been called into question due to their associations with structural violence. What are the arguments for and against the continued use of these collections?

ASSESSMENT 2: PRACTICAL EXAMINATION (40%)
The practical examination will take place on THURSDAY 8th December 2022 during your normal practical class time, in Room 308 of the IoA. The examination consists of 15-20 skull fragments which students are asked to write short notes on. This will include, for example, the element(s) present, the side of the body the fragment comes from, and which anatomical landmarks are present.

3. RESOURCES & PREPARATION FOR CLASS

You are expected to read 1-4 of the weekly reading list each week. Completing the readings is essential for your effective participation in the activities and discussions that we will do, and it will greatly enhance your understanding of the material covered. Further readings are necessary for you to get a sense of the range of current work on a given topic, particularly for your essay assessment.
RECOMMENDED BASIC TEXTS AND ONLINE RESOURCES

These are intended to provide only the most basic of introductions to the various topics discussed during the lectures. A more comprehensive reading list for each week of the module is provided later in this handbook; however, this is not exhaustive, and it is expected that each student will expand upon these provided articles in their own time.


Online skull atlases:

- [https://eskeletons.org/boneviewer/nid/12537/region/skull/bone/cranium](https://eskeletons.org/boneviewer/nid/12537/region/skull/bone/cranium)
- [http://virtualhumanembryo.lsuhsc.edu/IAHS/Skull/Skull_BL.html](http://virtualhumanembryo.lsuhsc.edu/IAHS/Skull/Skull_BL.html)

4. SYLLABUS

**WEEK 1: CRANIOLOGY AND TERMINOLOGY**

WEEK 2: WHAT DEFINES A HUMAN SKULL?


WEEK 3: ORIGINS AND DISPERSALS OF MODERN HUMANS


**WEEK 4: HOW SKULLS VARY IN SIZE AND SHAPE**


**WEEKS 7-8: DEVELOPMENT OF THE SKULL & FACE**


MEDICAL SCIENCES JB 145 ENL


WEEK 9: CRANIAL PATHOLOGY


https://www.proquest.com/docview/2441653998?fromopenview=true&pq-origsite=gscholar

https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/8c37/44fc31bc2ba590fa70f5bd4052dd25608bd6.pdf


https://www.oooojournal.net/article/S2212-4403(21)00596-4/fulltext


https://www.nature.com/articles/ejhg2010235


https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1879981718300950?casaca_token= dz6u24aXwgAAAAA_A_y2xm6zyUEZhn5Fkg8h1zJA2k8ApE2jvYP9Syev2--OIEY3PpvRt-5FwbPjr3diM-wPbudYR4BM

**WEEK 10: CRANIAL MODIFICATION**


**WEEK 11: FACIAL RECONSTRUCTION**


Examples of Facial Reconstructions


