



FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM
GRADUATE STUDENT GUIDELINES
2011-2012

DEPARTMENT OF ANATOMY AND NEUROBIOLOGY

DIVISION OF GRADUATE MEDICAL SCIENCES

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Supplement to Boston University Division of Graduate Medical Sciences Guidebook

Approved: 08/2011

Guide for Masters Degree Candidates

Full-Time Faculty in Forensic Anthropology

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Graduate Student Committee

This committee directs and oversees the Forensic Anthropology Graduate Program within the Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology. Its responsibilities include but are not limited to: admission decisions, policy-making, the establishment of academic requirements, the resolution of disputes and curriculum development. The Committee consists of the Director of the Forensic Anthropology Graduate Program, the Associate Director of the Forensic Anthropology Graduate Program, the Thesis Research Coordinator and one other full-time faculty member.

All students will meet with the Graduate Student Committee in the summer of their first year. The purpose of this meeting will be to evaluate the student's overall performance in the program and to make plans for their final year.

Description of the MS Program

Coursework

The program for the MS degree consists of the equivalent of approximately two calendar years of fundamental course work, including laboratory-based course work and at least two semesters of thesis research work and a written thesis. Students may also complete internships, directed studies and/or field school opportunities as part of their graduate education. Candidates are required to complete a minimum of 42 credits at the graduate level and pass a competency examination. It is not uncommon for students to complete additional course work, internship opportunities, directed studies and/or field school that will increase their overall number of credits by the time of graduation.

Program Advisor

Upon beginning the MS program, each student will be assigned a program advisor to assist him/her in selecting an appropriate course of study. Program advisors will be full-time faculty members in the Forensic Anthropology Program and will approve and sign course registration forms, approve and assign grades for internships, and help students choose an appropriate thesis advisor by the end of the first year of study. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor a minimum of twice a year.

Grades

To receive graduation credit in any course taken as part of the MS program, students must receive a grade of B- or higher. If a grade of C+ or lower (including grades of an "I" after one year) occurs in eight credit hours or more a student will be automatically dismissed from the Program.

When the work of a course has not been completed within the semester of registration due to extenuating circumstances, the grade of "I" may be issued at the discretion of the instructor. A grade of "I" only can be given if a student is currently passing the course. This automatically becomes a permanent grade of "I" (unsatisfactory grade) unless the course work is completed within one calendar year. "Incomplete" grades may not be changed after a period of one calendar year from the time the original grade is recorded. Grades of "I" (after one year) and C+ or lower are interpreted as failures.

Multiple choice, true-false style questions are graded as correct or incorrect. Short answer, essay or other handwritten responses are graded by the professor as they indicate. If you are UNCLEAR about the grading rubric ask your instructor.

Grade Scale

The following grading scale will be used in all courses in this program:

A	94+	C+	77-79
A-	90-93	C	74-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-73
B	84-86	D	61-69
B-	80-83	F	<60

Attendance

Attendance is required in all courses. If a situation arises that requires a student to miss a scheduled class, the student must e-mail the instructor and inform him/her that he/she will miss class. Unanticipated or emergency absences will be considered individually. Unexcused absences will be penalized by subtraction of 1% from the final grade per absence. If you arrive late to a class BE SURE to sign the attendance sheet prior to leaving. Habitual lateness (i.e., more than three per course) will be penalized 1% from the final grade.

Assignments

Each course will require specific writing assignments (including lab assignments) to be submitted during the semester by specified due dates. Late assignments will be accepted but will be penalized 1 point per day

(including weekends) and no assignment (including lab assignments or casework) will be accepted after 10 days beyond the original due date.

Requirements for the MS Degree

Core Course Requirements

Students entering the program will be required to take the following core courses. Planning of the academic schedule shall be carried out in consultation with the student's program advisor.

GMS FA 705	Forensic Anthropology Techniques	.....3 Credits
GMS FA 706	Forensic Anthropological Procedures	.....3 Credits
GMS FA 710	Topics in Forensic Anthropology	.....2 Credits
GMS FA 712	Human Anatomy and Osteology	.....4 Credits
GMS FA 716	Expert Witness Testimony	.....2 Credits
GMS FA 718	Special Topics in FA: Outdoor Crime Scene Awareness	.....3 Credits
GMS FA 740	Seminar in Forensic Anthropology	.....2 Credits
GMS FA 755	Directed Study in Forensic Anthropology	.....4 Credits
GMS FA 760	Research in Anthropology	.....6 Credits
GMS FA 800	Field Methods in Forensic Anthropology Lab	.....2 Credits
GMS FA 802	Applied Forensic Anthropology	.....3 Credits
GMS FA 804	Experimental Design for Forensic Anthropology	.....2 Credits
GMS FA 805	Advanced Crime Scene Investigation	.....2 Credits
GMS FA 806	Advanced Osteology	.....4 Credits

Students may transfer credits for any of the above courses if it is deemed that an equivalent and appropriate graduate level course has been successfully completed in the preceding 3 years at an accredited college or university. In order to obtain transfer credits, students must provide a course description, transcript and syllabus from the completed course. Students who receive a waiver for a core course must complete an elective course in its place. Requests to substitute an equivalent course for credit must be submitted on the appropriate forms to the Graduate Student Committee.

Sequence of courses:

Year 1

Fall

FA 709	Medicolegal Death Investigation	2 Credits
FA 712	Human Anatomy and Osteology	4 Credits
FA 755	Directed Study in Forensic Anthropology	4 Credits
FA 718	Special Topics in FA: Outdoor Crime Scene Awareness	3 Credits (10-12 stds)

Spring

FA 705	Forensic Anthropology Techniques	3 Credits
FA 710	Topics in Forensic Anthropology	2 Credits
FA 711	Forensic Pathology	3 Credits
FA 804	Experimental Design for Forensic Anthropology	2 Credits

FA 718	Special Topics in FA: Outdoor Crime Scene Awareness	3 Credits (10-12 stds)
<i>FA 708</i>	<i>Homicide Investigation</i>	<i>2 Credits</i>

Summer

FA 760	Research in Anthropology	4 Credits
<i>FA 720</i>	<i>Internship in Forensic Anthropology</i>	<i>2 Credits</i>

Year 2

Fall

FA 706	Forensic Anthropological Procedures	3 Credits
FA 740	Seminar in Forensic Anthropology	2 Credits
FA 800	Field Methods in Forensic Anthropology	2 Credits
<i>FA 805</i>	<i>Advanced Crime Scene Investigations</i>	<i>2 Credits</i>

Spring

FA 716	Expert Witness Testimony	2 Credits
FA 802	Applied Forensic Anthropology	3 Credits
FA 806	Advanced Osteology	3 Credits

* *courses in italics are optional*

Elective Courses

In addition to the core courses listed above, students may register for courses offered by the Biomedical Forensic Sciences program, departments of Anthropology and Archaeology or any graduate courses offered by the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences or the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Course selection will be carried out in consultation with the student's program advisor.

Thesis and the Research Committee

Research Committee

By the end of the first year (in the graduate program, each student **must** select a Research Committee in consultation with his/her program advisor. Research or work toward the thesis **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** without prior approval from the Research Committee. The Research Committee will include two Forensic Anthropology faculty members (full-time or adjunct). The student's program advisor may or may not be part of the Research Committee, depending on his/her area of specialty. Each student will choose a primary thesis advisor who will serve as the first reader and another faculty member who will be the second reader of the thesis. If one of the readers is not a full-time faculty member, the student must obtain a one-day special appointment in advance for that individual through the registrar's office.

The Research Committee will meet with the student at intervals of not more than two months once the student begins working on his/her research. **These meetings will be initiated and arranged by the student.** The Research Committee will consider the student's research plan, assist in implementing that plan and guide the writing process. The student should note that the two members of the Committee (first and second readers) must sign the finished thesis. Therefore, the student should seriously consider the advice of the Research Committee. **All deadlines for submission of thesis work and the required forms to the registrar's office are the responsibility of the student. Failure to meet these deadlines may require the student to register as a continuing student for an additional semester in order to complete his/her thesis.**

Thesis Proposal

All students are required to submit a thesis proposal to the Thesis Research Coordinator during the 1st semester, and the final copy of the proposal is due to the Graduate Student Committee by February 1st of their first year. Students will begin developing their thesis proposals during the Directed Study course in the Fall of the first year. Prior to preparing the proposal, students will meet with the Thesis Research Coordinator to develop an appropriate research topic. The proposal will be reviewed by the Graduate Student Committee, and comments and suggestions will be given to the students by March 15th. The proposal will be further developed as part of the Experimental Design course offered in the Summer I semester. The FINAL version of the thesis proposal will be submitted to the Graduate Student Committee by July 1st of the student's first year.

Thesis (Directed Research)

All thesis projects are laboratory or field-work based. Library theses are not acceptable. The body of the thesis document must be **a minimum of 65 double-spaced pages in length (not including figures and tables)**. Information about margins, font size etc can be found in the *Research Guide for Writers of Theses and Dissertations*, prepared by Boston University's Mugar Memorial Library. The process of conducting research and writing a thesis requires approximately **8-12 months to complete**. The thesis is **NOT** a term paper, library book review or a laboratory report. It will NOT be graded and passed back to you. One to two faculty members will spend considerable time reading and editing your thesis a minimum of twice. As a piece of scientific work it must include a clearly stated hypothesis or scientific question that is being addressed or investigated. The hypothesis or question should be related to laboratory/field experience. Students should be mindful of the significant time commitment involved in a field- or laboratory-based project, availability of instrumentation, supplies and chemical/biological standards as well as the availability of an appropriate faculty member(s) for guidance.

All work must be properly cited in an accepted format. The reference list must include authors, year published, title of article, journal, volume and inclusive pages. References are listed alphabetically by author. The following provides examples of a suggested format for references:

Gilmore TD, White DW, Sarkar S and Sif S (1995) Malignant transformation of cells by the v-Rel oncoprotein. In, *The DNA Provirus: Howard Temin's Scientific Legacy* (Cooper GM, Greenberg-Temin R & Sugden B, eds), American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC, pp 109-128.

White DW and Gilmore TD (1993) Temperature-sensitive transforming mutants of the v-rel oncogene. *Journal of Virology* 67 6876-6881.

White DW, Roy A and Gilmore TD (1995) The v-Rel oncoprotein blocks apoptosis and proteolysis

of I κ B- α in transformed chicken spleen cells. *Oncogene* 10 857-868.

AJPA Format:

Hanson CL, Owsley DW. 1980. Frontal sinus size in Eskimo populations. *Am J Phys Anthropol* 53:251-255.

JFS Format:

(Numbered throughout text, not alphabetical in the references section.)

Albert AM, Maples WR. Stages of epiphyseal union for thoracic and lumbar vertebral centra as a method of age determination for teenage and young adult skeletons. *J Forensic Sci* 1995; 40(4):623-33.

All statements and facts that are not the student's own conclusions or original data **MUST** be cited. The majority of citations **MUST** be from peer-reviewed journal articles. Textbook citations and personal communications should be limited to less than 5% of literature cited. Web sites and their documents (other than peer-reviewed journal reprints) are generally unsuitable as reference sources and as such are discouraged. Students must incorporate a minimum of **45 references** into their overall work. The complete set of formal requirements for a thesis available from the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences (*Research Guide for Writers of Theses and Dissertations*, prepared by Boston University's Mugar Memorial Library).

<http://gmsfile.bumc.bu.edu/pdfs/thesisgd.pdf>

A full draft of the thesis will be reviewed by both readers at least **twice** before it can be submitted to the graduate school. The readers must be allowed at least 3 weeks to read each draft and then return it with their suggestions for revision. **Students are expected to spend at least 8-12 months for the discussion of their thesis topic with their advisors, planning and implementing the research and writing the thesis.** Extensions are **NOT** provided if students do not meet graduate school deadlines. **It is the student's responsibility to obtain the deadlines for graduation for each semester from the registrar's office and to meet these deadlines.** It is highly recommended that the student frequently communicate with the appropriate advisors in regards to plans for the thesis and the proposed graduation date.

Students will receive feedback, comments, corrections, etc. from their thesis committees and will be expected to incorporate this feedback into a 2nd version of their thesis. The committee will again review this version and additional feedback will be provided to the student. A third version of the thesis may be required. **Please see attached Thesis Time Line for Dues Dates for the drafts of the thesis.**

Failure to meet these deadlines will result in the student being required to register as a continuing student and pay the associated tuition fee for an additional semester.

Arrangements must be made to present one bound copy of the final thesis to the Departmental Library and one copy to the Forensic Anthropology Office. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate contact and meet with the Registrar, Millie Agosto (617-638-5124), to ensure the use of proper formatting in advance of all deadlines.

Oral Presentation of Thesis Research

All students will be required to provide a 15-20 minute oral presentation describing their thesis research and results. The format of this presentation will be similar to the type of presentation that would be given at a

professional meeting. The precise instructions and details for the presentation will be provided to students in the Directed Study course in the fall of the first year.

Internships, Field Schools and Archaeological Field Work

Although not a requirement for graduation, students may decide to pursue an **approved** internship, field school and/or archaeological field work in a relevant setting. Students will be responsible for identifying their internships or field schools with the assistance of the Graduate Student Committee. With approval from the Graduate Student Committee and the site supervisor, work completed at an internship or field school may be used as data and resources for the student's thesis. Students may receive 2-4 credits for their internship or field school at the discretion of the student's academic advisor, depending on the number of hours completed and the nature of the work completed during the internship or field school. A completed evaluation from the internship or field school supervisor describing the nature of the work completed and the quality of the student's performance is required. In addition, the student will be required to write an 8-10 page summary of his/her internship or field school experiences and responsibilities. The paper should include evidence of skills or knowledge gained during the internship or field school and the results of any experiments or research conducted. The evaluation (grade) for the internship or field school will be based upon the written paper, which will be graded by the student's program advisor, as well as input from the internship or field school supervisor. **It is the responsibility of the student to make sure the evaluation form and the written paper are turned in to his/her program advisor in order for a grade to be assigned.** Students who register for an internship or field school and fail to submit the required documents will receive a grade of "F".

Requests for Letters of Recommendation

Requests for letters of recommendation for Ph.D. programs, internships or field schools, or employment applications must be requested at least 4 weeks prior to the due date. Requests must be made in writing, and the student must provide the address of the school, to whom the letter should be addressed and specific details about the program to which the student is applying. In addition, students should send an updated copy of their CVs and thesis proposals to the faculty when requesting a letter of recommendation.

Competency Exam

A requirement for graduation from the MS program in Forensic Anthropology is successful completion of a competency exam. This examination consists of a written examination (series of multiple-choice questions) and a practical examination (hands-on laboratory exercises). Topics included on the examination will be Forensic Anthropology Techniques, Forensic Anthropological Procedures, Osteology, Ethics and Experimental Design. Specifically, questions on the examination will cover material from, but not limited to, the following courses:

- FA 705 – Forensic Anthropology Techniques**
- FA 706 – Forensic Anthropological Procedures**
- FA 710 – Topics in Forensic Anthropology**
- FA 712 – Human Osteology**
- FA 740 – Seminar in Forensic Anthropology**

Students will complete the examination in the second week of January of their second year in the program. The specific date being announced by October 1st. The examination will consist of a 4-hour written examination in the morning and a 4-hour practical examination on the following day.

In the event that a student does not pass one or both sections of the examination, the student will be provided with an additional opportunity to retake and pass the examination. If the Practical section of the repeat examination is failed, that is considered to be grounds for termination from the program. Should the student fail the second attempt at the written part of the examination, he/she will be provided a third opportunity to satisfy the requirement in the form of an interview. The Graduate Student Committee in consultation with the student and the student's academic advisor will set the date and format of the re-examination(s). The grading of the exam follows the grading scale of the program (page 3).

Professional Organizations

Students are strongly encouraged to join the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (www.aafs.org) and the American Association of Physical Anthropology (www.physanth.org) as well as other forensic and anthropological professional organizations such as the International Association for Identification (www.theiai.org). Students are responsible for association fees.

Policy on Academic Honesty

Boston University is committed to the principles of intellectual honesty and integrity. All members of the BU community are expected to maintain complete honesty in all academic work, presenting only that which is their own work in tests and assignments. Violating this policy will result in a failing grade for the assignment or test at issue. If a second violation occurs in association with any course in the Forensic Anthropology Program, the student will face a disciplinary hearing with the Graduate Student Committee, and the Dean of Students will be notified. For complete details, please refer to the Boston University Code of Student Responsibilities. If you have any questions regarding proper attribution of the work of others or additional academic honesty concerns, contact the instructor prior to submitting the work for evaluation.

Classroom Policies

The nature of the material explored in this program is inherently delicate, and it is of a deeply personal nature. While enrolled in this program it is expected that all students will adhere to the Boston University Code of Student Responsibilities. This document can be found at: <http://www.bu.edu/lifebook/university-policies/policies-code.html>. Students are expected to conduct themselves professionally and represent the program professionally. Human remains are to be treated as sacred and never to be abused or handled in an inappropriate manner. Human remains must never be used to impress or thrill anyone at anytime. Violation of the appropriate decorum in working with these materials will be considered a serious infraction, resulting in a disciplinary hearing and possible dismissal from the program.

To ensure a quality educational experience for all students and instructors, we ask that students respect fellow students and instructors. To sustain an organized and meaningful learning environment you should make every effort to arrive on time for your classes, turn off cell phones/PDAs and provide your full attention to your instructors and fellow students. Students may **NOT** send or receive text messages or e-mail during class time. If an urgent situation does arise during class, please step out into the hallway to communicate.

Outdoor Research Facility

The program in forensic anthropology operates an outdoor research that is available for use by students to conduct research projects to gather data for their theses. The facility consists of 32 acres of land that includes wooded areas, small cranberry bogs and shaded areas. The number of research projects that can be conducted at the facility are limited, and therefore students interested in conducting research projects at the facility must submit a written proposal to the graduate student committee that clearly and thoroughly describes the hypothesis, rationale and methods for the project. The use of all material at the facility (e.g. soft tissue, bones and fresh carcasses) must be approved by the faculty prior to the beginning of all research projects. The graduate student committee will review all submitted proposal and decide which projects will be approved. The facility is located approximately 45 minutes west of Boston, and **transportation to and from is the sole responsibility of the student.**

Photography

Casual personal photography of activities, materials, classes, class material and above all decomposing remains of any sort is strictly forbidden. Research photography and videography IS permitted in the context of research and thesis purposes. Unauthorized imagery of any research activity or the facilities is viewed dimly and may carry disciplinary consequences pending investigation by the Program faculty.

STUDENTS ARE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN FROM PUBLISHING ANY MATERIALS RELATED TO THE PROGRAM ON THE INTERNET IN ANY FASHION WITHOUT EXPLICIT WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE PROGRAM FACULTY. THIS INCLUDES SPECIFICALLY BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO FACEBOOK AND OTHER SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES.

Students are expected to be sophisticated and discreet in their inevitable conversations about programmatic activities. Most people are uncomfortable with the idea of death and decomposition. It simply is impolite, inappropriate public conversation. Be mindful of your location when such conversations arise. Use your indoor voice, and avoid unnecessarily graphic speech. Do NOT display osteological materials casually in public, especially when transporting materials to and from the Holliston facility.

Background Checks

While not required for entry into the graduate program, students should be aware that employment in a crime laboratory (government or private) or law enforcement agency typically requires successful completion of an extensive personal background check which may include a criminal history investigation, fingerprint check, polygraph examination and drug testing.



Thesis Research Time Line

1st Year

Fall Semester (1st year): Develop 1st draft of thesis proposal in Directed Study (FA 755)

Spring Semester (1st year): Experimental Design course – further develop thesis proposal

June – August: Thesis research data collection

July 1st: Final Version of Thesis Proposal Due to Graduate Student Committee

2nd Year

September – November: Complete thesis research data collection and begin writing thesis

December 1st: **First FULL COMPLETE draft of Thesis Due to both readers**

January: Competency Examination

January 15th: **Receive Feed back from 1st and 2nd readers**

February 15th: **2nd FULL COMPLETE draft of thesis to both readers**

March 15th: **Receive Feed back from 1st and 2nd readers**

March 25th: **FINAL DRAFT OF THESIS DUE**

April: Oral presentations of thesis research

NB: Failure to meet any of the above deadlines will require students to enroll for Summer semester (s) to complete their theses.



Expectations and Code of Conduct

1. Attendance is required at all lectures, laboratory sessions and seminars and is calculated as part of your final grade in all courses. If extenuating circumstances do arise, you are required to notify your instructor as soon as possible.
2. Assignment due dates are described in each course syllabus or announced in class and must be followed. Late assignments will be penalized 1 point per day (including weekends) and late assignments will be **NOT** be accepted after 10 days beyond due date.
3. If you are encountering difficulties with a class or any of the material presented in the program, speak directly with the faculty member responsible for the material immediately. Please do not wait until the end of a course to discuss any difficulties with the material.
4. Professional and respectful behavior is required at all times in your communication and interactions with faculty, students and administrators.
5. Do not use cell phones, iPhones, Blackberry devices or other PDAs during class. This includes texts, e-mail messages and phone calls.
6. During your research and educational exercises at the outdoor research facility it may be necessary for you to take photographs of skeletal remains. **Under no circumstances are the pictures to posted or published on any internet site or other venue without written consent of program director.** Failure to comply with this regulation will result in dismissal from the University.



STUDENT GUIDELINE CERTIFICATION

By signing below in the space indicated I certify that I have read this document fully and am aware of my responsibilities regarding the proper timing and conditions of the requirements for graduation from this program. Furthermore, by signing I am indicating my agreement with the content of this document.

Student Printed Name

Student Signature

Date

Faculty Printed Name

Faculty Signature

Date