Sanisera Archaeology Institute for International Field Schools

Course 018: Advanced Osteological Analysis in the Roman Necropolis of Sanisera

Course Syllabus · 2027 season

Course ID	SAI 018 · Advanced Osteological Analysis in Sanisera
Country / Location	Spain · Biological anthropology laboratory, Ciutadella de Menorca, Balearic Islands
Dates	April to September 2027 (5 sessions of 16 days)
Duration	16 days per session
Instructional hours	101.5 hours (14 instructional days x 7.25 h)
Recommended credit equivalence	4-5 semester credits, depending on the student's home institution (reference scale: about 20 instructional hours per semester credit; 80 h = 4, 100 h = 5, 120 h = 6). Credit is awarded by the student's home institution; see section 12.
Level / Prerequisites	Intermediate / advanced. A previous course in biological anthropology or human osteology is recommended but not required.
Language of instruction	English
Maximum enrolment	8 students per session
Tuition	from USD 1,850 per session (see section 14)
Instructors	Ethan Campo Gómez (Instructor in bioarchaeology and physical anthropology)
Contact	info@archaeology.institute · www.archaeology.institute · Ciutadella de Menorca, Balearic Islands, Spain

1. Program description

A laboratory course, without excavation, devoted to the in-depth analysis of the human skeletal remains recovered from the Roman and late antique necropolis of Sanisera, a collection of more than 250 individuals from more than 50 tombs. The aim is to use standard and advanced osteological techniques to reconstruct the biological life history of the individuals buried at the site and the demography and health of the population.

Students work with real material under the supervision of a physical anthropologist. Lectures and practical work cover the measurement and recording of skeletal elements according to international standards, the estimation of age, sex, stature and ancestry, the recognition of pathological lesions, trauma and activity markers, dental pathology and wear, the assessment of commingled and cremated remains, and the principles of isotopic and DNA analysis.

2. Course objectives

- To consolidate and extend the student's command of human osteological methods on an archaeological collection.
- To train students in the complete osteological analysis and recording of a funerary unit according to international standards.
- To develop the ability to interpret pathological, traumatic and activity-related changes in bone.
- To introduce the current debates of palaeodemography, palaeoepidemiology and biomolecular analysis.
- To contribute to the ongoing research on the Sanisera necropolis.

3. Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify fragmentary human bones and use anatomical terminology accurately.
- Carry out the complete osteological analysis of an individual: inventory, measurements, age, sex, stature, non-metric traits.
- Assess disarticulated remains and calculate the minimum number of individuals.
- Classify dental pathology and tooth wear, and recognise pathological bone and trauma.
- Record osteological information on complex standard forms.
- Discuss the possibilities and limits of isotopic, DNA and cremation analysis.
- Present a case study orally with appropriate scientific language.

4. Course format and instructional hours

The course takes place in the Institute's laboratory in Ciutadella. The working day runs seven hours and fifteen minutes of supervised laboratory work, lectures and exercises. Over the 16-day session there are 14 instructional days and 2 rest days: 101.5 instructional hours. A field visit to the necropolis of Sanisera is included.

Total instructional hours: 101.5 hours. This figure appears on the Certificate of Completion and on the Student Evaluation Report.

5. Course schedule

Indicative daily schedule; the order of activities may change according to weather, site conditions and research needs.

Day	Activities
Day 1	Arrival, orientation and Code of Conduct. Presentation of the Sanisera collection and of the recording system. Lecture 1: funerary practices at Sanisera and taphonomy.
Days 2-4	Skeletal inventory and identification of fragmentary bones; anatomical terminology; bone measurement according to Buikstra & Ubelaker standards. Field visit to the necropolis.
Days 5-7	Age and sex estimation; stature; non-metric traits. Each student begins the complete analysis of an assigned individual. Review of journals and forms.
Day 8	Rest day.
Days 9-11	Dental pathology and wear; pathological bone, trauma and activity markers; palaeodemography and palaeoepidemiology.
Days 12-14	Commingled and cremated remains, MNI; ancestry estimation; isotopes and ancient DNA (lecture). Completion of the individual analysis and of the recording forms.
Day 15	Rest day.
Day 16	Final presentations (morning), course assessment and delivery of certificates. Departure.

6. Assessment and grading

Students complete three assignments during the course, in addition to daily supervised work: a daily field journal, the course's recording sheets and a final presentation. The final grade is calculated as follows:

Component	Weight	Description
Field / laboratory participation and professional conduct	40 %	Daily assessment by the instructors of engagement, technique, care of the record and of the finds, teamwork and compliance with the Code of Conduct.
Daily field journal	20 %	A written entry for every instructional day describing the work carried out, the methods applied, the contexts or materials handled and the student's own observations. Reviewed weekly.
Recording sheets	20 %	Standard osteological recording forms (inventory, measurements, age/sex, pathology) for the individual assigned to each student. Assessed for accuracy, completeness, terminology and legibility.
Final presentation	20 %	A 10-minute PowerPoint presentation, delivered on the last instructional day, on the individual analysed by the student or a

Component	Weight	Description
		pathological, traumatic or methodological case from the collection, followed by questions.

Grading scale

Letter grade	Percentage
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	below 60

Grades are recorded as a percentage and as a letter grade on the US scale above. Students who request it receive a Student Evaluation Report signed by the Course Director, with the breakdown of the grade, the attendance record and the instructional hours completed, for submission to their home institution. The Institute does not itself award academic credit.

7. Attendance policy

Attendance at all scheduled instructional activities is compulsory. A minimum attendance of 85 % of the instructional hours is required to pass the course and to receive the Certificate of Completion. Absences for documented illness or injury are excused but still count towards the 85 % threshold; unexcused absences lower the participation grade. Students who leave the course early receive a certificate stating only the hours actually completed.

8. Prerequisites and who should apply

Recommended but not required: a previous university course in human osteology, biological anthropology or anatomy, or participation in a bioarchaeological field school such as Course 008. Minimum age 18.

9. Instructors

Ethan Campo Gómez — Instructor in bioarchaeology and physical anthropology. Degree in Biology (University of Oviedo) and Master's specialisation in Physical Anthropology (Complutense University of Madrid). Experience in the excavation of human and faunal remains, including Bronze Age tombs at the Al Qusais necropolis (Dubai).

10. Equipment and what to bring

- Lab notebook, pencils, ruler; sliding and spreading calipers if available (the laboratory provides them).
- Own laptop (compulsory) for the recording forms, daily journal and final presentation; tablets and phones are not accepted.
- Passport valid for the whole stay; health insurance.

11. Travel and meeting point

Fly to Menorca (Mahón, MAH). Students travel on their own to the Student Residence in Ciutadella (bus or taxi, approx. 45 minutes); public buses approx. EUR 30, taxi approx. EUR 75; on the arrival day the Institute offers a private minibus from the airport for about EUR 30-40 in cash. The address and arrival instructions are sent two weeks before the course. Meeting point: the residence, on Day 1 at 6 p.m.

Students arriving from outside the Schengen area should check whether they need a visa; the Institute issues the letter of invitation required for the application. US, Canadian, UK and Australian citizens do not need a visa for stays of up to 90 days in Spain; they will need the EU ETIAS travel authorisation once it comes into force (no start date has been fixed yet; the Institute will inform admitted students). If a Schengen visa is refused, everything paid is refunded in full on presentation of the official refusal document.

12. Academic credit and transcript

With 101.5 instructional hours, this course can be recognised for 4 to 5 semester credits, depending on the student's home institution (reference: about 20 instructional hours per semester credit).

The Sanisera Archaeology Institute is an independent, non-profit institution and does not award academic credit directly. Students who wish to receive credit for this course should obtain pre-approval from their department or study-abroad office before the course begins, using this syllabus. On completion, the Institute issues a Certificate of Completion stating the course, dates, instructional hours and final grade, and, on request, a detailed Student Evaluation Report. Students from universities in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia have regularly obtained credit for Sanisera courses in this way: students from more than 40 universities have done so (see the list on the Institute's website). The Institute is currently working towards a School of Record agreement with a US accredited institution for the issue of official transcripts.

13. Code of conduct and safety

All students and staff are bound by the Institute's Code of Conduct and Anti-Harassment Policy, available on the website, which applies at the site, in the laboratory, in the accommodation and during free time. A safety briefing is given on the first day; students may decline any activity they consider unsafe. Serious breaches of the Code may lead to removal from the course without refund. Accident insurance at the site is included; students are responsible for their own health and travel insurance.

14. Dates, tuition and what is included

Session	Dates 2027	Tuition (USD)
1	12-27 April	$ 1,850
5	14-29 July	$ 2,100
6	1-16 August	$ 2,100
7	19 August - 3 September	$ 2,100
8	6-21 September	$ 2,100

Tuition includes

- Course tuition and teaching.
- Accident insurance at the site and in the laboratory.
- Accommodation in the Institute's Student Residence in the centre of Ciutadella de Menorca (rooms separated by sex, air conditioning / heating, dining room and terrace, daily professional cleaning; launderette three minutes away).
- Visits to museums and archaeological heritage of the island.

- Certificate of completion and, on request, the Student Evaluation Report.
- Letter of invitation for the Schengen visa, if required.

Not included

- Airfare from the student's home to/from Menorca (Spain).
- Meals (budget approx. EUR 23 per day; cafés and restaurants recommended by the Institute).
- Personal expenses and optional travel insurance.

Payment. A deposit of USD 450, which is part of the tuition and is deducted from the total, reserves the place and is due within five days of admission; the balance is due 60 days before the session begins. Payment plans are available on request. The Institute does not offer scholarships or discounts.

Refund policy. If the student cancels, only the USD 450 deposit is refunded, and only if the refund is requested within 20 days of paying it; the balance is not refundable, but everything paid can be converted into credit for any course in the current year or the following season. Everything paid is refunded in full if the Institute cancels the session or if the student's Schengen visa is refused (official refusal document required). Places are not transferable. Full text: Terms and Conditions of Payment on the website.

15. Recommended readings

Recommended, not required. Readings are available in the Institute's library during the course.

- Buikstra, J. E. & Ubelaker, D. H. (eds.) (1994). Standards for Data Collection from Human Skeletal Remains. Fayetteville: Arkansas Archeological Survey.
- White, T. D., Black, M. T. & Folkens, P. A. (2012). Human Osteology. 3rd ed. Amsterdam: Academic Press.
- Ortner, D. J. (2003). Identification of Pathological Conditions in Human Skeletal Remains. 2nd ed. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Larsen, C. S. (2015). Bioarchaeology: Interpreting Behavior from the Human Skeleton. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hillson, S. (1996). Dental Anthropology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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