



## ЦЕНТЪР ЗА ОБУЧЕНИЕ – БАН

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### **Basic Information:**

Course Title: Paleoanthropology

Lecturer: Associate Prof. PhD Victoria Russeva

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Total Teaching Hours: 30

### **Annotation** (up to 150 words)

The course provides PhD students with the complex of the main contemporary methods used in paleoanthropological research across its three main stages: fieldwork, including documentation requirements; laboratory work and initial interpretation of results; comprehensive osteoarchaeological interpretation of the results of the study of human skeletal remains from an archaeological context.

The PhD training presents the main scientific methods for studying human skeletal material from archaeological contexts, along with the corresponding principles of sample collection, documentation, and interpretation of the results.

The course provides PhD students with a detailed overview of the characteristics of the skeletal populations studied in Bulgaria during the various historical periods documented on our territory.

The programme aims to train PhD students in contemporary paleoanthropological methods, enabling them to apply these with confidence and develop their ability to interpret results. The researchers' horizons are broadened by presentations on other anthropological materials found in archaeological contexts in Bulgaria, such as dermatoglyphic impressions on clay surfaces, as well as materials relevant to interpreting the Bulgarian materials.

### **Course content** (brief description by topics or modules)

Topic / Module 1: Field study of human skeletal remains in an archaeological context: documentation of skeletal remains and their context, preliminary interpretative methods, and collection of skeletal remains. The skeletal remains from burial complexes of various types found on Bulgarian territory during different historical periods of population development. Skeletal remains from contexts other than resulted from burial rites investigated on Bulgarian territory.

Topic / Module 2: Laboratory analysis of human skeletal remains from an archaeological context. Measurement, documentation, and determination of key anthropological characteristics regarding sex, age, pathological changes, cultural modifications to the skeletal material, and traces of daily activities.

Topic / Module 3: Methods used in the osteoarchaeological interpretation of the results from the anthropological analysis—the biological traits identified in the skeletal material and their relationship to the social and cultural development of the ancient inhabitants of our lands. Demographic distribution of sex-age groups from the studied sites, prevalence of various anthropological types and genetic markers in the populations, prevalence of various pathological changes and, in particular, infectious diseases, disability in ancient societies and attitudes toward the disabled, evidence on skeletal remains regarding people's daily activities, and cultural influences on living individuals or their skeletal remains.



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### Teaching and assessment methods

This is an in-person course. Assessment is based on a combination of an exam and a project related to the doctoral student's dissertation topic.

### Competencies acquired as a result of training (3–5 points)

Skills in handling human skeletal remains during fieldwork, including documentation, measurement, interpretation of the context of their discovery, excavation, and preservation of the skeletal remains.

Development of a modern set of methods for laboratory analysis of human skeletal remains from an archaeological context.

Capabilities for osteoarchaeological interpretation of field situations, which contain human skeletal remains and reconstruction of the events that led to the creation of these sites.

### Literature:

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