

## Forensic Taphonomy

Minor code	LLS362vnFS + LLS363vnFS			
Education cycle	1st cycle (bachelor)			
Mode of delivery	On-campus			
Study programme	Forensic Laboratory Research			
Part of study year	Year 3			
Location	Van Hall Larenstein Leeuwarden			
Semester	Spring semester; terms 3 and 4			
Number of credits (ECTS)	30			
Language of instruction	English			
Target group	Van Hall Larenstein students, Erasmus+ students, external students Students from Biomedical Sciences, Biotechnology, Forensic Science, Archaeology and Biology.			
Minor co-ordinator and contact person	Tristan Krap, <a href="mailto:tristan.krap@hvhl.nl">tristan.krap@hvhl.nl</a> and Iris Sluis <a href="mailto:iris.sluis@hvhl.nl">iris.sluis@hvhl.nl</a>			
Entry requirements and prerequisites	VHL students: Propaedeutic diploma obtained. Biomedical Sciences, Biotechnology, Forensic Science. Erasmus+ and External students: Propaedeutic diploma obtained. Biomedical Sciences, Biotechnology, Forensic Science, Archaeology, Biology.			
Application procedure	Erasmus+ students: consult <a href="#">Exchange possibilities</a> External students from the Netherlands: apply through 'Kies Op Maat.' A propaedeutic diploma must be submitted. There is a maximum of 25 students, and a minimum of 15 participants for the minor to proceed.			
Major study units	<b>Term of teaching</b>	<b>Study unit code</b>	<b>Name of the study unit</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
	Term 4	TOETS-02	Field analysis report	8
	Term 3	TOETS-03	Research proposal	8
	Term 4	TOETS-01	Exam Taphonomy	6
	Term 4	TOETS-04	Research thesis	8
Content	<p>Do you want to know whether decomposing cadaver material has an effect on the environment, and vice versa? You reconstruct past events, learn to extract DNA from skeletal remains, and dive into the study of fossilization of organic remains. In the minor Forensic Taphonomy we combine different scientific fields that can help answer these questions.</p> <p>When you dive into this unique world you get to work with themes as decomposition of human remains, (micro)environmental effects (flora and fauna), extreme situations like fires, all applied to forensics. After performing a series of outdoor analysis, you write a field analysis report. Parallel to this period, you immerse yourself in the literature of a topic of your choice and write a research proposal for an applied taphonomic study into an identified knowledge gap. In the second part of the minor, you roll up your sleeves and, for example, put your own research proposal into practice by carrying out a taphonomic experiment. You set this up yourself and you complete it with a thesis.</p>			
Competences	Experimenting, level 2			

Learning goals	<p>After this course the student has/is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insight in the value and complexity of taphonomic studies.</li> <li>• Knowledge of the process of decomposition of the human body.</li> <li>• Knows the effects of in- and external variables on the process of decomposition.</li> <li>• Describe the process of decomposition objectively, document it according to the guidelines, analyze and interpret changes.</li> <li>• Determine the state of remains based on internationally accepted models.</li> <li>• Identify possible knowledge lacunae in literature, based on acquired knowledge, and write a research proposal.</li> <li>• Set up a taphonomic experiment, execute it and report the results.</li> <li>• Make microscopic slides from bone.</li> </ul>
Added value	<p>This minor is a niche subject, combining knowledge from archaeology and forensic science. Interesting for students with either an archaeological or biological background and an interest in forensic science. The minor offers hands-on experience and knowledge on the taphonomic changes in cadaveric material. Students will participate in a large research group and learn how to set-up their own experiment. Notable also is that further education on this topic at home and abroad, is limited, especially of this volume (30 ECTS).</p>
Mandatory literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory: Forensic Taphonomy, the post-mortem fate of human remains, by William D. Haglund &amp; Marcella H. Sorg.</li> <li>• Advised: Manual of Forensic Taphonomy, by James T. Pokines &amp; Steven A. Symes.(2014)</li> <li>• Proper work clothing and gear.</li> </ul>
Teaching methods and student workload	<p><u>Theory</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures: 46 hours</li> <li>• Self-study: 150 hours</li> <li>• Presentation: 10 hours</li> </ul> <p><u>Practice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field study: 70 hours</li> <li>• Workshops: 32 hours</li> <li>• Field analysis report: 112 hours</li> </ul> <p><u>Research proposal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annotation: 20 hours</li> <li>• Literature study: 140 hours</li> <li>• Report: 64 hours</li> </ul> <p><u>Research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature study: 66 hours</li> <li>• Methodology: 12 hours</li> <li>• Execution: 80 hours</li> <li>• Report: 32 hours</li> <li>• Presentation: 6 hours</li> </ul>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field analysis report, individual essay</li> <li>• Research proposal, individual essay</li> <li>• Exam Taphonomy, individual exam, closed book</li> <li>• Research thesis, individual essay</li> </ul>
Evaluation scale	<p>Grades between: 1-10; 0,1 interval; 5,5 pass</p> <p>View <a href="#">ECTS credits and grading</a></p>