In this seminar the techniques used in ancient DNA analysis will be explained, and a brief history of ancient DNA research will also be given. The seminar will deal with the problems faced by the researcher when working with ancient DNA and how these are tackled, including the major problem of every ancient DNA study – contamination. The protocols followed when working with ancient DNA in order to obtain reliable results will also be explained.

The questions that may be resolved by means of studying ancient DNA will be listed, and case studies presented in order to explain how ancient DNA has been used in order to answer archaeological questions on kinship analysis, paleodisease, the Neolithic migrations into Europe, domestication, and whether the Neanderthals contributed genetically to the make up of modern humans.

A description of the research project I am doing on Maltese samples from two Roman burial sites will also be given, followed by the work concerning population genetics I would like to conduct on modern Maltese samples.