



ANTH C1001 - Introduction to Biological Anthropology

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: In this course, students examine human origins, evolution, and variation with a focus on the adaptations of humans and other primates. Biological evolution and scientific methods are foundations for the course. (C-ID ANTH 110).

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify and compare primate and hominin species in terms of their osteological, morphological, and/or behavioral adaptations.
2. Identify the biological and cultural factors responsible for human variation.
3. Identify the principles of human inheritance, molecular biology, genetics, and evolutionary processes from the perspective of biological anthropology.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific method and an ability to interpret data to arrive at reasoned conclusions.
5. Define the scope of anthropology and discuss the role of biological anthropology within the discipline.
6. Evaluate how the forces of evolution produce genetic and phenotypic change over time.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic	
<u>Lecture</u>	
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
1. The nature of scientific inquiry and the scientific method	51.00
2. The anthropological perspective	
3. Development of biological evolutionary thought	
4. Molecular, Mendelian, and population genetics	
5. Mechanisms/forces of evolution	
6. Comparative primate taxonomy, anatomy, and behavioral ecology	
7. The fossil record, geologic time, and dating methods	
8. The fossil, archaeological, and genetic evidence of human evolution	
9. Biocultural adaptations and modern human variation	
10. Understanding ancestry, racism, and the invalidity of biological race in humans	
Total Hours: 51.00	

Methods of Instruction

- A. Collaborative Group Work
- B. Discussion
- C. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- D. Lecture
- E. Multimedia Presentations

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Examples of potential methods of evaluation used to observe or measure students' achievement of course outcomes and objectives could include, but are not limited to: assignments, quizzes, exams, projects, and academic writing. Methods of evaluation are at the discretion of local faculty.

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read the article from the Annual Edition: Physical Anthropology that focuses on the “Lumper/Splitter” debate. Be prepared to discuss this debate in light of how these two perspectives influence taxonomic categorization of early human groups.
2. Read the section in Chapter 10 of your text book (Essentials of Physical Anthropology) that deals with the Neanderthal controversy. Be prepared to discuss this controversy in light of recent lines of evidence, as outlined in your text (e.g. DNA, blood type, and physical morphology). Be prepared to discuss in class how these new lines of evidence have changed our views of Neanderthals.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a short essay (300 words) summarizing different views on evolutionary process. Focus your essay on the “gradualist vs punctuated equilibrium” debate. Cite Stephen Jay Gould and Richard Dawkins. Present your paper in class.
2. Write a short essay (300 words) on the emergence of bipedalism among early members of the human line(s). Focus on the articles by C. Owen Lovejoy and Richard Leakey.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Visit the Human Identification Lab at CSU Chico. Be prepared to discuss this experience in class. Keep in mind the following questions: what is the basic function of this lab; what methods are used in carrying out responsibilities associated with human identification; were there any cases being worked on while you were there (if so, describe them)? Alternative options to complete this assignment will be identified in the instructions.
2. Attend this week’s Anthropology Forum at CSU Chico. Select a talk given any relevant topic, like Baboon social bonding. Be prepared to discuss in class the main ideas of this talk with the class and show how it relates to the material we have been discussing this semester. Alternative options to complete this assignment will be identified in the instructions.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Clark, L. (2025). Essentials of Biological Anthropology. *Norton, 6th*. 9781324084013.

Fuentes, A. (2019). Biological Anthropology: Concepts and Connections. *McGraw-Hill, 3rd*. 9781260131550.

Boyd, R. et. al. (2023). How Humans Evolved. *Norton, 10th*. 978-1-324-06174-8.

Zero Cost Textbook

Shook, B. et. al. (Eds.). (2023). Explorations: An Open Invitation to Biological Anthropology. 2nd ed. (OER).
<https://pressbooks.calstate.edu/explorationsbioanth2/>

Other Learning Materials

Textbook choice is the discretion of faculty.

Minimum Qualifications

Anthropology (Masters Required)

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