

ANT 670: Principles of Physical Anthropology

Tues/Thurs 11-12:15

Fall, 2010

3 Credit Hours

Primary Instructor: Christopher Lynn

Syllabus subject to change.

Office Hours

Office: 12 ten Hour

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Prerequisites

Graduate standing in Anthropology.

Course Description

This course provides a detailed introduction to biological anthropology, the study of human variation and human origins. The principal aims of the course are as follows:

1. To understand the various aspects of biological anthropology as they have developed throughout the history of the discipline.
2. To review the basic facts and ideas about human variation and human origins.
3. To consider theoretical and methodological issues in biological anthropology.

Objectives

At the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Outline the history of the discipline of physical anthropology, including major historical figures and their contributions, intellectual trends, and major controversies.
2. Understand evolutionary theory well enough to address new and unfamiliar evolutionary problems using "first principles."
3. Outline and describe the major branches of contemporary human biology, and identify major applications of human biology research to contemporary issues or debates concerning health, social policy, and human behavior.
4. Identify both commonalities and diversity across non-human primate taxa in social behavior and ecology and articulate the relevance of primatology to the broader anthropological enterprise.

5. Outline human evolutionary history based on the fossil record.

Outline of Topics

Dates: August 19 – September 9

Topics:

- Organizational Meeting
- What is Physical Anthropology, and how did it get that way?
- What are the conceptual underpinnings of modern physical anthropology?

Presentations available (online at: <http://www.as.ua.edu/ant/bindon/ant570/>):

- [History of Physical Anthropology](#)
- [Molecular and Familial Genetics](#)
- [Population Genetics](#)
- [Evolutionary Theory](#)
- [Misconceptions in Evolution](#)

Readings:

- Graves, Intro, Ch. 1-9
- Spencer (1981) – **read for 8/17 meeting**
- Tattersall and Schwartz, Preface, Ch. 1, 2
- Washburn (1953) – **read for 8/17 meeting**
- Your physical anthropology text (YPAT): Intro chapter, chapters on genetics, cell biology, and evolution

Assignments:

- Assignment 1: Edit your statement on our website [using this link](#) to tell about your background in anthropology, why you came to UA, who you're working with, and what you hope to do for your thesis research. (due 8/26: **all assignments are due by 10AM on the assigned date**) (<http://www.as.ua.edu/ant/admin/peopledit.htm>)
- Assignment 2: Genetics Problems (posted on eLearn—due 9/2)
- Assignment 3: Submit a critique of an article on the evolution/creation/intelligent design debate. (due 9/9)

Dates: September 14 – October 7

Topics:

- What is humanity's place in nature?
- Who are our closest relatives, and what can we learn about ourselves from them?

Presentations available:

- [Primates](#)
- [Primate Evolution](#)

Readings:

- Beard, whole book
- Relethford, Preface, Ch. 1 – 2
- YPAT: Chapters on Primates, taxonomy, behavior, evolution

Assignments:

- Assignment 4: Submit a critique of an article on living primates (due 9/23)
- Assignment 5: Submit a critique of an article on primate evolution (due 10/7)

Dates: October 12 – November 4

Topics:

- How do we differ from our closest relatives?
- Where did we come from?
- How did we get here?

Presentations available:

- [Models of Hominid Origins](#)
- [Pliocene-Pleistocene Hominids](#)
- [Fossil Hominids](#)
- [The Genus Homo](#)
- [Modern Humans](#)

Readings:

- Hart and Sussman, whole book.
- Relethford, Preface, Ch. 3, 4
- Tattersall and Schwartz, Ch. 3 - 8
- YPAT: Chapters on fossil humans, paleoanthropology

Assignments:

- Assignment 6: Submit a critique of an article on the evolution of early hominids, prior to the genus *Homo* (due 10/14)
- Assignment 7: Submit a critique of an article on the evolution of the genus *Homo* prior to *Homo sapiens* (due 10/21)

- Assignment 8: Submit a critique of an article on the evolution of *Homo sapiens* (due 11/4)

Dates: November 9 – December 2

Topics:

- How do we differ from one another?
- What causes differences between groups of people?
- How are human differences patterned?

Presentations available:

- [Human Variation](#)
- [G6PD](#)
- [Sickle Cell](#)
- [Human Adaptation](#)
- [Skin Color](#)
- [Samoan Adaptation](#)
- [Samoan Foodways](#)

Readings:

- Graves, whole book
- Relethford, Ch. 5 – 10

Assignments:

- Assignment 10: Submit a critique of an article about human variation (due 11/11)
- Assignment 11: Submit a critique of an article on human microevolution (due 11/18)
- Assignment 12: Submit a critique of an article on human adaptation (due 11/25)
- Assignment 13: Submit a critique of an article on the interaction of biology and culture (due 12/2)

Exams and Assignments

Essays:

The in-class essays are designed to allow the student to learn, review, and synthesize material, and to write an in-class essay question simulating the comprehensive exams. Each essay will be allocated one-hour of in-class time. Essays should be well organized and well-written, in addition to being factually correct and complete.

Participation and Assignments:

Your participation will be established by demonstrating that you are well-prepared for class. There will be three general areas in which this will be assessed:

1. Participation during class. I will randomly ask one of you to lead the discussion based on the readings each meeting. This means that everyone should read some of the material before every class and prepare some notes as though you will be leading a discussion, as you may very likely be called on to do so. You will be evaluated on your ability to elicit and guide a discussion. However, this is a graduate level seminar, and every student is expected to contribute to the discussion each meeting.
2. On days assignments are due, 1-3 of you will be asked to present summaries of the article you have read and to lead the class in a discussion of the article in relation to the assigned course readings. Presenters will also be randomly chosen at each class meeting. You will be evaluated on your ability to succinctly and clearly convey the gist of their articles so always be prepared for this.
3. Preparation of weekly assignments including the article critiques, which are to be posted to the appropriate section on eLearn by 10AM on the date due—***late assignments will not be accepted.***

Article summaries should be a minimum of one single-spaced page each and address the following aspects of the article:

- What is the hypothesis or thesis of the article?
- What is the theoretical position the article takes and, if relevant, what theory is the article taking issue with?
- What methods does the article use?
- What are the main results or findings of the article? If it is a review, is there a conclusion made based on a synthesis of the material reviewed?
- What are the implications of the data or material discussed? What is left unresolved—i.e., for future research?
- How does the article relate to the course objectives (see above)?
- Finally, what did you think? Was it compelling? Well-written? Clearly written with intelligible terminology? Were the methods sound? Were the authors' conclusions justified and logical given the methods and results/synthesis?

Grading Policy

Your grade will be determined by your scores on four essays and on your participation in class as follows:

- Essay 1 = 15%
- Essay 2 = 15%
- Essay 3 = 15%
- Essay 4 = 15%

- Participation = 40%

Policy on Missed Exams & Coursework

There will be no make ups for classes, essays or other assignments.

Attendance Policy

This is a discussion-oriented class and attendance is required. Since 40% of your grade for this course is based on participation, any absences will lower your grade. Please contact Dr. Lynn *in advance* if you have some urgent need to be absent from a class session.

Required Texts

UA Supply Store Textbook Information:

1. Beard, Chris 2004 *The Hunt for the Dawn Monkey: Unearthing the Origins of Monkeys, Apes, and Humans*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
2. Graves, Joseph L., Jr. 2001. *The Emperor's New Clothes: Biological Theories of Race at the Millennium*. Rutgers, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
3. Hart, Donna, and Robert W. Sussman 2005 *Man The Hunted: Primates, Predators, and Human Evolution*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
4. Relethford, John H. 2003. *Reflections of Our Past: How Human History is Revealed in Our Genes*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
5. Tattersall, Ian, and Jeffrey H. Schwartz 2001. *Extinct Humans*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Other Course Materials

These additional required readings will be available via eLearn:

Spencer, Frank. 1981. The rise of academic physical anthropology in the United States (1880-1980): A historical overview. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 56(4):353-364.

Washburn, Sherwood L. 1953. The strategy of physical anthropology. In A. L. Kroeber, ed., *Anthropology Today*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp.714-726.

Extra Credit Opportunities

Participation in the following group will **not** earn you course extra credit but is a good way to enhance your academic career, become involved in ongoing research, and develop your own research design and methodology.

The Human Behavioral Ecology Research Group is an integrated group of grad and undergraduate students from several disciplines directed by Dr. Lynn, the goal of which is to formulate and carry out exciting and innovative research projects in human behavioral ecology. Weekly meetings are held Mondays 2-4 in Rowand-Johnson 37 and weekly lab hours (where we talk less and work more) are Wednesdays 2-4 (NOTE: These are subject to change depending on everyone's schedules, including mine).

Some current projects include "Fireside Relaxation Study," "Self-Enhancing Self-Deception & Reproductive Success," "Charismatic Signaling & Congregational Stability," "Pentecostal Charismata & Consonance in Brazil & Costa Rica," "Voice Attractiveness & Cunnilingus in Bonobos," "Inking of Immunity: Tattooing & Immunoglobulin A," and others initiated by various members.

See Dr. Lynn if you are interested in participating.

Disability Statement

If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary. If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call 348-4285 or visit 133-B Martha Parham Hall East to register for services. Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are welcome to make an appointment to see me during office hours. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services, 133-B Martha Parham Hall East, before receiving academic adjustments.

Policy on Academic Misconduct

All students in attendance at the University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student.

[The Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Policy](#) will be followed in the event of academic misconduct.

Severe Weather Protocol

In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar; sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate life saving actions.

When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the [National Weather Service](#) and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take. The Office of Public Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:

- Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage
- Weather advisory sent out through Connect-ED--faculty, staff and students ([sign up at myBama](#))
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA 7. WVUA 7 Storm Watch provides a free service you can subscribe to that allows you to receive weather warnings for Tuscaloosa via e-mail, pager or cell phone. Check <http://www.wvua7.com/stormwatch.html> for details.