

Effective: Spring 2021

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Title: Introduction to Physical Anthropology

Course Number: ANTH 111

Credits: 3

Total Weeks: 14 (Fall, Spring)
12 (Summer)

Total Hours: 39

Course Level: ☒ First Year ☐ Second Year
☐ New ☐ Revised Course
☐ Replacement Course

Department: Social Sciences

Department Head: A. McDougall

Former Course Code(s) and Number(s) (if applicable):
N/A

Pre-requisites (If there are no prerequisites, type NONE): NONE

Co-requisite Statement (List if applicable or type NONE): NONE

Precluded Courses: N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys the scope, goals, and major discoveries of physical anthropology, with particular emphasis on heredity and evolution, primate behaviour patterns, the human fossil record, and contemporary evolution issues.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Discuss the scope and goals of evolutionary theory.
- Discuss the major subfields of physical anthropology and explore recent contributions to the science.
- Outline the major theories of biological evolution, from Darwin to the newly developed synthetic bacterial cell.
- Identify fossil remains of both hominid and non-human primates.
- Discuss the importance of studies of our closest relatives, the non-human primates, to the understanding of human biology, behaviour and evolution.
- Discuss the hominid fossil record: how it is formed, recent discoveries, the role they play in understanding hominid evolution, and the limitations inherent in the data.
- Discuss the importance of race as a social construct.
- Discuss the role disease has played on human adaptation, and the continuing impact diseases have on human existence.
- Assess the significance an evolutionary perspective has on understanding our connection to the natural world.

INSTRUCTION AND GRADING

Instructional (Contact) Hours:

Type	Duration
Lecture	39
Seminars/Tutorials	
Laboratory	
Field Experience	
Other (<i>specify</i>):	
Total	39

Grading System: Letter Grades ☒ Percentage ☐ Pass/Fail ☐ Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory ☐ Other ☐

Specify passing grade: 50%

Evaluation Activities and Weighting (total must equal 100%)

Assignments: 25% <i>Specify number of, variety, and nature of assignments: 5</i>	Lab Work: %	Participation: 5% <i>Specify nature of participation: Students will need to complete 4 short written assignments and 1 essay.</i>	Project: %
Quizzes/Test: 20%	Midterm Exam: 25%	Final Exam: 25%	Other: %

TEXT(S) AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

Provide a full reference for each text and/or resource material and include whether required/not required.

Jurmain, Robert, Kilgore, Lynn: Introduction to Physical Anthropology. Boston 2014

COURSE TOPICS

List topics and sequence covered.

This course explores topics in physical anthropology connected to:

1. Heredity and evolution
2. Primates and primate behaviour
3. Hominin evolution
4. Contemporary evolution issues.

Heredity and Evolution

This section will explore the historical development of evolution theory, describe how natural selection operates on biological variation and explain some of the limits and gaps in evolutionary history of the nineteenth century.

Primates and Primate Behaviour

This section will introduce the genetic relationship between humans and chimpanzees and examine the fossil record of primates with particular attention to more recent primate fossil discoveries. The discussion will then turn to highlight specific behaviour patterns of primates found in the wild. Today many primates are endangered as such the goal of raising awareness of endangerment and the efforts in primate conservation will be touched upon.

Hominin Evolution

In this section students will learn about the evolutionary stages from Australopithecus to Homo Sapiens. Discovery of hominin fossils and evidence of their behaviour such as the development of stone tools shall be explored. New fossil discoveries found in Ethiopia and South Africa will be discussed as well as the possible implications these new fossil discoveries might have on existing theories of human evolution. Also, a discussion will focus on studies indicating interbreeding between Neanderthal and Denisovans with modern humans.

Contemporary Evolution Issues

The concept of race as a social construct will be explored by examining the genetic variation that exists both within a population and between populations emphasizing the idea that race is socially and culturally constructed. After, we will explore the patterns of adaptations that humans have undergone with particular emphasis to diseases from pre-historic to the continuing impact of infectious diseases. Lastly, this section will cover the human disconnect from themselves and the natural world and the importance of the evolutionary perspective in demonstrating our dependency and connection to the natural world.

NOTES

1. Students are required to follow all College policies. Policies are available on the website at: [Coquitlam College Policies](#)
2. To find out how this course transfers, visit the BC Transfer Guide at: bctransferguide.ca

Last Revised: October 30, 2020

Last Reviewed: September 2024