

## ANTHROPOLOGY 2226B-650

### Biological Anthropology

#### COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2021

**Instructor:** Dr. Ian Colquhoun (he/him)

**Email:** colquhou@uwo.ca

**Office Hours:** Consultations via Zoom can be arranged on request.

**Teaching Assistants:** Maddie Hertz (mhertz3@uwo.ca)  
Emy Roberge (eroberg@uwo.ca)

**Credit value:** 0.5 credit

**Mode of delivery:** For 2020/2021 this course will be conducted online. It is *asynchronous*, meaning that students will be provided with a variety of lesson materials and activities that can be done throughout the week, although there may be tasks that must be completed by specific times.

**Calendar Course Description:** A survey of the major areas of biological anthropology, including heredity, paleo-anthropology, human adaptability and variability, and growth and development.

**Antirequisites:** None.

**Prerequisites:** Anthropology 1020 (formerly Anthropology 1020E), or one of Anthropology 1025F/G or Anthropology 1021A/B and one of Anthropology 1026F/G or Anthropology 1022A/B.

*Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.*

#### Course Syllabus:

**Biological** (or, **physical**) **anthropology** is a very diverse anthropological subfield encompassing such research as: the study of human evolution (i.e., paleoanthropology), the study of living and fossil non-human primates (i.e., primatology and paleoprimateology), the study of the human skeleton (i.e., human osteology), and the study of adaptations in living human populations (i.e., human biology). As in other areas of evolutionary biology, the **synthetic theory of evolution** provides the conceptual framework for considering the biological processes and fossil evidence relevant to the evolution of the human species. This means our study of human evolution and adaptation will also draw on aspects of numerous fields, including: genetics, population biology, primatology, conservation biology, ecology, and geology.

The course has a four-part structure, and will pursue an “issues-oriented” perspective.

i) We begin the course with a consideration of **the philosophy of science** and an examination of the **history of evolutionary thought**. In this first segment of the course, we will also consider the **genetic basis of** short-term and long-term **evolutionary change**.

- ii) The second segment of the course deals with the **evolution of the Order Primates**; this segment also includes an overview of the taxonomy, biogeography, and socioecology of those mammalian species most closely related to humans -- the living non-human primates.
- iii) The third segment in the course focuses on the field of **paleoanthropology** -- the study of the fossil record of hominin evolution.
- iv) The fourth, and concluding, segment of the course inspects the **adaptations, biologic variation, and biocultural behaviour of contemporary human populations.**

Throughout the term, in keeping with an "issues-oriented" perspective, attention will also be given to any material relevant to the course that may appear in the academic literature and/or be reported in the media as the term unfolds. This is also a "hands-on" lab course. A significant portion of your course grade will be based on the work you complete for a set of lab exercises. These lab exercises that will allow you to mentally apply some of the analytical concepts utilized in biological anthropology, to conduct some representative quantitative calculations as well as conduct qualitative assessments, and to interpret and **report** on those quantitative and qualitative analyses. Of course, any questions about the course readings are welcome -- it is recommended that you endeavour to stay on top of each week's assigned readings (note: there is relevant material in our course text that you can consult in preparing your lab exercise reports).

*A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course's OWL site before the first day of class.*

### **Learning Outcomes:**

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

- appreciate and communicate the breadth of material that constitutes the field of biological anthropology (much of which is often reported in the popular media, but not explicitly identified as being "biological anthropology");
- identify and describe major theoretical issues in the various sub-areas of biological anthropology (i.e., evolutionary theory, primate biology and taxonomy, paleoanthropology, and human biology);
- recognize active and promising research fronts in biological anthropology and gain some background for predicting the directions where future research is most promising for major advances in the field.

### **Course Materials:**

Our course text is:

Marks, Jonathan, 2017. *The Alternative Introduction to Biological Anthropology* (2nd Edition). New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press. The paperback version of Marks (2017) is available at the Western BookStore. Students wishing an e-text version of the book will have to order directly through 'VitalSource':

<https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/the-alternative-introduction-to-biological-jonathan-marks-v9780190639662>

*Registered students will be able to access the necessary lab exercise handouts through the course OWL site; "lab groups" will be formed in Week 1, and lab exercises will begin in Week 2, of the term.*

## Evaluation:

- **three lab reports** (there are three sets of lab exercises to be completed by each student -- a lab report is due the week following each of the assigned lab exercises). Lab reports are **worth 10% each**, for a total of 30% of the final course grade;
- a **mid-term test** (Mar. 1st-5th -- **35% of final course grade**);
- a **final examination** (April Final Exam Period (Apr. 14th-30th) -- date & time to be announced; **35% of final course grade**).

**NOTE:** Both the mid-term test and the course final examination will be written as "take-home" tests. Answers to questions will be in **short essay format**. The structure of both tests will be to select a subset of questions to answer from a larger set of questions that are presented (e.g., choosing to answer any three of six questions presented). Given the "written work" format of the mid-term test and final exam:

**All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review** to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and [Turnitin.com](http://Turnitin.com).

## Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course

Because of the lab exercise component of Anthro. 2226B, each student must complete the three lab exercises \*and\* submit a lab report on each lab exercise.

## Course Specific Statements and Policies:

It is expected that, in preparing their lab reports to complete each set of lab exercises, each student will work independently and not engage in shared/joint work relating to the lab exercises with other students.

## Statement on Seeking Special Accommodations:

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please see your academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds.

## Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

## Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding medical accommodation, accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences in Western's Academic Calendar by clicking on this link:

<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/academicPolicies.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>

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