

# ANTH 1020

## Biological Anthropology

Utah State University  
Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Anna Cohen

Contact: Canvas (preferably) or  
[anna.cohen@usu.edu](mailto:anna.cohen@usu.edu)

Course website: <https://usu.instructure.com/courses/472121>



*[\*\*I will do my best to respond to your inquiries within 24 hours on week days. \*\*]*

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

What does it mean to be human? This introductory course in biological anthropology addresses this question by looking at the interaction of biology and culture in the evolution of our species. We will discuss the history, theory, and methods of research in biological anthropology through interactive discussions, lectures, and activities about recent scientific discoveries. Major topics include: evolutionary theory and genetics; primate versus modern human anatomy; concepts of race; and early humans and our relationship to Neandertals and Denisovans. This class emphasizes the ways in which anthropologists learn about the past and how we can use our knowledge of the past to understand the present and future of our species.

### COURSE GOALS

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- ❖ Describe the basic objectives of biological anthropology and archaeology
- ❖ Define the basic principles of genetics and evolution
- ❖ Define the biological and behavioral characteristics of the order primates
- ❖ Summarize the fossil record from the first primates to modern humans
- ❖ Understand the reasons for modern human variation
- ❖ Understand the cultural and biological evolution of humans and variation as seen in the archaeological record.

## COURSE CONTENT

Each weekly unit will consist of several short (~10 min) video lectures with PowerPoint slides. Many of the PowerPoint slides include additional notes that provide detail on the video lecture material. Each week, you are required to participate in the discussion boards. In addition, for some units you will have an activity to complete. All discussion posts, activities, and tests are due by Friday at 11:59 pm of the assigned week. I suggest using the calendar tool on Canvas to keep track of assignments/exams. It is up to you to keep track of deadlines and assignments.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Assignment	Percentage	Points
Syllabus Quiz	5%	50
Exams (3)	3 * 10% = 30%	300
Final	15%	150
Genetics Activity	5%	50
Ardipithecus Assignment	10%	100
Ancient DNA Activity	10%	100
Discussion Board – weekly participation	25%	250
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1000</b>

\*Detailed assignment explanations are posted under Assignments on Canvas.

### Syllabus Quiz (5%)

This brief quiz must be completed during the first week of the class. The quiz contents are focused on the syllabus and organization of course. The purpose is to introduce students to the online assessment format and to ensure understanding of expectations for the course.

### Exams (3 \* 10% = 30%)

The three semester exams are multiple choice questions that must be completed in 50 minutes. The exams are not cumulative, but the course content generally builds on itself so that for each test you must understand the concepts and ideas introduced throughout the course. See the course schedule for what content is included in each exam.

Study guides will be provided a week prior to the exams, and I am happy to answer any review questions before the exam.

\*\*\*These online and timed exams are not open book. I do not require a proctor, but you are expected to adhere to the University's Honor Code for exams. Attempts to use notes or a book will significantly affect your ability to finish the entire exam in the time provided. You

can take the exam at any point during the week it is assigned, but once you log in and begin the exam, you MUST finish at this time. You cannot stop and re-start. \*\*\*

### **Final (15%)**

The Final will be a two-hour exam to be taken during finals week. Approximately 50% of this exam will consist of material from your first two exams and 50% will be from the last 1/3 of course material.

### **Genetics Activity (5%)**

This activity will help you understand the mechanisms behind evolution. The assignment will involve some interactive activities and problems to solve. Assignment is under UNIT 4.

### **Ardipithecus Assignment (10%)**

The discovery of *Ardipithecus ramidus* has prompted a significant and wide ranging re-evaluation of human evolution, and by extension, chimpanzee evolution. Your assignment will involve critically reading the scientific publications regarding this discovery, and responding to questions based on the readings. Assignment is under UNIT 10.

### **Ancient DNA Assignment (10%)**

For this assignment, you will find and post an article (can be from a newspaper or journal) that presents a recent finding in biological anthropology. The research involved in the finding must include the analysis of ancient DNA, such as our shared DNA with Neandertals, Denisovans, or another species. You must summarize the article and discuss how this has shifted previous suppositions in hominin evolution. Assignment is under UNIT 13.

### **Weekly Discussion Posts (25%)**

Each week you are given a topic relevant to course material to post on the discussion board. I have divided the class into two discussion groups, so you will be reading and responding to posts written by half of the class. In order to receive full credit for your participation grade, each week you must post at least one question or comment (~200 words), and then reply to **TWO** other postings. In order for us to create a productive, engaging discussion environment, you must complete your readings *beforehand*. Feel free to bring in outside sources or personal knowledge to enrich our discussions; however, please stay on topic. Give credit where credit is due: cite your references when you paraphrase or quote. In your response posts, refrain from writing "Me, too!" and "I liked your post" responses that contribute little to the discussion. The key here is that your discussion posts should be substantive. In other words, we want to hear your original thoughts on the discussion topic.

\*Please feel free to use the discussion board as a free and open space for raising any questions you have regarding course material and content.

\*Please be courteous and respectful in your posts and replies. This is not a place for aggressive debates or criticisms of others' questions/comments. If I see any behavior I consider inappropriate for the discussion board, I will deduct points from your discussion participation grade.

## GRADING SCALE

A	100% to 93.5%	C	76.4% to 72.5%
A-	93.4% to 89.5%	C-	72.4% to 69.5%
B+	89.4% to 86.5%	D+	69.4% to 66.5%
B	86.4% to 82.5%	D	66.4% to 59.5%
B-	82.4% to 79.5%	F	59.4% to 0%
C+	79.4% to 76.5%		

## COURSE READING

Larsen, Clark Spencer (2014). *Our Origins: Discovering Physical Anthropology*. Norton, NYC. Available in a variety of formats (paperback and Ebook):  
<http://books.wwnorton.com/books/webad.aspx?id=4294978514>

## COURSE POLICIES

### Late Assignments

Late assignments will not be accepted unless you have a documented, legitimate (medical, legal, bereavement) excuse. Should a medical or legal appointment be unavoidable during a critical date, please make arrangements with Dr. Cohen **BEFORE** the assignment due date.

### Academic Integrity and Netiquette

All students at Utah State University agree on admission to abide by the university *Honor Code*. Please review the Academic Integrity tutorial on Canvas to familiarize yourself with USU policies and procedures pertaining to the USU honor code. This tutorial links to an additional, in-depth review on how to avoid plagiarism and cite sources, which you are strongly encouraged to review. Also, please review the core rules of netiquette on Canvas for some guidelines and expectations on how to behave in an online learning environment.

### Instructor Correspondence

Please use the Canvas messenger tool to correspond with me at any time. Make sure to include a specific reference to your query in the subject line and always begin your message

with 'Dear/Hi/Hello Anna.' Always sign your message with your name. I will do my best to respond to you within 24 hours on weekdays.

**To Succeed in this Class**

For many of you, the content of this course will include new information. This course is heavily focused on the biological sciences, and as anthropologists, we approach the past using a scientific framework. Some of the material may seem complex since students often have different levels of previous exposure to the content. You should put aside a couple of hours a week to re-read any text you may have found confusing, and to review your notes and the Power Points. If you do this, you will have a better chance of retaining the information and doing well on your tests.

**SCHEDULE** (*subject to change*)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
UNIT 1: Intro to Anthropology & What Makes Us Human?		
<i>Discussion Post: Introductions</i>		
8/28-9/1	Intro to Anthropology, Scientific Method, Biological Anthropology <i>Syllabus Quiz</i>	Larsen Ch. 1
UNIT 2: Theory of Evolution & Genetics		
<i>Discussion Post: Darwin and Evolution</i>		
9/2-9/8	Development of Evolutionary Theory from Darwin to Present; Intro to Genetics	Larsen Ch. 2
UNIT 3: Genetics		
<i>Discussion Post: The Human Genome Project</i>		
9/9-9/15	Intro to the Genetic Code, Genetic Basis for Human Variation	Larsen Ch. 3
UNIT 4: Population Genetics		
<i>Discussion Post: Population Genetics and Evolution</i>		
9/16-9/22	Causes of Evolutionary Change, Forces of Evolution <i>Genetics Activity due</i>	Larsen Ch. 4

UNIT 5: Modern Human Variation

*Discussion Post: Concepts of Race*

9/23-9/29 Human Variation and Adaptation; Understanding Race Larsen Ch. 5  
**\*\*\*EXAM 1\*\*\*** [Diamond 1994](#)

UNIT 6: Living Primates: Taxonomy, Biogeography, & Characteristics

*Discussion Post: Pick a Primate*

9/30-10/6 Characteristics of Primates, Diversity of Living Primates; Larsen Ch. 6  
 Intro to Prosimians

UNIT 7: Living Primates: Anthropoids, Great Apes, & Models for Human Behavior

*Discussion Post: Observe Primate Behavior (webcam)*

10/7-10/13 Variation in Behavior among Primates, Importance of Larsen Ch. 7  
 Primate Culture and Behavior; [Disturbing Behaviors of](#)  
 Anthropoids and Great Apes [Orangutans](#)

UNIT 8: Learning about the Past: Methods, Fossils, & Dating

*Discussion Post: Pick a Fossil*

10/14-10/20 How Scientists use Fossils, Relative and Absolute Dating Larsen Ch. 8  
 Techniques  
**\*\*\*EXAM 2\*\*\***

UNIT 9: Primate Evolution

*Discussion Post: If you were at a party...*

10/21-10/27 Origin and Evolution of Primates Larsen Ch. 9

UNIT 10: Early Hominins

*Discussion Post: Ardipithecus Video*

10/28-11/3 Hominin Origins Larsen Ch. 10  
*Ardipithecus Assignment*

UNIT 11: The Genus *Homo*

*Discussion Post: Comparing *H. habilis* and *H. erectus**

11/4-11/10 Models for Emergence of *Homo*, Morphological and Larsen Ch. 11  
 Behavioral Characteristics

UNIT 12: The Origins of Modern *Homo sapiens*

*Discussion Post: A Game of Thrones kind of world?*

11/11-11/17 Origins, Evolution, and Dispersal of *H. sapiens* Larsen Ch. 12  
**\*\*\*EXAM 3\*\*\***

**\*\*\*Thanksgiving Break\*\*\***

UNIT 13: Lower/Upper Paleolithic, Neolithic Revolutions

*Discussion Post: Ancient DNA Assignment*

11/25-12/1	Cultural and Evolutionary Developments; Upper Paleolithic Rock Art; Agriculture <i>Ancient DNA Assignment</i>	Larsen Ch. 13 <a href="#">Diamond 1987</a>
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UNIT 14: Evolution in the Present

*Discussion Post: Are we still evolving?*

12/2-12/8	Forces Shaping Human Biocultural Evolution Today	Larsen Ch. 14
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**12/9-12/13 FINAL EXAM DUE 12/3**

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Academic Integrity and Dishonesty**

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The [Honor Pledge](#) establishes the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students.

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined in the USU Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Ⓢ **Cheating:** using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity.
- Ⓢ **Falsification:** altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
- Ⓢ **Plagiarism:** representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. Note that this includes copying the work of the professor from course material. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All

accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC): <http://www.usu.edu/drc/> (tel: 435.797.2444).

### **Diversity Statement**

Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. For more information, please contact:

- © Access and Diversity: <http://www.usu.edu/accesscenter/>
- © Multicultural Programs: <http://www.usu.edu/accesscenter/multiculture/>
- © LGBTQA Programs: <http://www.usu.edu/accesscenter/lgbtqa/>
- © Provost's Office Diversity Resources: <http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty/diversity/>