

Anthropology 111: Laboratory in Human Biological Evolution
West Los Angeles College, Section 8304
Fall 2013; ACT Program
Prof: Dr. Sasha David (Ph.D.)
October 21, 2013 – December 15, 2013

Description: This laboratory class offers an exploration of selected topics in biological anthropology including genetics, human variation, the living primates, and human paleontology.

Student Learning Outcomes: This course will help students achieve the following institutional Student Learning Outcomes as listed in the Schedule of Classes:

A. Critical thinking: Analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinions, using evidence, and using sound reasoning to specify multiple solutions and their consequences. Students will apply critical thinking to investigate and interpret the influences of heredity and environment upon human beings.

G. Cultural Diversity: Respectfully engage with other cultures in an effort to understand them. Students will participate in activities designed to elicit discussion and understanding of the biological variation among *Homo sapiens*.

Textbook: CD-ROM, Virtual Laboratories for Physical Anthropology Version 4.0, J. Kappelman, ed., Thomson/Wadsworth, ISBN 9780495009924.

Course design: This class is divided into six units. The timeframe of this class is completely open-ended, so you are free to complete all the assignments and exams at your own pace. The only time rule is that you must have all the work and exams completed by the end of the course (by 11:59 PM on December 15th). However, as there are six units to this course, you may prefer to pace yourself by doing one unit per week, which will leave time for studying for the midterm and final exams. Here are the Units and activities that you will complete, and a suggested schedule:

Unit 1: The Basics (Week of 10/21)

- Modules: Introduction, Genetics, & Mendel
- Field Trip: Natural Selection activity
- CD-ROM: Lab 1 (Introduction to the Primates) & Lab 2 (Genetics and Evolution of Human Populations)
- Lab 1 and Lab 2 discussion forums

Unit 2: The Primates (Week of 10/28)

- Modules: Macroevolution, The Primate Order & Primate Behavior
- Field Trip: Observe a non-primate mammal and list its similarities and differences with primates

- CD-ROM: Lab 3 (Primate Functional Morphology), Lab 4 (Primates in Motion), Lab 5 (Primate Diets and Feeding Behaviors), & Lab 6 (Primate Behavior: The Ethogram)

- Lab 3, 4, 5, and 6 discussion forums

Midterm Exam (Week of 11/4)

Unit 3: Australopiths (Week of 11/11)

- Module: Australopithecines
- Field Trip: Walk around and observe the muscles and bone structure used by bipedalism
- CD-ROM: Lab 7 (Primate Evolution), Lab 8 (The Australopithecines) & Lab 9 (The Evolution of Bipedalism)
- Lab 7, 8, and 9 discussion forums

Unit 4: Almost Human (Week of 11/18)

- Modules: Homo erectus & Homo heidelbergensis and Neandertals
- Field Trip: Interview three people about their beliefs about evolution
- CD-ROM: Lab 10 (Fossil Hominids of the Genus Homo) & Lab 11 (The Archaeological Record)
- Lab 10 and 11 discussion forums

Unit 5: Early Humans (Week of 11/25)

- Module: Early Homo sapiens
- Field Trip: Survey five people about where they think the human race originated
- CD-ROM: Lab 12 (The Origin and Evolution of Modern Humans)
- Lab 12 discussion forum

Unit 6: Race (Week of 12/2)

- Module: Race and Human Variation
- Field Trip: Describe one event that you observed today or yesterday in which race played a part

Final Exam (Week of 12/9)

Modules: These are your lecture notes for the unit. They also include accompanying PowerPoint slides. Read and review them to the best of your ability, as the material from the modules is what is covered by the midterm and final. If anything doesn't make sense to you—please let Dr. David know immediately! You are a student and it is OK to not understand things! 😊

Field Trips: Well, they're not really "field trips," in that we are not all going to get on a bus and go somewhere together. The field trips for this class are really individual

activities that will give you a deeper understanding of the course material. Each field trip has its own discussion forum. The directions for each field trip are noted on each discussion forum. Post your findings on the discussion forum for each field trip.

CD-ROM Labs: Please do the labs according to the schedule in this syllabus (and on the CourseMap) and post five comments that you have about the lab in the forum that has been designated for each individual lab. Please include all your comments as a single post. Also, your comments must be completely in your own words and show that you completed the lab, in order to receive credit. You will not receive credit if you comment on the topic in general, without making specific reference to the lab activity. Do not include ANY information that you've found on the Internet.

Exams: There will be a midterm and a final exam for this course. There are no time limits on these tests; however, you only get one try for each test. Both the midterm and the final are multiple choice. The midterm and final exam will ONLY cover the modules, and they are posted in Assignments, Tests & Surveys. The Midterm covers Units 1 & 2 and the final exam is cumulative. NOTE: Do not bring in ANY outside information when taking these exams. Not all anthropologists agree on every fact regarding the primates and human evolution, so you may find competing explanations on the Internet. Answer the questions based ONLY on what you read in the Modules.

About the open-ended schedule for this class: Yes, you have until the end of the class to finish all your work. However, you should not abuse this privilege. Life is always full of surprises, so if you've left everything for the last minute, you are running the risk of failing the class. Also, Dr. David will NOT be available 24/7 over the last weekend of the course to answer questions for people who have put all their work off until the very end. In other words, make sure you make timely progress in this class, otherwise you will be on your own at the very end.

Fun stuff: There is a "Pleased to meet you!" forum where you can introduce yourself to your classmates. There is also a "Coffee Shop" forum where you and the other students can have off-topic discussions with each other.

Grading scheme: This class will use the traditional numerical values for each letter grade. (A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = 59 or lower.) Extra credit will not be offered in this class. Here is what all the assignments are worth, relative to your final grade:

- Final exam: 33% of final grade
- Midterm exam: 19% of final grade
- Lab Discussions: 28% of final grade
- Field Trip Discussions: 20% of final grade

Communication with Dr. David: *Email will not be used for communication for this class.* Instead, Dr. David will monitor the Chat Room from 1-6 PM every Thursday; this will be the “office hours” for the class. If you leave a message in the Chat Room and it goes unanswered for a few minutes, please wait—I may be away from my desk for a minute. ☺ You can also post your questions in the “Questions” forum, which Dr. David will monitor Monday through Friday, or you can send Dr. David a private message.

Forum posting rules: You are allowed to post any comment in the discussion forums as long as it is relevant to the assignment or topic at hand and not potentially offensive to anyone in any manner. Any posts that involve religion are not allowed. If this were a literature class and we were reading *The Lord of the Rings*, you would be expected to know what a hobbit is, regardless of whether you believe they ever existed. Likewise, you are expected to learn this material whether or not you agree with it; debate about its accuracy from a religious standpoint is completely unacceptable. Inappropriate posts will be removed from the forum and may cause points to be detracted from your final grade.

Note to students with disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and require accommodations, please contact the Disabled Students Programs & Services (DSP&S) Office. The DSP&S Office provides special assistance in areas including: registration assistance, specialized tutoring, academic and career guidance counseling, instructor liaison, special instruction and testing assistance. You can contact the Director of the DSP&S Office, Adrienne Foster, at fosteraa@wlaac.edu.

Academic honesty/plagiarism statement: All students are expected to adhere to the West Los Angeles College standards of academic honesty. These standards forbid plagiarism, unlawful copying and, or, failure to give credit to sources that you may use in the research and writing of your class work. Cheating and other forms of misconduct are covered under this statement. Failure to comply with these standards may result in a failed assignment and, or, a failed grade in this class.

Controversial content statement: This course includes discussions of a frank and coarse nature regarding particular subjects including race, religion and sexual orientation protected by the college’s academic freedom statutes that may be considered offensive and controversial to some. When such topics may arise during the course of this semester and a student wishes to be excused, please notify the instructor that you wish to be excluded from class discussion on the ground that it is personally offensive and the instructor will excuse you until such discussion has concluded.

Drop policy: You must have actively participated in the class site by the census date in order to avoid being dropped from the roster.

Technical problems: Please direct all questions regarding accessing the website or using the ETUDES platform to the West Los Angeles College Distance Learning Department (310 287-4305). Dr. David is not able to assist in these matters.

Technical difficulties are NEVER an acceptable excuse for not completing your work. You should only be taking this class if you have reliable access to the Internet, a working CD-ROM drive, and a working understanding of the ETUDES system.

General advice: It's OK to feel a little lost at first, but after the first week you should start feeling at home. Remember that the role of an online student is much more active than the role of a traditional student, so you will need to make sure you are keeping on top of all the assignments. The CourseMap is a handy tool to use to make sure you are on track. (Please note, however, that you must access the discussion forums by directly clicking the "Discussion and Private Messages" tool, in order to receive the directions for each forum. If you attempt to access the discussion forums through the CourseMap, you will not receive the instructions.)

Let's get started! Go to CourseMap for your first assignment. Have fun, and a great semester, and I will see you online!

☺ *Dr. David*