

Introduction to Biological Anthropology and Archaeology

COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2021



Instructor: Karyn Olsen (she/her)

Email: kolsen5@uwo.ca

Office Hours: Online, by appointment only

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: An introduction to aspects of biological anthropology and archaeology which help us to understand the place of humankind in nature. Topics to be covered include heredity, human evolution and variability, archaeological method, the development of culture, the domestication of plants and animals, and the rise of civilization and the state.

Antirequisites: Anthropology 1020 (formerly Anthropology 1020E), Anthropology 1022A/B.

Prerequisites: None.

Course Syllabus: Why take this course? You will get more than just the fundamentals of how biological anthropology and archaeology are used to understand the world around us. You will have the opportunity to engage in disciplinary debates that are still ongoing in the field. For example, we will explore arguments for why humans first started walking upright (there are many!) We will examine the oldest known forms of musical instruments and debate their origins. We will discuss famous archaeological hoaxes and what can be learned from them. And finally, you will have the chance to research key questions in archaeology like, "How did humans first arrive in the New World?" and "How does fringe archaeology impact scientific research in the discipline?"

Learning Outcomes

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

1. Define fundamental terminology, concepts, and methods associated with the study of biological anthropology/archaeology.
2. Identify the kinds of questions anthropologists ask about past people and their environments and describe how anthropologists answer those questions using multiple lines of evidence.
3. Ask questions relating to common debates in biological anthropology/archaeology and identify answers in the literature using academic research skills.
4. Complete the essential first steps of scholarly research, including locating and critically evaluating scholarly and other information sources relevant to anthropological topics.
5. Articulate connections between biological anthropology/archaeology, today's society, and your own lives.

Course Materials

Your custom text for this course is titled, "Archaeology and Biological Anthropology" and is published by the University of Toronto Press. This text combines excerpts from two different textbooks: *Through the Lens of Anthropology* (2016, Muckle & González) and *Introducing Archaeology* (2014, Muckle).

- An eBook version of the textbook is available at the University of Toronto Press website by [clicking on this link](#).
- Note: Given the current situation regarding the COVID19 pandemic, it is unclear whether or not you will be able to order paper copies of the custom textbook. I am working with both the Bookstore and Western Libraries to see what additional options may be available to you.

Registered students will be able to access additional course readings through the course site in OWL before the first day of class. These readings include but are not limited to:

- Ackermann, R., Athreya, S., Bolnick, D., Fuentes, A., Lasisi, T., Lee, S.H., McLean, S.A., and Nelson, R. 2019. "Association of American Anthropologists (AAPA) Statement on Race and Racism". Available by [clicking on this link](#).
- Kelly, R. L., and Thomas, D. H. 2017. "Bioarchaeological Approaches to the Past". In: *Archaeology*, 7th edition. Boston: Cengage Learning, pgs. 198-218.
- Lovejoy, O. 1984. "The Natural Detective." *Natural History* 93 (10): 24-28.
- Stanford, C., Allen, J. S., and Antón, S. C. 2017. "Human Variation: Evolution, Adaptation and Adaptability". In: *Exploring Biological Anthropology: The Essentials*, 4th edition. Boston: Pearson, pgs. 105-140.

Evaluation

Weekly Quizzes (x10)	10%
Discussion Activities (x7)	20%
Bipedalism Assignment	25%
Research Essay	30%
Take-Home Exam	15%

Weekly Quizzes – 10%

The 10 quizzes (worth 1% each) incorporated into this course are intended to help you stay on top of the course material. Each quiz consists of 10 multiple choice and true/false questions and is based on the readings and resources (e.g., lecture videos, YouTube videos, discussion activities, etc.) covered since the previous quiz. Quizzes are open book.

Quizzes occur in Weeks 1-4, 6-11. These assessments allow students to demonstrate learning outcome (LO) 1.

Note: Each quiz will only be open for a one-week period. If you miss a quiz deadline, you will not be able to complete that quiz. However, the quiz that receives the lowest mark will be dropped from the overall grade calculation for the course.

Discussion Activities – 20%

The seven Discussion Activities embedded in this course are opportunities to engage with course content, see the thoughts and opinions of your peers, contribute your own questions, or ideas, present evidence from independent research on the web, or reflect on coursework. Additional details for each discussion activity will be posted on the course OWL site.

Discussion Activities occur in Weeks 2-4, 6-9. These assessments allow students to demonstrate LO 1, LO 2, and LO 5.

Note: Discussion Activities are not accepted following deadline given that each one is relevant to its own week and contributions are typically synthesized and posted for everyone to read. If you miss a deadline, you will not be able to complete that activity. However, the Discussion Activity with the lowest mark will be dropped from the overall grade calculation for the course.

The Great Debate: Bipedalism – 25%

For this assignment, you will address an important debate in biological anthropology: "Why did humans develop bipedal locomotion?" As a class, we will read one article that reflects specific researcher's explanation for the development of bipedalism. Your task will be to describe additional explanations found in the peer-reviewed literature and assess the best explanation among the articles. Word limit 750-1000 words. As part of the bipedalism assignment, you will complete an Assignment Check-in Quiz (3%) to ensure that you are on the right track for the assignment.

The Assignment Check-in Quiz is due by Friday, January 31, and the assignment itself is due Friday, February 5. This assignment allows students to demonstrate LO 2, LO 3, and LO 4.

Note: Unless a student receives accommodation for illness through Academic Counselling, late Bipedalism assignments will be penalized at the rate of 5%/day late for up to a total of 5 days (including weekends) following the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted after 5 days.

Research Essay – 30%

For this assignment, you will have the opportunity to choose a topic from two options related to ongoing academic debates in archaeology. Your task is to write a 1200- to 1500-word paper that critically evaluates the debate. As part of the research essay, you will be asked to complete an Assignment Check-in Quiz (3%) to ensure that you are following the assignment guidelines. You will also submit your thesis statement and bibliography (5%) as part of the check-in to ensure you are on the right track for the paper. This assignment allows students to demonstrate LO 2, LO 3, and LO 4.

- The Check-in Quiz is due Friday, March 14
- The thesis statement and bibliography submission is due Friday, March 19.
- The final draft of the Research Essay is due Thursday, April 1.

Note: When students submit their Research Essays on April 1, they will be able to see their Turn-it-in score. Turn-it-in is a plagiarism detection software that ensures students are writing in their own words and citing references appropriately. Students who receive a score from Turnitin of <15% will receive 2 bonus marks on their essay. If an essay receives a Turnitin score >15%, students will have 48 hours to revise and resubmit their essay without a late penalty (final deadline, Saturday April 3).

Note: Unless a student receives accommodation for illness through Academic Counselling, late research essays will be penalized at the rate of 5%/day late for up to a total of 5 days (including weekends) following the April 1 deadline. Late assignments will not be accepted after 5 days.

Take Home Final Exam - 15%

The final exam is cumulative for the course and involves responding to 1-2 mini-essay questions. Mini-essay questions will ask you to identify and explain course concepts, consider the kinds of questions bio-anthropologists and archaeologists work on, and include specific examples from class to illustrate your ideas. The final exam questions will be released on Saturday, April 3. The exam is due in OWL on Friday, April 9.

Note: Unless a student receives accommodation for illness through Academic Counselling, late exams will be penalized at the rate of 5%/day late for up to a total of 5 days following the due date. Late exams will not be accepted after 5 days.

Course-Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course

In order to pass this essay course, students must demonstrate competence in essay writing and an appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course. To demonstrate competence and knowledge, students must submit and receive a passing grade on their Research Essay.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

I would like to create a learning environment that supports diverse thoughts, perspectives, and experiences. We all bring unique identities to the classroom that reflect differences in age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, and class. I will gladly honour any request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. I will attempt to foster an environment in which students are able to express ideas and hear and respect one another. Please let me know if there are ways that you think I could improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students/student groups.

Statement on Engaging in the Online Learning Environment

This course relies on the OWL site to connect you with the syllabus, assignment outlines, content, and other course material. Here, you will engage with me and your peers as we progress through the course. Please keep track of weekly tasks and contribute respectfully to online activities.

Statement on Email

You may contact me by email, but it may take up to 24 hours for a response. If I cannot provide an immediate response, or if the matter is something that I cannot address easily in an email, we will plan to meet virtually. Please ensure that your emails are worded professionally and include the course number (1026G) in the subject line.

Statement on Student Success

If you need support with your academic writing skills, please visit the [Writing Support Centre](#) in person or online. The Centre aims to (1) enhance your writing and communication skills and build your confidence, (2) equip you with tools, resources and knowledge to effectively communicate through writing, (3) increase your critical analysis abilities to effectively communicate scholarly ideas, (4) convey university level writing expectations, and (5) provide you with the skills you need to navigate academic transitions.

[Learning Development and Success](#) supports your development as student by answering questions and providing advice on how to succeed in your studies at Western. They can help you to develop and strengthen academic skills.

[The Wellness Education Centre](#) will help you navigate any kind of mental health issue (e.g., anxiety, stress, etc.) WEC provides free assistance in connecting you with wellness services and resources on and off campus.

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.

Statement on Turn-it-in

All required written assignments (i.e., Discussion Activities, the Bipedalism Assignment, the Research Essay, and the Take Home Exam) 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](https://www.turnitin.com).

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined in Western's academic policies by clicking on this link: [Western's academic policies](#).

Weekly Breakdown of Topics, Readings and Due Dates

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due Dates
Week 1	Jan 4-10	Introduction to Biological Anthropology and Archaeology: Definitions, branches, situating the discipline	Custom Text: "Through the Lens" (Ch. 1) and "Intro Arch" (Ch. 1; Ch. 3, p. 55-66)	Quiz 1 (by Jan 17)
Week 2	Jan 11-17	Evolutionary Thought and Theory: Science, historical and modern perspectives on evolution	Custom Text: "Through the Lens" (Ch. 3)	Intro and Piltdown Activity (due Jan 15) Quiz 2 (by Jan 17)
Week 3	Jan 18-24	Human Biological Evolution: Paleoanthropology, hominins, bipedalism	Custom Text: "Through the Lens" (Ch. 4) Find in OWL: Lovejoy (1984)	Bipedalism Activity (due Jan 22) Quiz 3 (by Jan 24)
Week 4	Jan 25-31	Human Variation & The False Concept of Race: Scientific/anthropological arguments against biological races	Find in OWL: AAPA Statement on Race/Racism (2019) and Stanford et al. (2017)	Social Construction of Race Activity (due Jan 29) Quiz 4 (by Jan 31)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due Dates
				Assignment Check-in Quiz A (due by Jan 31)
Week 5	Feb 1-7	Complete the assignment	None	Bipedalism Assign (due Feb 5)
Week 6	Feb 8-12	Studying Nonhuman Primates: Taxonomy, evolution, and behaviour	Custom Text: "Through the Lens" (Ch. 2)	Primates Activity (due Feb 12) Quiz 5 (by Feb 22)
READING WEEK				
Week 7	Feb 22-28	Comprehending the Archaeological Record: Sites, preservation, analysis	Custom Text: "Intro Arch" (Ch. 4; Ch. 5, p. 95-102; Ch. 6, p. 113-124)	Musical Instruments Activity (due Feb 26) Quiz 6 (Feb 28)
Week 8	Mar 1-7	Explaining Things of Archaeological Interest: Conceptual frameworks, interpretations, biases	Custom Text: "Intro Arch" (Ch. 10)	Pop Culture Activity (due Mar 5) Quiz 7 (by Mar 7)
Week 9	Mar 8-14	Reconstructing Ecological Adaptations: Paleoenvironments, settlement patters, subsistence strategies	Custom Text: "Intro Arch" (Ch. 8)	Zooarchaeology Activity (due Mar 12) Quiz 8 (by Mar 14) Assignment Check-In Quiz B (by Mar 14)
Week 10	Mar 15-21	Bioarchaeology: Ethics, aging, sexing, and indicators of stress and disease	Custom Text: "Intro Arch" (Ch. 6, p. 124-130) Find in OWL: Kelly & Thomas (2017)	Research Paper Thesis/Bib (due Mar 19) Quiz 9 (by Mar 21)
Week 11	Mar 22-28	Inequality, Identity and Ideology: Artifacts, symbols, and mortuary data	Custom Text: "Intro Arch" (Ch. 9)	Quiz 10 (by Mar 28)
Week 12	Mar 29-Apr 4	Complete the research paper	None	Research Paper (due April 1)
Exam Period	April 8-30	Complete the Take Home Exam (cumulative)		Available: Sat, Apr 3 Due: Fri, Apr 9