

ANTHROPOLOGY 2267B-650

Anthropology of Zoos

COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2023

Version date: Jan. 5, 2023

Lectures: Asynchronous delivery via OWL.

Instructor: Dr. Ian Colquhoun (he/him)

Email: colquhou@uwo.ca

Office Hours: By appointment (meetings held via Zoom).

Teaching Assistant: Rebecca Lahosky (rlahosky@uwo.ca)

-- You can email either of us about anything regarding the course!

Credit value: 0.5 credit

Mode of delivery: For the Winter '23 term 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 each week of the term, although there may be tasks that must be completed by specific times.

Course Description: Modern zoos characterize themselves as key players in conserving endangered species. But, is this message getting across to zoo visitors? This course utilizes anthropological and interdisciplinary approaches to assess key aspects of zoo-based conservation action, and the extent to which zoos can generate public engagement in 21st century conservation concerns.

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: None.

Course Description:

Just about everyone has visited a zoo at one time or another (or maybe even visited multiple zoos multiple times). But, what does the average zoo-goer actually know about zoos? Zoos are, at the same time, one way that people, particularly children, may experience aspects of the natural world (especially exotic wildlife), but are also perhaps relatively unknown to the general public in how they function. Zoos, in fact, present a microcosm of how humans interact with the natural world. In this course, we will undertake an examination of the zoo-based academic literature to focus on the multiple dimensions of interaction that exist between zoos (and the species they maintain), society (both zoo-goers and the broader general public), and the conservation research community. We will also consider what the future of zoos may hold.

A full course schedule including a **week-by-week schedule of topics and assigned readings** is available on the course OWL site. All assigned readings are either from open access sources (links are provided in the week-by-week schedule), or from academic journals that are available through

Western Libraries. The Site Tool listing on the course OWL site includes a tab labelled "Course Readings" -- clicking on that tab will take you directly to a digital archive prepared for the course by Western Libraries which presents the non-open access journal article readings I have selected for the course.

Learning Outcomes:

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

- identify and critically reflect upon the key perspectives concerning the role(s) that zoos currently play in the conservation of endangered species;
- show an appreciation of how an interdisciplinary approach grounded in anthropology can be used to examine the value, and future, of zoos in the 21st century;
- critically analyze and evaluate online content presented by zoos relating to public engagement and conservation education. This critical analysis and evaluation will include assessment of ongoing public and academic debates on a range of issues as they relate to course themes and the societal position zoos will hold in the future.
- hone transferable critical thinking skills that will have long-term applicability in your professional and life tool-kits.

Course Materials:

There is **not** a required textbook for this course. In some ways, the compilation of research articles used in this course (rather than working from a textbook) is more similar to what one might encounter in a graduate "Reading Course" or research seminar. In fact, before Anthro. 2267A/B was offered as a course, I ran a reading course on 'Zoos and Conservation Biology' for one of my Master's students. With several revisions (some minor, others more major), Anthropology 2267A/B-650 'Anthropology of Zoos' was eventually developed out of that Master's reading course (note -- as Anthro. 2267A/B-650, the course has only ever been delivered as an online course).

Rather, in our examination of the multi-faceted nature of zoos, we will be making use of peer-reviewed articles drawn from academic journals such as *Zoo Biology*, *International Zoo Yearbook*, and *Conservation Biology* (among others). **All** the course readings are either from Open Access sources, or are drawn from academic journals which are available electronically through the [Western Libraries web portal](#).

Registered students will be able to access information about these journal article course readings through the course's on-line OWL site on the first day of the Fall 2020 academic term.

Evaluation:

The following is the breakdown of this course's evaluated work:

- Zoo Websites Comparative Evaluation (15%)
- Mid-term Test (35%)
- Reflection: The Future of Zoos (15%)
- Final Exam (35% -- only covers material following the mid-term test)

Note – Both the mid-term test and final exam will be structured as *take-home examinations*. See the [week-by-week course schedule](#) for the scheduling of these evaluations.

For the purposes of the mid-term and final tests, a take-home evaluation is normally considered to be an assessment that could reasonably be completed by a well-prepared student in 6 hours or less. As a guideline, for long-answer and essay-based take-home examinations, the University's expectation is that completion of the assessment will require 2000 words or less (because Anthro. 2267B-650 is **not** an "essay course").

Students will be provided online access to the examination at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the examination slot assigned by the Office of the Registrar. Papers will be due by the end of the assigned examination slot, and will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism (i.e., OWL can automatically check submitted work for evidence of plagiarized text, such as "cut and pasted" segment of text that are uncited).

Academic Statements and Policies:

Student Absences

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totalling 10% or more of the final course grade, you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration (i.e., your "Home" Faculty) as soon as possible.

For further information, please consult the University's medical illness policy at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

The Student Medical Certificate is available at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Absences from Final Examinations:

If you miss the Final Exam, please contact the Academic Counselling office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a "Multiple Exam Situation" (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

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 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](#).

Note on Mid-term and Final tests -- Because Anthropology 2267B is being delivered as an asynchronous online course, Western has a policy that mid-term and final tests can only be in one of two formats: **i)** "real-time" tests conducted online with 'cyberproctor' software, or **ii)** "take-home" tests that are administered over two consecutive days, with a 24-hour "question reveal" period (during which time students can be preparing their test answers) followed by a 6-hour window during which completed test answers must be submitted via the course OWL site. **We will be using "take-home" test formats for the mid-term and final tests in Anthropology 2267B.**

~ END ~