

Department of Anthropology
ANTHROPOLOGY 2236A-001

Anthropological Perspectives on Human Growth, Development and Aging

Course Outline

Fall 2023

Version date: September 5, 2023

Instructor and course information:

Instructor: Dr. Andrew Nelson
Email: anelson@uwo.ca

Prerequisites: none.
Antirequisites: none.

Credit value: 0.5 credit

Course Description:

This course examines the growth, development and aging of the human body using evolutionary, comparative, and cross-cultural approaches. Modern humans are unique among other primates in having very large brains, which have evolved through a complex process that required adaptations to gestation, delivery, the number and length of post-natal growth phases, and in patterns of parental investment. Modern humans have also evolved long life spans compared to our primate relatives. In addition, the growth and aging processes are affected by cultural factors. Practical methods will be drawn from bioarchaeology and forensics, theoretical perspectives will be drawn from biological evolution and evolutionary ecology, cultural aspects will be drawn from cultural anthropology and clinical perspectives will be incorporated from modern medical studies. In order to be studied holistically, both the biological and cultural aspects of aging must be considered, making it an ideal subject for an anthropology course.

Weekly Lecture Topics

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:

On successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- integrate perspectives from several disciplines in the analysis of human growth and aging
- place the pattern of modern human growth and development in its evolutionary context
- identify and characterize the stages of human growth and development
- understand the biocultural approach and how it shapes interpretations within biological anthropology and bioarchaeology
- debate the future of our species and whether and/or how natural selection will shape how we age

Course Materials:

An updated 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.

Evaluation:

Midterm test	30%
Essay	40%
Final Exam	30%

Midterm Test - 30%

October 16th, 2023. 2 hr duration. Multiple choice and short answer format. Use of electronic devices will not be allowed during midterm tests.

Essays/Written Assignments – 40%

The 2000 +/- 250 word research paper will focus on theories of why we age. This is a topic introduced in the first lecture and revisited in the last lecture. The reading for the last lecture should provide a jumping off point for your research. Students should gather at least 5 additional academic references (refereed journal articles – note that there is a lot of very unacademic stuff on the internet about this!). The paper should have a title page, the text and a literature cited section. It should be formatted in Times Roman, 12 point font, double spaced with 2.5cm margins. Further details on format and structure will be presented in class and posted on OWL.

The research paper is due November 27th, 2023. It should be submitted to OWL by 11:55pm that evening. Submit a hard copy in class or to the Department drop box on November 28th (if already submitted to OWL on time). Assignments that are not submitted to OWL on the due date will be assessed a late penalty of 5% per day; assignments that are more than a week late will not be accepted.

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](https://www.turnitin.com).

Final Exam – 30%

The final exam will take place during the designated exam period for this course. Multiple choice and short answer format. The use of electronic devices will not be allowed during the final exam.

Academic Statements and Policies:

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current [Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#) policies in the Academic Calendar. Such items include accommodations for students with disabilities,

religious holidays, consideration for medical illness, academic appeals, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and code of student conduct.

Academic Integrity - 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.

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.

Use of OWL

Western's OWL online course management program will be used for providing the final course outline and weekly schedule, submitting and returning assignments (using the Assignments tool), communications with the class (using the Announcements tool), and posting grades (using the Gradebook tool). Pdf copies of lecture slides will be made available in the OWL Lesson pages before each class.

Academic Consideration for Student Absences

For students who have missed, or will miss, any course work, whether it be for medical related or non-medical related, please read the details and instructions on "[What is Academic Consideration](#)". 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. All missed work must be made up by the end of the exam period in the applicable term.

Accessible Education

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. Please see [Accessible Education](#) for information.

Useful Websites:

Anthropology Department: <http://anthropology.uwo.ca>

Office of the Registrar: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Academic Support and Engagement: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca>

Accommodated Exams: http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html