

Department of Anthropology
ANTHRO 2226A: Biological Anthropology
COURSE OUTLINE
Fall 2025

Date: August 25, 2025

Instructor and Course Information

Instructor: Dr. Michelle Graham

Method of delivery: In Person

Credit value: 0.5

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: There are not any designated prerequisite courses to Anthro 2226A/B. However, students who have taken Anthro 1022A/B or 1026F/G should find they have a solid conceptual basis for the work in this course.

Course Description

Biological anthropology is a subfield of the broader discipline of anthropology that studies the evolutionary history and biological diversity of humans and non-human primates. As biological anthropology is a subfield investigating human biology and evolutionary history, this course primarily draws on the synthetic theory of evolution and biocultural anthropological theory as a framework in conjunction with the contributions of primatology, paleoanthropology, and human biology to better understand ourselves.

This course is composed of four parts:

Part One: What is biological anthropology? The philosophy of science, the history of evolutionary thought, genetics, and human heredity.

Part Two: What makes a primate? Primate evolution, behaviour, and biology.

Part Three: Why do anthropologists study bones? What makes a human *human*? What is "human nature"? The study of human evolution.

Part Four: When we study humans, we study people: Human variation and biocultural considerations.

A full course schedule, including a week-by-week breakdown of topics, assigned readings, and class activities will be posted on the OWL Brightspace course site at the beginning of the term.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Describe what biological anthropology is and explain where it fits among the human sciences and within the four subfields of anthropology. (**Part One**)
- Explain the historical development of the theory of evolution, how evolution happens, how genetics and heredity work to make each of us unique, and how these processes affect our daily lives. (**Part One**)

- Describe the criteria used to develop systems for the classification of species, how primates are classified, and what we can learn about them and ourselves through the study of primatology. (**Part Two**)
- Distinguish between the different species of hominin identified thus far and explain the differences between them, as well as comparing the characteristics that separate Neanderthals from *Homo sapiens*. (**Part Three**)
- Describe variation in modern human populations and predict the future of biocultural anthropology. (**Part Four**)
- Identify and explain the interdisciplinary applications of biological anthropology today, including bioarchaeology and forensic anthropology. (**Part Four**)

Course Materials

In addition to the required textbook listed below, supplementary course materials, activities, and communications will appear in digital format on the [OWL Brightspace](#) course site. Copies of PowerPoint presentations will be made available each week after the in-person lecture. All grades will be posted in the OWL gradebook. If you need assistance with OWL Brightspace, you can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, you can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#) online or by phone at (519) 661-3800 ext. 83800 for technical support. Current versions of all popular browsers (e.g. Safari, Chrome, Edge, Firefox) are supported with OWL Brightspace; what is most important is that you update your browser frequently to ensure it is current. All JavaScript and cookies should be enabled.

Textbook and Other Learning Materials

Required textbook: Jonathan Marks, *The Alternative Introduction to Biological Anthropology* (2nd edition), Oxford University Press, 2017. **The textbook costs** between \$54.33 new and \$19.98 used on [Amazon Canada](#).

Students will need to purchase the second edition. Older editions will not be sufficient.

Supplementary resource: [Explorations: An Open Invitation to Biological Anthropology](#). While not required, this free Open-Access online textbook provides an overview of introductory information for those that did not complete a recommended first year anthropology course.

Evaluation

Grades will be based on the following:

- 4 Lab Assignments (class exercises using the materials provided) *Oct 8, 22, 29; Nov 19*
- Mid-term Exam (multiple-choice and true-and-false questions) *Oct 15*
- Final Exam (multiple-choice and true-and-false question, and a short essay; will take place during the final exam period *between Dec 11th and 22nd*)

4 Lab Assignments (4 x 10%)	40%
Mid-term Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%

Late Assignments and Flexibility

Labs involve practical exercises that will allow you to get some “hands-on” experience in the techniques of biological anthropology. Each student is responsible for completing the lab assignments within the designated time, unless otherwise noted. Students may miss one lab

assignment without documentation. Further information about options and scheduling will be provided by your instructor. If the missed assignment is not completed by the end of the term once make-up options are provided, then a zero will be assigned. Requests for additional make-up labs or extenuating circumstances will require documentation. All requests for making up a lab must follow [Western's Policy on Academic Consideration](#). Note that if you lack documentation for the excused absence, you must specify that the request is for an Undocumented Absence (limited to one per term).

Important: Classroom Policy for Handling Lab Materials

This course will involve the opportunity to handle casts of skeletal remains, along with the potential to view real skeletal remains in Western Anthropology's collections. As part of this course, it is expected that you will follow instructions and handle materials with care and respect.

Accessibility

This course is designed with accessibility and flexibility in mind. On the OWL Brightspace course site, all materials are formatted for accessibility. The material is presented in a variety of modalities (text and audiovisual material) to accommodate different learning styles. I welcome other suggestions for how to make the course more accessible to you. Please reach out to me.

Additional Statements

Institutional 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, academic considerations, academic appeals, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and code of student conduct.

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Electronic devices can be used to take notes during lectures and to access course material on OWL Brightspace or consult supplementary sources during lab exercises. However, any text or ideas incorporated into your work that are not your own must be cited using [APA Style, 7th edition](#). No electronic devices can be used during exams, including computers, tablets, cellphones, and smart watches.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) may be used to explore your ideas about the course material. However, any text created by AI tools, software, or apps cannot be used in course assignments as it constitutes plagiarism and is not possible to adequately cite sources. You are expected to read original publications and cite all sources using APA Style 7th edition. Please do not use AI to proofread your work either. It is my job to evaluate your writing and provide resources to help you improve your skills, as needed.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a [Scholastic Offence](#).

All required written work 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 Western University and [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com).

Computer-marked multiple-choice texts and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

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 students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Writing assignments should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work. Please consult Western's guide on [Cheating, Plagiarism, and Other Scholastic Offences](#).

Support Services

For student support services please see the [Office of the Registrar](#) and [Student Support Services](#).

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at [this link](#).

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

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

Accommodation for Religious Holidays: Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Note: The course outline is subject to change as needed. Please make sure to check the course schedule and any announcements on OWL for updates.

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