

COURSE OUTLINE - Winter 2025

AN2050(A3): Introduction to Biological Anthropology - 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

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|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| INSTRUCTOR: | Shawn Morton, PhD | PHONE: | (780) 539-2830 |
| OFFICE: | C402 | E-MAIL: | smorton@nwpolytech.ca |
| OFFICE HOURS: | W 11:00-12:00 or by appointment | | |

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This course covers the basics of our origins and all the spectacular biological diversity we see around us in the modern human species, from an anthropological perspective. Students will be introduced to fundamental concepts in evolutionary theory, genetics, demography, and the various ways that human diversity has been understood and interpreted. This course is an exciting overview of humans, biologically, from our origins to who we are today.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:

None

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Shook et al. (2023) Explorations: An Open Invitation to Biological Anthropology, 2nd Ed., OER.
<https://pressbooks.calstate.edu/explorationsbioanth2/>

DELIVERY MODE(S):

On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will be able to:

- describe the differences between scientific and non-scientific viewpoints with respect to fundamental topics such as human origins, race, etc.
- explain the basics of evolutionary theory and human genetics.
- demonstrate an understanding of and describe the human evolutionary record.
- explain what non-human primates can tell us about ourselves and the world.
- demonstrate an understanding of the scientific position on human biodiversity.
- describe the relevance of biological anthropology to the modern world.

- Apply critical thinking skills to access, evaluate, and interpret information to draw conclusions and shape arguments.
- Demonstrate a scholarly mindset that is open to different perspectives, acknowledges the provisional nature of knowledge, and an identify the limits of research and understanding within the discipline of anthropology.
- Express ideas clearly and effectively in writing.
- Act with honesty and integrity to both complete academic work and conduct themselves in an academic environment.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferralberta.ca>

**** Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

| Assessment | Weight |
|--|--------|
| 10 reading quizzes, 5 points each, for 50 points total | 25% |
| 3 lab/reflective activities, 30 points each, for 90 points total | 45% |
| Final exam for 60 points total | 30% |
| Total = 200 points | 100% |
| Note: All points are weighted equally for 200 points total. | |
| Extra credit for up to 10 points | 5% |

Reading Quizzes (10 reading quizzes at 5 points each for 50 points total)

You will be given 10 reading quizzes covering your syllabus and chapters in our textbook throughout the semester. Each quiz will consist of a small number of questions (multiple choice, matching, etc.) and are intended to encourage you to keep up with your readings. They are not worth a whole lot of points in the grand scheme of things but could mean the difference between one letter grade and the next; don't let them slip past you! **Reading Quizzes are to be completed on our myClass page, will open Mondays at 8 am of the week assigned, and close Sundays at 11:59 pm (see due dates on schedule).**

Lab/Reflective Activities (3 activities at 30 points each for 90 points total)

Lab/Reflective activities are intended to engage your critical thinking skills in an application of course content. While the requirements of these assignments vary significantly with the topics covered and resources available, they are each intended to give you an opportunity for hands-on exploration of specific methods or concepts covered in your lectures and readings. Also, assuming we have the same definition of "fun," these are supposed to be fun, so jump in and enjoy! **Activities are to be completed on our myClass page and will open Mondays at 8 am of the week assigned and close Sundays at 11:59 pm (see due dates on schedule). Don't worry, no prep work is required (we'll cover it in class)!**

Final Exam (60 points total)

You will have a scheduled final exam in this class; HOWEVER, your exam WILL NOT require you to be physically present on campus and will follow the same format as your midterm exam. Your exam is a TAKE HOME. As we will be invoking concepts that are foundational to the discipline of anthropology, it will build on the material covered throughout the course. Your final exam will be worth 60 points and consist of an essay question and response that will be provided in advance. **Your final is to be completed on our myClass page and will open on the Monday (at 8 am) of the last week of scheduled classes. The exam is due and will close by 11:59 pm on the date scheduled by the registrar. I will let you know when this information is available.**

Note: I do NOT provide study guides. Significant quantities of research have served to demonstrate that it is not in a student's best interest to be provisioned with a study guide by the instructor. You may not like it, but the reality is that production of your own study guide is an important studying technique in its own right. Like eating vegetables, this is for your own good. You are encouraged to ask questions in class and to approach me in office hours for guidance. Although this isn't a course where you need to memorize a lot of information, you do need to be familiar with what we've covered and where you can find it. Use the tables of objectives included in each module to structure your study guide.

Extra Credit (up to 10 points)

Extra credit is as stated, extra points above and beyond your regular class assignments. These points are somewhat easy to acquire, but to receive any point you must do exactly as asked. Opportunities for extra credit (worth 5 points each) will be announced throughout the semester.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Grading Chart

| Alpha Grade | 4-point Equivalent | Percentage Guidelines | Alpha Grade | 4-point Equivalent | Percentage Guidelines |
|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| A+ | 4.0 | 95-100 | C+ | 2.3 | 67-69 |
| A | 4.0 | 85-94 | C | 2.0 | 63-66 |
| A- | 3.7 | 80-84 | C- | 1.7 | 60-62 |
| B+ | 3.3 | 77-79 | D+ | 1.3 | 55-59 |
| B | 3.0 | 73-76 | D | 1.0 | 50-54 |
| B- | 2.7 | 70-72 | F | 0.0 | 00-49 |

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

| Week | Date | Topic(s) | Reading(s) |
|---|---------|--|-------------------------|
| Getting Started | | | |
| 1.1 | Jan. 7 | Introduction to course | Syllabus & Introduction |
| Module 1: Basic Principles in Biological Anthropology | | | |
| 1.2 | Jan. 9 | What is biological anthropology. | Chapter 1 |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 1 - Due Sunday, Jan. 12, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 2.1 | Jan. 14 | The development of evolutionary theory | Chapter 2 |
| 2.2 | Jan. 16 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 2 - Due Sunday, Jan. 19, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 3.1 | Jan. 21 | The biological basis of human variation | Chapter 3 |
| 3.2 | Jan. 23 | | |
| Homework: Lab/Reflective Activity 1 - Due Sunday, Jan. 26, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 4.1 | Jan. 28 | From variant to species | Chapter 4 |
| 4.2 | Feb. 30 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 3 - Due Sunday, Feb. 2, 11:59 PM | | | |
| Module 2: Primatology | | | |
| 5.1 | Feb. 4 | What it means to be a primate | Chapter 5 |
| 5.2 | Feb. 6 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 4 - Due Sunday, Feb. 9, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 6.1 | Feb. 11 | Primate behavioural ecology | Chapter 6 |
| 6.2 | Feb. 13 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 5 - Due Sunday, Feb. 16, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 7.1 | Feb. 18 | Family Day - No Classes | |
| 7.2 | Feb. 20 | Reading Break - No Classes | |
| 8.1 | Feb. 25 | Primate evolution | Chapters 7 & 8 |
| 8.2 | Feb. 27 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 6 - Due Sunday, Mar. 2, 11:59 PM | | | |
| Module 3: Paleoanthropology | | | |
| 9.1 | Mar. 4 | What it means to be a hominin | |
| 9.2 | Mar. 6 | | |
| Homework: Lab/Reflective Activity 2 - Due Sunday, Mar. 9, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 10.1 | Mar. 11 | Hominin origins: from ape to Australopithecine | Chapter 9 |
| 10.2 | Mar. 13 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 7 - Due Sunday, Mar. 16, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 11.1 | Mar. 18 | The emergence of the genus Homo | Chapter 10 |
| 11.2 | Mar. 20 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 8 - Due Sunday, Mar. 23, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 12.1 | Mar. 25 | The advent of humanity and anatomically modern humans | Chapters 11 & 12 |
| 12.2 | Mar. 27 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 9 - Due Sunday, Mar. 30, 11:59 PM | | | |
| Module 4: Biological Anthropology in Contemporary Society | | | |
| 13.1 | Apr. 1 | Beyond bone and stone | Chapters 13 & 14 |
| 13.2 | Apr. 3 | | |
| Homework: Reading Quiz 10 - Due Sunday, Apr. 6, 11:59 PM | | | |
| 14.1 | Apr. 8 | Biological anthropology as applied science and Wrap up | Chapter 15 |
| 14.2 | Apr. 10 | Wrap up | |
| Homework: Lab/Reflective Activity 3 - Due Sunday, Apr. 13, 11:59 PM | | | |
| Final Exam - Date TBD | | | |

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Late Assignment/Make-up Policy: You are expected to follow the schedule as posted and **late assignments will not be accepted**, except with my permission. Contrary to a popular idiom, it is always better to ask

for permission than forgiveness; if you know that you are going to miss a deadline, please let me know in advance.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance will not be taken, and no part of your grade is directly tied to attendance/participation. You are paying good money for this class and committing a significant amount of time to it. To get the most for your money and effort, **attendance is strongly encouraged.**

Classroom Climate Expectations: To create and maintain a safe and productive learning environment in the classroom, standards of behaviours are expected as follows:

1. **Listen** attentively and TAKE NOTES.
2. **Communicate** clearly and actively when asking questions or during discussions.
3. **Be respectful** when asking questions/discussing topics with EVERYONE. This does not mean that you need to agree with all the views/opinions expressed but note that there is a difference between being critical or engaging in a productive conversation and being confrontational or abusive.
4. **Refrain** from excessive talking or use of technology for NONACADEMIC PURPOSES. You are supposed to be in class, so BE IN CLASS.

If you choose to violate the above expectations, either once or repeatedly the following consequences will be enforced:

1. Verbal warning;
2. Meeting after class/in office hours, or;
3. Pursuing a report of non-academic misconduct under the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html>

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Note that you should not take your performance in this course as an indication of how much I like or respect you. No, that will depend on whether you laugh at my jokes (that was a joke). It goes without saying that post-secondary education is a process. You'll figure out what works for you. I'm here to help. Also, looking for a little extra credit? Just send me an email with "AN2050 – Extra Credit" in the subject line and the word "elephant" as the body.