

San José State University
Anthropology Department
ANTH 12, Introduction to Human Evolution, Section 2, Spring 2023

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Amanda Kadkly
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Office Hours:	By appointment (M 2:30-3:30 pm) – schedule in Canvas calendar
Class Days/Time:	MW 12:00-1:15 pm
Classroom:	WSQ 004
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	B2/Life Science

ANTH 12: The human organism from an evolutionary perspective. The foundations of life and evolutionary theory. Introduction to primate behavior and the fossil record. Human biocultural evolution over the last sixty million years. Prerequisites: None.

Course Description

In this course, we will be studying human and primate variation within an evolutionary framework. Throughout the course, we'll pay special attention to what anthropological research can teach us about "the human condition," how to live happier and more fulfilling lives, and how to better understand ourselves as biocultural organisms. Unfortunately, popular media is filled with misinformation about evolution, so we will start by "unlearning" some major misconceptions about evolution, health, and human biology. You'll find that, interestingly, many impediments to happiness are reinforced by biologically deterministic beliefs about our species.

Perhaps when you think about anthropology, you envision Indiana Jones' swashbuckling adventures or a scientist in cargo pants examining bones. Though some anthropologists do work in more traditional settings, anthropology, as a whole, is a holistic field that emphasizes solving human problems—from large-scale problems to personal ones! Throughout this course, we will examine where humans fit into the animal kingdom, and we will explore the biological and cultural processes at work in shaping human adaptation.

I have been teaching this course for several years, and I've come to realize that many undergraduates are struggling to find their place in the world. Some students seem particularly anxious about their life choices and are looking for answers to big picture questions. What does it mean to be successful? What does it mean to be a good person? I struggle with these questions, as well. In all honesty, this course is just as much for me as it is for you! If you decide to take this course and undergo this journey of self-reflection on what it means to be human, I highly encourage active participation on your part throughout the semester. I have found that students are able to more concretely grasp concepts related to human evolution by unpacking their own experiences. To facilitate this process, this class will engage in reflection exercises and discussions. I hope these experiences will allow you to apply the material we cover to your own life. Welcome to class! 😊

Course Format

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on [Canvas Learning Management System course login website](#) at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](#) on [Spartan App Portal](#) at <http://one.sjsu.edu> (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see [Canvas Student Resources page](https://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/software-tools/teaching-tools/canvas/student-resources/index.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/software-tools/teaching-tools/canvas/student-resources/index.php>).

Course Goals

Students completing this course will achieve a fuller understanding of (a) how to think scientifically, (b) how evolution works, (c) humans as primates, (d) human evolutionary history, and (e) human variation.

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

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

LO1: Demonstrate knowledge of scientific theories, concepts, and data used in the physical and life sciences.

LO2: Apply scientific principles and communicate in ways appropriate to the discipline about the process and results of scientific discovery.

LO3: Access, critically evaluate, and represent scientific information in various forms and draw appropriate conclusions.

LO4: Use methods derived from current scientific inquiry to form evidence-based opinions about science-related matters of personal, public, and ethical concern.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

In this course, students will learn the principles of evolutionary theory and how the study of human evolutionary history, adaptation, and variation plays a fundamental role in the evolutionary processes that affect the human species. In addressing our understanding of the human condition, students will be challenged to think critically, interpret and assess the validity of scientific methodologies, examine quantitative data, and engage in class discussions.

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

CLO 1: Explain the evolutionary process, how it works, and how scientists have come to understand the process (specifically to understand ourselves).

CLO 2: Describe the evolutionary history of our species and the biological bases that are at the foundation of this process.

CLO3: Comprehend basic biological knowledge relating to molecular biology, cell reproduction, fundamental principles of micro- and macro-evolutionary theory (especially the role of natural selection), and the intellectual background leading to the development of evolutionary theory.

CLO4: Explain from a comparative perspective how humans are related to other primates (and what this implies structurally, physiologically, and behaviorally).

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

- *Physical Anthropology*
 - Readings on the course website: <https://afanthro.wordpress.com/>
- *Explorations: An Open Invitation to Biological Anthropology*
 - Author(s): Beth Shook, Katie Nelson, Kelsie Aguilera, and Lara Braff
 - ISBN: 978-1-931303-62-0 (eBook), 978-1-931303-63-7 (Print)
 - This is an open access textbook which can be accessed at <https://explorations.americananthro.org/>.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus ([University Policy S16-9](#), Course Syllabi <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>).

Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus. More details can be found in Office of Undergraduate Education's [Syllabus Information web page](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

Final Exam: There is a cumulative final exam in this class. Make-up exams will only be given for unforeseen circumstances (illness, family emergency), and only if the legitimacy of the emergency is **adequately documented** AND the student contacts me **within 24 hours** of the exam date. You will not be given extra time if you start on the exam too close to the deadline. If you have any concerns about disability accommodations, please discuss this with me ahead of time so that accommodations can be made. Students must complete the exam to pass this course.

Exam questions will test your knowledge of course concepts and material, as well as your ability to apply this knowledge to novel situations and examples. I truly believe in your success as a student, so I will provide study guides and practice questions to help you grasp the material. Office hours are available for students. This is a great opportunity to get feedback and assistance with the course.

Final Examination or Evaluation: [University Policy S06-4](#) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S06-4.pdf>) states that "Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment."

Reflection Surveys: You will complete 10 brief surveys throughout the course. These surveys will form the basis of lectures and class discussions.

Practice Quizzes: There are 3 practice quizzes on Canvas. They will be graded on accuracy, but you will have unlimited attempts to complete the quizzes. There is much misinformation on evolution in popular media, so I want to incentivize having an accurate understanding of evolution. These will be completed in class, and you will have the ability to work in groups.

Experiential Assignment: At the end of the course, you will turn in a write-up of experiential activities completed throughout the semester. These activities are designed to help you reflect on your experiences, assess your skills as a critical thinker, and apply the concepts taught in class. This assignment (6 pages, double-spaced) will involve mini self-reflective experiments/thought exercises guided by anthropological perspectives. The goal is to inspire you to take direct action and make positive change in your life. Detailed instructions will be provided on Canvas.

All written responses need to be appropriate for an academic setting (complete sentences, proper grammar, etc.). They should reflect college-level writing, and they should be specific to the concepts discussed in class. Writing is a personal process that is ever evolving. I strongly believe that we all (and by that, I mean myself too) can improve our writing with practice! If you need help with the writing process, consult with the Writing Center (<https://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>).

Course Goals: Since the goal of this class is to examine what it means to be a human organism, I strongly encourage you to take a learning/personal growth mindset rather than a strictly performance-based mindset. Research shows that overly focusing on performance causes students to become more stressed and less interested in the material. Ultimately, I want students to learn how to live a more authentic life, reflect on anthropological perspectives that affect our lives, and rethink some of the automatic habits and behaviors that have become negative “side effects” of our cognitive evolutionary history.

Attendance and Deadlines: Assignments will be due on Sundays by 11:59 pm unless otherwise specified. The surveys and practice quizzes will be open until the last day of class without penalty, but you should put forth your best effort to complete them by the due dates in order to stay on track. I will not be strictly grading for attendance, though I do keep records of attendance for statistical purposes. If you need to miss class, reach out to a classmate to get any information you missed. I know that students often experience unexpected personal challenges, and I want to provide some flexibility for those circumstances. With that said, if you are truly trying to make positive changes in your life, I want to strongly emphasize the importance of being present, sticking to a schedule, starting on assignments early, and maintaining communication with me.

Cellphones and Laptops: When you enroll in a course, you have a responsibility to help maintain a positive learning environment for the entire class. This means you should come to class on time, be prepared, avoid distracting others, and contribute during class activities. Therefore, I ask that you put aside your cellphone and laptop during lectures, as they are highly distracting to yourself, your peers, and to me. It is okay to use a cellphone or laptop during groupwork or class activities, but they should be put away during lectures (unless you have accommodations that permit the use of a laptop for note-taking).

Communication: Please be mindful of email professionalism guidelines and note that I respond to emails during business hours (M-F). If I experience an overload of emails, it may take longer before I can respond. All emails must include your full name and section.

Grading Information

To pass this course, students must receive a grade of C or higher.

Grades will be based on the following (each assignment is graded on a scale of 100):

Final Exam (100 pts)	=	20%
Practice Quizzes (100 pts) PQ x 3	=	20%
Reflection Surveys (50 pts)	=	10%

RS x 10		
Experiential Assignment (250 pts)	=	50%
Total (500 pts)	=	100%

Grading is as followed:

A	B	C	D	F
97% - 100% = A plus 92-96% = A 90-91% = A minus	87-89% = B plus 82-86% = B 80-81% = B minus	77-79% = C plus 72-76% = C 70-71% = C minus	67-69% = D plus 62-66% = D 60-61% = D minus	Below 60% = F

More guidelines on grading information and class attendance can be found from the following university policies:

- [University Syllabus Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>)
- [University Attendance and Participation Policy F15-12](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf>)
- [University Grading System Policy F18-5](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F18-5.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F18-5.pdf>)

Grading Policies

It is important to maintain a system of fairness to students who complete work on-time in this course. Therefore, only students with a valid, *documented* excuse will be able to submit an exam late. If you are experiencing a difficult circumstance, reach out to me as soon as possible.

Sensitive topics may come up in class. If you have any specific concerns, I encourage you to seek accommodations and/or discuss your situation with your academic advisor. Requests for extensive assignment extensions due to emergency situations must be formally submitted in writing. A plan to get back on track must be approved before an extension will be granted (if the extension request meets the requirements).

When turning in assignments/exams on Canvas, it is your responsibility to make sure you uploaded the correct document, and that it is a working file that I can access. Be sure to check your submission on Canvas.

Any grade disputes or concerns should be addressed **within 7 days** of receiving the grade for the assignment. There are no additional extra credit opportunities or grade boosts. Final grades do get rounded up (for example, an 89.5% is rounded up to an A-).

People that are taking this course should know that cheating will not allow you to achieve your academic goals or live a more fulfilling life. It will catch up to you one way or another. Students must adhere to [SJSU's Academic Integrity Policies](https://www.sjsu.edu/iss/current-students/integrity/) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/iss/current-students/integrity/>). Any form of cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance, or academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and a formal investigation will be pursued if this behavior is found. It is the student's responsibility to understand and comply with all academic integrity protocols. Every assignment will be individually evaluated for adhering to academic integrity standards.

Classroom Protocol

I enjoy facilitating discussions in an engaging and comfortable environment! 😊 This works best when students are prepared, courteous, and open-minded. It is important to maintain a structured classroom environment where students can learn with without distractions, so please keep this in mind when reading through these guidelines:

- It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider disenrolling from a course. Refer to SJSU's Schedule for dates and deadlines for registration.
- Check Canvas and you SJSU email regularly. You should aim to check Canvas and email at least every few days during the week. I will not send reminder emails about assignments. Keep track of all due dates in the syllabus and on Canvas.
- Assignments need to be submitted on Canvas. Cybersecurity threats are a concern, so I do not accept assignments attached in emails. Corrupt files or attachments that cannot be read will receive a zero.
- In the Subject Line of an email, always include the class and section number. Refer to the email professionalism guidelines on Canvas, and note that I respond to emails/Canvas messages during business hours (9 am – 5 pm) within 24-48 hours.
- Be respectful and courteous to others in this class. The classroom should be a comfortable learning environment where ideas can be shared and discussed. Be positive and constructive when making contributions.
- Being respectful also includes respecting everyone's time. Please do not show up late because it is quite distracting.
- Cellphones and laptops are only permitted during groupwork (not during lectures).
- If you have questions about the content, other students may have similar questions and could benefit from this information. I encourage you to speak up and not feel embarrassed to ask questions! Questions about grades, however, should be addressed in office hours.
- Office hours will be scheduled by appointment. Please note that when you join Zoom, you will be placed in a waiting room, and I will meet with students one at a time.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

All students must obtain the instructor's permission if they wish to record lectures or distribute materials from the class. University Policy S12-7 <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> to establish a record of their disability.

Resources

Academic Success Center <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/>
 Peer Connections website <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu>
 Writing Center website <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>
 Counseling Services website <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>

ANTH 12 / Introduction to Human Evolution, Spring 2023, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice; any changes will be announced and posted to Canvas.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Readings, Assignments, and Deadlines
1	1/25 – 1/27	Module 1: <i>Unlearning the Myths that Bind Us</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing anthropology, unpacking misconceptions 	Reading: (PA) Introduction RS 1
2	1/30 – 2/3	Module 2: <i>The Evolution Controversy</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evolutionary theory, misconceptions 	Reading: (PA) Evolutionary Theory
3	2/6 – 2/10	Module 3: <i>Your Inner Fish</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural selection, ecological influences 	Reading: (PA) Natural Selection RS 2
4	2/13 – 2/17	Module 4: <i>The Warrior Gene</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cell biology, chromosomes, genes 	Reading: (EXP) Ch. 3 RS 3
5	2/20 – 2/24	Module 5: <i>Nature vs. Nurture</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DNA, genetic inheritance, PQ 1 	Reading: (EXP) Ch. 4 PQ 1: 2/22
6	2/27 – 3/3	Module 6: <i>Tough Pills</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genetic/health complexities 	Reading: (PA) Health RS 4
7	3/6 – 3/10	Module 7: <i>Life in Plastic</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evolutionary effects, plasticity 	Reading: (PA) Evolution RS 5
8	3/13 – 3/17	Module 8: <i>Rise of the Mammals</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speciation, mammal traits 	Reading: (PA) Speciation, Mammals RS 6
9	3/20 – 3/24	Module 9: <i>The Age of Dating Apps</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reproductive ecology, PQ 2 	Reading: (PA) Complexities PQ 2: 3/22
10	3/27 – 3/31 <i>Spring Break</i>	Spring Break No class!	Reading: None
11	4/3 – 4/7	Module 10: <i>Social Beings</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primate evolution, lemurs, monkeys 	Reading: (PA) Primate Evolution RS 7 <i>Recommended: (EXP) Ch. 5, 6</i>

Week	Date	Topics	Readings, Assignments, and Deadlines
12	4/10 – 4/14	Module 11: <i>The Need to Belong</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesser and great apes, socialization in primates 	Reading: (PA) Apes RS 8
13	4/17 – 4/21	Module 12: <i>Methods</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fieldwork, data analysis 	Reading: (PA) Methods RS 9
14	4/24 – 4/28	Module 13: <i>From Tiktaalik to TikTok</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The human lineage, PQ 3 	Reading: (PA) Fossilization PQ 3: 4/26
15	5/1 – 5/5	Module 14: <i>Id, Ego, and Superego</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligence, biocultural evolution 	Reading: (EXP) Ch. 9 RS 10 <i>Recommended: (EXP) Ch. 10, 11, 12</i>
16	5/8 – 5/12	Module 15: <i>The Happiness Trap</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human variation, biological adaptations, stress 	Reading: (PA) Adaptation, (EXP) Ch. 14 EA due
17	5/15	Module 16: <i>Big Picture Questions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA discussions, course conclusions 	Reading: (PA) Modern Humans
Final Exam	5/17	Exam day https://www.sjsu.edu/classes/final-exam-schedule/index.php	Final: 5/17 at 9:45 – 12:00 pm (in class)