ANTHROPOLOGY 7: “HUMAN EVOLUTION”

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UCLA  
Spring 2014  
Fowler A103B  
TR 11:00-12:15

TEXTBOOK: R. Boyd & J.B. Silk. HOW HUMANS EVOLVED, 6th EDITION

GRADES will be based on a midterm exam (40%), a final exam (45%), and a discussion section grade based on discussion participation and homework assignments (15%). Both exams will consist of a mix of questions – multiple choice, short answer, and short essay.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE

Humankind is one product of the process first identified by Charles Darwin: evolution by natural selection. This insight has profound implications for every scholarly field that concerns itself with the human condition. In this course, you will learn how evolution works -- in particular, how Darwin and his intellectual successors solved the problem of how complex organic design could emerge in the absence of a conscious designer. You will be introduced to the ecology and behavior of humanity’s closest living relatives, the nonhuman primates. You will survey the extensive and growing fossil record of human evolution through 6-7 million years of change from ape-like -- but upright walking -- creatures to modern Homo sapiens. Finally, you will learn how evolutionary theory and evolutionary history can inform the study of modern human biology, the human mind, and human social behavior.

COURSE OUTLINE

PART I: HOW EVOLUTION WORKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC(S)</th>
<th>READING(S)</th>
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|        | • How science works and how scientific ideas change; what is a “theory”?  | (1) Prologue.  
<p>|        | • Natural selection: How randomly generated variation and non-random survival and reproduction produce adaptations.  | (2) All of Chapter 1. |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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| Apr. 3      | • (More) natural selection.  
              • Mendelian genetics: why offspring resemble their parents (but not perfectly). | Pages 22-34. |
| Apr. 8      | • Genes in populations: processes by which gene frequencies change (or don’t). | All of Chapter 3. |
| Apr. 10     | • Molecular genetics: DNA, the chemical basis of heredity.  
              • Species and speciation: what is a species and how do new ones form? | (1) Pages 34-46.  
              (2) All of Chapter 4. |

**PART II: PRIMATE BEHAVIOR**

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| Apr. 15     | • Introduction to the primates: a survey of the apes, monkeys and prosimians.  
              • Primate ecology: how primates make a living. | All of Chapter 5. |
| Apr. 17     | • Evolutionary theory and social behavior: how natural selection has shaped selfishness and altruism; the central roles of kinship, mate competition and mate choice in evolution. | (1) Pages 135-138.  
              (2) Pages 146-150.  
              (3) Pages 159-166. |
| Apr. 22     | • (More) Evolutionary theory and social behavior.  
              • Primate social behavior: how the above principles play out in the lives of apes, monkeys and prosimians. | All of Chapter 6  
              (including re-reading pages 135-138 and pages 146-150). |
| Apr. 24     | • (More) Primate social behavior | All of Chapter 7  
              (including re-reading pages 159-166). |
| Apr. 29     | • **MIDTERM EXAM** (covers material through the Apr. 24 lecture, and associated readings – i.e. HHE Ch. 1-7) |
| May 1       | • Primate life histories  
              • Primate intelligence: how and why are primates so smart? | All of Chapter 8. |
### PART III: THE HISTORY OF THE HUMAN LINEAGE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>10. May 6</td>
<td>- Primate evolution: how small shrew-like insectivores were transformed into forest apes. All of Chapter 9.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. May 8</td>
<td>- Early hominins: how forest apes were transformed into bipedal savanna dwelling apes. All of Chapter 10.</td>
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### PART IV: EVOLUTION AND MODERN HUMANS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>17. May 29</td>
<td>- (More) evolutionary psychology. Pages 374-378.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Human uniqueness: life history, large-scale cooperation among non-relatives, culture as a second system of inheritance. (2) All of Chapter 16.</td>
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19. June 5

- (More) human uniqueness.

- Darwinism, science and ethics: how evolutionary theory can help explain morality but can’t substitute for morality.

Epilogue.

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday June 11, 11:30 AM-2:30 PM

COURSE MECHANICS AND COURSE POLICIES

Textbook

_How Humans Evolved_, 6th edition (hereafter, HHE), is the required text. Don’t use a previous edition of this textbook unless you’re willing to risk missing important material – this is especially true of the chapters about the human fossil record, a field in which major new discoveries occur frequently. New copies of HHE are expensive, but used copies, and a less expensive loose-leaf version, should be available at the bookstore, and the publisher (WW Norton) offers a relatively inexpensive e-book version.

Please read the assigned portions of HHE _before_ their associated lectures. In some of the lectures, I will assume that you’ve already done the reading. Note that some lectures’ associated reading assignments are much longer than others’.

Many of the reading assignments begin or end in the middle of a page of HHE. In these cases, the beginning or end of the assigned reading is at a major section break. For example, part (2) of the reading assignment for Apr. 17 ends in the middle of page 150. This means that it ends just before the section heading titled “Male Reproductive Tactics.” In Part II of the course (“The Nonhuman Primates”), I have assigned some of HHE to be read and then re-read for a later lecture. This is because I choose to organize the material in a somewhat different way from the authors of HHE.

Some of the midterm and final exam questions will be based on material that is covered in HHE, but not in the lectures.

Lectures

PowerPoint slides displayed in lectures will be posted on the course website before each lecture. These are organized by week on the left side of the course webpage.

Video and audio podcasts of the lectures will be available from Bruincast: [http://www.bruincast.ucla.edu/](http://www.bruincast.ucla.edu/)
I will show some video clips during lectures. Some of these will be from YouTube. I will post the titles of these videos on the class website, so you'll be able to view them again at your leisure.

**Discussion sections**

For each meeting of the discussion sections, except for the first week, you will write brief answers to a few questions that will be posted on the class website (see “Homework Assignments” on the main page). These questions, and students’ answers to them, will form the basis of the discussions that your T.A. will lead. You will turn in your written answers to your T.A. at the end of each discussion section meeting.

The discussion section portion of your grade (15% of the course total) will be based on (1) answers to homework questions and (2) discussion participation.

**Office hours**

I will have two regularly scheduled office hours each week: Mon. 9:00-9:50 and Thurs. 9:00-10:30. You are more than welcome to stop by (Haines 389) during those times; don’t worry that you’re “bothering” me – those hours are your time. You are also welcome to email me to set up an appointment at other times.

**Exams**

The exams will consist of a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions. T.A.s will grade the exams. Each T.A. will grade all the answers (of the entire class, not just their discussion sections) to one portion of each exam.

I will provide study guides before each exam. Some material from lectures and the textbook, though not very much, will fall into the category “You don’t need to know this.” This material will be designated explicitly in the study guides. Please don’t ask, about any other textbook or lecture material, whether you need to know it. The answer is yes.

*No make-up exams will be given. If you know that you will not be able to be present at the midterm (Tue Apr. 29, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM) or the final exam (Wednesday June 11, 11:30 AM-2:30 PM), then don’t enroll in this class.*

**Grading**

Course grades will be based entirely and exclusively on exam scores and discussion section homework and participation. The exams and discussion section work are meant to measure your knowledge of the subject matter. Final grades are intended to reflect your mastery of the course material – *not* the amount of effort you put into the course. A
few moments of reflection should clarify why I cannot assign grades based on students’ work effort. First, I cannot measure it. Self-reports of effort are obviously unreliable. Remote monitoring of students’ study habits is obviously not feasible, either ethically or practically. Second, when grade reports are used in decisions made both inside and outside the university (e.g. admission to an impacted major, or to graduate school), the decision-makers presume that a high grade signifies mastery of the subject matter – not merely a high level of effort. When I review the transcript of an applicant to UCLA Anthropology’s graduate program, I trust that the applicant’s undergraduate professors assigned grades based on knowledge, not just effort. As a matter of integrity, I must abide by the same standard.

Final grades will determined by the percentage of total course points earned. There will be no “curve.” Grade cut-offs are as follows:

A: 84%
A-: 81%
B+: 77%
B: 70%
B-: 65%
C+: 62%
C: 51%
C-: 43%

Points totals less than 43% will earn a grade of D or F.

Students rightly expect grading to be fair, but what constitutes fairness is not always clear. Here’s what I mean by fairness: every student’s work is graded using the same criteria. You may not like these criteria in all cases, but you can be sure that I’m applying the same criteria to every other student. This standard of fairness has several implications.

For one thing, I do not allow “extra credit” work. If only those who asked for such work were allowed to do it, this would be unfair to the students who didn’t ask. But if every student in the class were given the opportunity to do “extra credit,” it would no longer really be “extra” – it’d be just another course assignment. And I have already determined that I’m assigning the proper amount of work for this course.

Furthermore, in assigning grades I cannot take into account a student’s personal circumstances (e.g. the “need” for a particular grade to keep a scholarship or get into a major, or a distracting family crisis or financial crisis) – however much I may personally sympathize with a student’s difficulties. (If you are having personal problems that interfere with your academic work, I can refer you to appropriate on-campus counseling and other resources.) If I were to consider one student’s personal circumstances in assigning his or her grade, to be fair I would need to consider every student’s personal circumstances – again, an ethical and practical impossibility. (Actually this is a moot
point, because the UCLA Faculty Code of Conduct prohibits basing grades on any consideration other than course work).

Course policy regarding re-grades of midterm exam questions also reflects this standard of fairness. Re-grade requests are strongly discouraged. They must be submitted as written commentaries on the exam answer, referencing the relevant material from lectures and/or course readings, and explaining in detail why the exam answer deserved more points than were given. The same T.A. who graded the question will evaluate all requests for re-grades of that question. The T.A. will consider only whether the standards for grading the question were correctly applied in the exam being re-graded. Under no circumstances will the grading standards themselves be retroactively changed – this would be unfair to some of the students who did not receive full credit for their answer yet did not request a re-grade of that question. More details on re-grade requests will be provided at the time of the midterm. Requests for re-grades of the final exam are even more strongly discouraged. The likelihood of such a request being granted is very close to zero.

Also, I will not change the course grading scheme (e.g. the relative weights of the midterm and the final in determining the final grade) for particular students.

“How should I study for this class?”

The one general-purpose suggestion I can offer, besides the obvious (e.g. go over your lecture notes) is to keep in mind that almost all the Anthro 7 material is hierarchically organized. There is a single integrative “root” concept -- adaptation by natural selection – a number of “main branch” concepts (e.g. sources of the variation on which selection acts; sexual selection) an even larger number of more specific “small branch” concepts, and finally the “twigs” of supporting observations and experiments. Almost every concept and fact that you’ll need to learn resides somewhere on this metaphorical tree. If you find yourself regarding some element of course material as a “random” fact unconnected to the rest of the course, then you are missing some important point. Do some more reading and thinking, and ask your T.A. or me for help, and we will try to clarify how it all fits together.

Academic integrity

I suggest that you visit the Dean of Students’ website, which includes a guide to academic integrity:

http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/integrity.html

Instances of suspected academic dishonesty (e.g. consulting notes during exams; sending a substitute to take an exam for you) will be immediately reported to the Dean of Students. UCLA’s rules require this.