Graduate Seminar in Physical Anthropology
ANTH 202 (Call No. 83849) Fall 2009

Syllabus

Lecture: Wednesday 5.30-8.20 PM
MND 4008

Instructor: Dr. Roger Sullivan
Office: MND 4024
Office Hours: Wednesday 9.00-12.00 AM, or by appointment.
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Course web page: http://www.csus.edu/indiv/s/sullivar/

Catalog Description

Required Readings

Course Objectives and Requirements
ANTH 202 is a readings-based discussion seminar of theoretical issues and current research in biological/physical anthropology. Assessment consists of two essays (40%), preparatory writing and participation in each week’s discussion (40%) and class presentations (20%). The course work is intended to develop skills in critical analysis of the science literature, and to engage with current issues and research in the discipline. Attendance and active participation at all class meetings is mandatory and you will be graded on both. You are expected to read the assigned articles before class so that you can fully participate in discussions.

Essays (40%)
Students will complete two essays:

Essay One (5 pages excluding title page and references, typed and double-spaced) will address the following statement and is worth 10% of the final grade:

“Did Lawrence Summers have a point about innate [brain] differences between men and women?”

Write me an essay constructing a negative or affirmative argument in response to the statement. Construct your essay initially around the supplied popular science article “Sex on the brain” (Hoag 2008), but you must build your argument based on primary research sources on biological sex-differences from the literature (i.e. use some references from the supplied article as a starting point).

This initial assignment is a learning exercise to orientate students to the required writing style and grading expectations for the final essay. Essay One is due in class in the 6th week (October 7). A guide for organizing and writing essays will be handed out at the first class and will also be available on the class website.

Essay Two will address a course-related topic of your choosing and is worth 30% of the final grade. You must clear your choice of essay topic with me first. The paper will be based on an extensive reading of primary source material and will include a substantial reference list (>10 references). Your essay will be no more than 15 pages in length (excluding title page and
references), pages numbered, double-spaced, with a 12 point standard font, one-inch margins all around and include your name at top-right of each page. Essay Two is due in the last week of instruction - refer to the essay guide for further details about how to write your essays and my expectations for grading.

Abstracts (20%)
A concise written summary (abstract) of two of the required readings (marked with an asterisk*) is due in class each week. Your abstract will be a 1/2 to 1 single-spaced page (1-2 double-spaced pages) on each of the required readings. Abstracts will be written in prose (i.e. no list or bullet points) and will include 1) a clear introductory sentence describing what the paper is about 2) a paragraph or two describing the essential points made by the author(s), and 3) their main conclusions. Abstracts will be graded as below. Abstracts are due in class - late work will not be accepted.

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<tr>
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Class Participation (20%)
Each week’s topic and readings will be discussed in class. To assist in preparation for class discussions you will formulate a list of three questions related to the readings for that week. You will refer to these questions when called upon during class discussion and will hand them in to me at the end of class. Your participation grade will be based on the quality (rather than quantity) of your discussion contributions, evidence that you are thinking critically about class topics, and the quality and relevancy of your discussion questions.

Points to consider when preparing your discussion questions:
- what parts of the readings do you not understand?
- what are the broader implications of the reported research findings?
- have you detected flaws in the author’s logic or methods?
- what is the broader theoretical context of the article?
- can you detect an implicit, rather than explicit, point of view or theoretical position that the author is advocating?

Student Presentation (20%)
Each student will lead-off one or more class period by giving a presentation on the topic of the week. The main thing that I will be looking for in terms of assessing presentations is evidence of a critical analysis of the topic - that you present an informed opinion of the issue in question rather than merely review the literature. Presentations are expected to go beyond the assigned readings. A bibliography of five additional references used in the preparation of your presentation will be submitted to me on the day that you present. You will be also be graded on organization and presentation skills. Plan your presentation to take up at least 30 minutes of the class period (not to exceed 45 minutes). Afterward, we will spend 10-15 minutes on questions.

Final Grade Summary
 Essays: 40%
 Literature Summaries: 20%
 Class Participation: 20%
 Presentation(s): 20%

Total: 100%
Class Schedule

Week 1. September 2.
**Introduction: Science writing and critical analysis.**
Readings: Kuyper 1991, Dr Sullivan's Essay Guide

**History of Physical Anthropology/Philosophy of science.**
Readings: Washburn 1951, Feynman 1974, Miller 1985* (Popper readings), Kuhn 1970*
Presenter: Dr. Sullivan

Week 3. September 16.
**Evolutionary genomics I: Chimpanzee vs human.**
Required readings: Varki and Nelson 2007*, Watanabe et al. 2004* (also “Genomic jargon” glossary)
Presenter: Tobin Rodman

Week 4. September 23.
**Evolutionary genomics II: Natural Selection in the human genome.**
Required readings: Hancock and Di Rienzo 2008*, Harris 2008*
Presenter: Jessica Jones

Week 5. September 30.
**Chimpanzee vs human culture and behavior.**
Presenter: Chelsea Ellis, Matthew Steinkraus

Week 6. October 7.
**First essay is due.**
**The Major Histocompatibility Complex [MHC] and behavior.**
Readings: Penn and Potts 1998*, Slev et al. 2006*
Presenter: Dr. Sullivan

Week 7. October 14.
**Modern human origins I: What happened to the Neandertals?**
Required readings: Caramelli et al. 2003*, Duarte et al. 1999*, Tattersall 2002
Presenter: Shannon Goshen, Olivia James

Week 8. October 21.
**How does speciation occur? Species concepts and speciation.**
Presenter: Kimberley Morris

**Paleontology and phylogeny: Recent fossil discoveries in paleoanthropology.**
Presenter: Jessica Jones, Shannon Goshen

**What’s in a name? Issues of classification in the fossil record.**
Presenter: Kimberley Morris
Week 11. November 11.
Veteran’s Day. No class.

**Problems with human forager and primate models of hominin evolution.**
Required readings: Hames 2007, Kelly 1995*, Sayers and Lovejoy 2008*
Presenter: Matthew Steinkraus, Chelsea Ellis

Thanksgiving. No class.

**Modern Human Origins II: Out of Africa and archaic Europeans.**
Required readings: Weaver and Roseman 2005*, Zilhao 2006*
Presenter: Olivia James, Tobin Rodman

Week 15. December 9.
Faculty furlough. No class.
Readings (refer to LOCUS for complete list)


**Relevant full-text journals that are available online at the CSUS library:**
American Journal of Human Biology
American Journal of Physical Anthropology
Current Anthropology
Evolutionary Anthropology
Evolution and Human Behavior
Human Biology
Journal of Human Evolution
Nature (except the current year)
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (except the previous 6 months)
Science (except the current year)