ANTH 118: THE ANTHROPOCENE: HUMAN IMPACTS ON ANCIENT ENVIRONMENTS

In Workflow

1. ANTH Committee Chair (zeanah@csus.edu)
2. ANTH Chair (mgdel@csus.edu)
3. SSIS College Committee Chair (shiltsm@csus.edu)
4. SSIS Dean (mendriga@csus.edu)
5. Academic Services (torsetj@csus.edu;%20212408496@csus.edu;%20cnewsome@skymail.csus.edu)
6. Senate Curriculum Subcommittee Chair (curriculum@csus.edu)
7. GE Crs Rev Subcomittee Chair (smizrahi@csus.edu)
8. Dean of Undergraduate (james.german@csus.edu;%20celena.showers@csus.edu)
9. Dean of Graduate (cnewsome@skymail.csus.edu)
10. Catalog Editor (212408496@csus.edu;%20torsetj@csus.edu;%20cnewsome@skymail.csus.edu)
11. Registrar's Office (wwd22@csus.edu;%20wlindsey@csus.edu;%20sac19595@csus.edu;%20danielle.ambrose@csus.edu;%20h.skocilich@csus.edu;%20205109584@csus.edu)
12. PeopleSoft (PeopleSoft@csus.edu)

Approval Path

1. Tue, 10 Sep 2019 00:38:06 GMT
   David Zeanah (zeanah): Rollback to Initiator
2. Wed, 11 Sep 2019 00:05:40 GMT
   David Zeanah (zeanah): Approved for ANTH Committee Chair
3. Wed, 11 Sep 2019 15:35:22 GMT
   Michael Delacorte (mgdel): Approved for ANTH Chair
4. Sat, 21 Sep 2019 22:33:32 GMT
   Mical Shilts (shiltsm): Rollback to Initiator
5. Tue, 24 Sep 2019 23:31:45 GMT
   David Zeanah (zeanah): Approved for ANTH Committee Chair
6. Wed, 25 Sep 2019 14:37:36 GMT
   Michael Delacorte (mgdel): Approved for ANTH Chair
7. Fri, 04 Oct 2019 16:11:34 GMT
   Mical Shilts (shiltsm): Approved for SSIS College Committee Chair
8. Fri, 04 Oct 2019 18:58:04 GMT
   Marya Endriga (mendriga): Approved for SSIS Dean

New Course Proposal

Date Submitted:Tue, 24 Sep 2019 21:51:10 GMT

Viewing:ANTH 118 : The Anthropocene: Human Impacts on Ancient Environments

Last edit:Tue, 24 Sep 2019 21:51:09 GMT

Changes proposed by: Jacob Fisher (213340648)

Contact(s):

Name (First Last)	Email	Phone 999-999-9999
Jacob Fisher	jlfisher@csus.edu	916-278-4555

Catalog Title:

The Anthropocene: Human Impacts on Ancient Environments

Class Schedule Title:

The Anthropocene

Academic Group: (College)

SSIS - Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Studies

Academic Organization: (Department)

Anthropology

Will this course be offered through the College of Continuing Education (CCE)?
No

Catalog Year Effective:
Fall 2020 (2020/2021 Catalog)

Subject Area: (prefix)
ANTH - Anthropology

Catalog Number: (course number)
118

Course ID: (For administrative use only.)
TBD

Units:
3

In what term(s) will this course typically be offered?
Fall, Spring

Does this course require a room for its final exam?
Yes, final exam requires a room

Does this course replace an existing experimental course?
No

This course complies with the credit hour policy:
Yes

Justification for course proposal:
This course is designed to provide significant historical depth to students' understanding of the relationship between humans and their environment, and it will expose students to the value of archaeology in problem-oriented research related to the human-environment relationship. While climate change, human environmental impacts, and the onset of the Anthropocene are pressing contemporary issues, our current concerns are the most recent in a long history of human impacts on the environments. This has been the center of the recent debate on whether humans have had a significant enough impact to warrant a new geologic epoch, the Anthropocene. We do not currently offer a course that discusses the topic of prehistoric human-environment relationships from an anthropological perspective that reaches out to a broad student body. This proposal will remedy this deficiency by offering the course as an upper-division Area B5 course to majors and non-majors.

Course Description: (Not to exceed 80 words and language should conform to catalog copy.)
Designed to challenge students to critically evaluate past human relationships with their environment at the local, regional, and global scale over the past 10,000 years. The diachronic perspective of the course provides students with a broader understanding of contemporary challenges, such as anthropogenic climate change and declining biodiversity, that is rooted in our prehistoric past.

Are one or more field trips required with this course?
No

Fee Course?
No

Is this course designated as Service Learning?
No

Does this course require safety training?
No

Does this course require personal protective equipment (PPE)?
No

Does this course have prerequisites?
No

Does this course have corequisites?
No

Graded:
Letter

Approval required for enrollment?
No Approval Required

Course Component(s) and Classification(s):
Lecture

Lecture Classification
CS#01 - Large Lecture (K-factor=1 WTU per unit)
Lecture Units
3

Is this a paired course?
No

Is this course crosslisted?
No

Can this course be repeated for credit?
No

Can the course be taken for credit more than once during the same term?
No

Description of the Expected Learning Outcomes: Describe outcomes using the following format: "Students will be able to: 1), 2), etc."
Students will be able to:

1. Explain the theoretical and methodological approaches archaeologists use for understanding past human-environmental interactions;
2. Evaluate competing arguments about the history of human-environmental interactions from a broad temporal and geographic perspective;
3. Discuss the relationship between people and their environment, particularly in the context of human impacts and changing climate;
4. Discuss the value of archaeology and other long-term datasets to contemporary landscape and resource management and climate change concerns.
5. Discuss the strength and limitations of scientific based inquiry for learning about past human behavior.

Attach a list of the required/recommended course readings and activities:
ANTH 118 Anthropocene.pdf
Email from Geography Dept.pdf
Email from ENVS Dept.pdf

Assessment Strategies: A description of the assessment strategies (e.g., portfolios, examinations, performances, pre-and post-tests, conferences with students, student papers) which will be used by the instructor to determine the extent to which students have achieved the learning outcomes noted above.
1. Exams (fulfills ELO 1-3, 5)
2. Research Paper and associated assignments (fulfills ELO 2-4)
3. Participation and miscellaneous in-class or take-home small assignments (fulfills 1, 3, 5)

For whom is this course being developed?
Majors in the Dept
General Education

Is this course required in a degree program (major, minor, graduate degree, certificate?)
No

Does the proposed change or addition cause a significant increase in the use of College or University resources (lab room, computer)?
No

Will there be any departments affected by this proposed course?

No

I/we as the author(s) of this course proposal agree to provide a new or updated accessibility checklist to the Dean's office prior to the semester when this course is taught utilizing the changes proposed here.

I/we agree

University Learning Goals

Undergraduate Learning Goals:

Competence in the disciplines
Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
Integrative learning
Personal and social responsibility
Intellectual and practical skills

Is this course required as part of a teaching credential program, a single subject, or multiple subject waiver program (e.g., Liberal Studies, Biology) or other school personnel preparation program (e.g., School of Nursing)?

No

GE Course and GE Goal(s)

Is this a General Education (GE) course or is it being considered for GE?

Yes

In which GE area(s) does this apply?

B5. Further Studies in Physical Science, Life Forms and Quantitative Reasoning (Upper Division Only)

Which GE objective(s) does this course satisfy?

Read, write, and understand relatively complex and sophisticated English prose.
Find and use common information resources, engage in specialized library research, use computers and seek out appropriate expert opinion and advice.
Gain a general understanding of current theory, concepts, knowledge, and scientific methods pertaining to the nature of the physical universe, ecosystems, and life on this planet.
Construct a non-fallacious verbal argument, recognize fallacious arguments, and follow the verbal arguments of others.

Attach Course Syllabus with Detailed Outline of Weekly Topics:

ANTH 118 Anthropocene.pdf

Syllabi must include: GE area outcomes listed verbatim; catalog description of the course; prerequisites, if any; student learning objectives; assignments; texts; reading lists; materials; grading system; exams and other methods of evaluation.

Will more than one section of this course be offered?

No

General Education Details - Area B5: Further Studies in Physical Science, Life Forms and Quantitative Reasoning

Section 1.

Indicate in written statements how the course meets the following criteria for Category B5. Relate the statements to the course syllabus and outline. Be as succinct as possible.

Course type:

Physical Science or Life Forms

For courses in physical science or life forms:

Develops an understanding of the principles underlying and interrelating natural phenomena including the foundations of our knowledge of living systems.

This course centers on the interrelationships between humans and their "natural" environment over the past 10,000 years. The concept of the "Anthropocene" as developed in geology will be critically evaluated using anthropological and ecological theoretical approaches, archaeological observations, and paleoenvironmental datasets.

Introduces students to one or more of the disciplines whose purpose is to acquire knowledge of the physical universe and/or living systems and life forms.

Students will be introduced to anthropological archaeology and related fields in Quaternary sciences (e.g., paleontology) as they pertain to our understanding of past human-environment interactions, including past extinctions, plant and animal domestication, intensified land use, and effects of finite resources on past societies.

Develops an appreciation of the methodologies of science and the limitations of scientific inquiry.

Understanding of the strength and limitations of scientific based inquiry for learning about past human behavior, including the nature of evidence contained in fossil and archaeological records and the inherent prerequisites and limitations to their scientific study are course objectives. Chronological methods (e.g., radiocarbon dating), zooarchaeology (study of animal remains from archaeological contexts), paleoethnobotany (study of plant remains from archaeological contexts), palynology (study of pollen records), stable isotope paleoecology, and ancient DNA are among the approaches covered in the course.

Please Note: Courses listed in this category:
1) Need not be introductory courses and need not be as broad in scope as courses included in B1, B2, B3 or B4 i.e.; they may deal with a specialized topic.
2) These courses may have prerequisites or build on or apply concepts and knowledge covered in Areas B1, B2 and B4. For math courses, there must be an intermediate algebra prerequisite.

Addresses the specific GE student learning outcomes for area B5. A student should be able to do one or more of the following:

Cite critical observations, underlying assumptions and limitations to explain and apply important ideas and models in one or more of the following: physical science, life science, mathematics, or computer science.

Physical and life sciences will be covered throughout the entirety of the semester. These include:

--Throughout the course, students will develop an understanding of how theories are tested in the historical sciences and the building of inferences using analogical reasoning.

--Critical analysis of radiocarbon dates to evaluate the timing of megafaunal extinctions as they relate to the earliest archaeological record of the Americas and major climatic events (e.g., Younger Dryas).

--Evaluation of underlying assumptions in arguments for sustainability and conservation among prehistoric human populations as viewed from human behavioral ecology models, and review of the empirical record for overhunting and conservation using multiple case studies.

--Assumptions and limitations of faunal, genetic, and stable isotope studies for establishing the timing, location, and mechanism of plant and animal domestication as a form of speciation via coevolution.

--Critical evaluation of environmental deterministic arguments for the "collapse" of past societies due to over-exploitation of the environment, including case studies on Rapa Nui (Easter Island), the Maya, American Southwest, and the Norse expansion.

--Critical evaluation of the concept of a "pristine" environment and the "Ecological Noble Savage" using archaeological and paleoenvironmental data.

Recognize evidence-based conclusions and form reasoned opinions about science-related matters of personal, public and ethical concern.

Contemporary human impacts on the environment is of pressing concerning to citizens across the world, including anthropogenic climate change, extinctions, and modified landscapes for agricultural and pastoral production of food for an ever growing human population. Understanding the origins of these problems and possible solutions requires a close inspection of the archaeological record that reflect varied cultural dynamics with the environment.

Students are presented with alternative interpretations of the archaeological and paleoenvironmental records to create informed opinions on matters related to the on-going debate on human impacts on the environment. For example:

--Numerous scholars have frequently argued that the timing of the first occupation of the Americas coincided with megafaunal extinctions, and thus Paleoindians must have caused 34 genera of animals to go extinct at the end of the Pleistocene. While this argument has become infused in many narratives available to the general public, the empirical evidence (chronology and evidence of hunting of extinct taxa) suggests that climate change was the primary cause of terminal Pleistocene extinctions. An underlying theme how sciences distinguish correlation and causation, as well as "faith-based" arguments that are based on negative evidence.

--Contemporary debates on modern agricultural practices are rooted in a deep past of human manipulation of plants, animals and landscapes. Genetic modification of plants and animals during prehistoric domestication processes are contrasted with current debates on the use of genetically modified organisms.

Discuss historical or philosophical perspectives pertaining to the practice of science or mathematics.

Throughout the course, philosophical perspectives on the roles and actions indigenous populations have on their local environments in light of their historical social contexts over the past few century. The concept underlying the "Ecological Noble Savage", where indigenous populations are seen as the original conservationalists is contrasted with viewpoints supporting "Homo economicus", where conservation is not an evolutionary stable strategy without the presence of specific conditions. Each position is evaluated using a broad array of empirical evidence in the course.

Includes a writing component described on course syllabus

I) If course is lower division, formal and/or informal writing assignments encouraging students to think through course concepts using at least one of the following: periodic lab reports, exams which include essay questions, periodic formal writing assignments, periodic journals, reading logs, other. Writing in lower division courses need not be graded, but must, at a minimum, be evaluated for clarity and proper handling of terms, phrases, and concepts related to the course.
2) If course is upper division, a minimum of 1500 words of formal, graded writing. [Preferably there should be more than one formal writing assignment and each writing assignment (e.g. periodic lab reports, exams which include essay questions, a research/term paper etc.) should be due in stages throughout the semester to allow the writer to revise after receiving feedback from the instructor. Include an indication of how writing is to be evaluated and entered into course grade determination.]

Each student will write a position paper addressing a prompt provided by the instructor. In the paper, students will analyze the issue, synthesize relevant information from a set of peer-reviewed sources, and advocate an informed opinion based on scientific evidence. Two "stacked" assignments are associated with the paper assignment: an annotated bibliography of six academic sources that will be used to initiate the research process and forms a large portion of the literature review for the paper, and an expanded outline and thesis statement that initiates the writing process of the final paper.

Feedback on the writing quality, research, and formation of arguments will be provided to students at least two weeks prior to the submission of the final paper. The final paper will be graded using a rubric that covers Disciplinary Knowledge (ability to assess earlier research and perspectives in contemporary terms; 30%), Critical Thinking and Analysis (ability to engage in and synthesize ongoing debates and discussions in the field through the development of strong analytical skills and arguments; 30%), Information Literacy (ability to complete a literature review and ability to identify and cite appropriate scholarly sources; 20%), and Communication (ability to write in a clear, organized, and grammatically correct manner; 20%).

Section 2.

If you would like, you may provide further information that might help the G.E. Course Review Committee understand how this course meets these criteria and/or the G.E. Program Objectives found in the CSUS Policy Manual, General Education Program, Section I.B.
N/A

Please attach any additional files not requested above:

Email from Geography Dept.pdf

Reviewer Comments:

David Zeanah (zeanah) (Tue, 10 Sep 2019 00:38:06 GMT): Rollback: The correct course classification appears to be CS#01 - Large Lecture (K-factor=1 WTU per unit) It appears they had me attach consultation correspondence with the syllabus under "Attach a list of the required/recommended course readings and activities."
Mical Shilts (shiltsm) (Sat, 21 Sep 2019 22:33:32 GMT): Rollback: Please see email for requested revision.

Key: 14122