

# ANTH 198: BIOLOGY AND FEMINISM: A CO-EVOLUTION

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## In Workflow

1. ANTH Committee Chair (zeanah@csus.edu)
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## Approval Path

1. Sat, 11 Sep 2021 02:31:39 GMT  
David Zeanah (zeanah): Rollback to Initiator
2. Mon, 04 Oct 2021 15:31:24 GMT  
David Zeanah (zeanah): Approved for ANTH Committee Chair
3. Mon, 04 Oct 2021 16:12:59 GMT  
Michael Delacorte (mgdel): Approved for ANTH Chair
4. Thu, 21 Oct 2021 02:48:18 GMT  
Tristan Josephson (tristan.josephson): Rollback to Initiator
5. Fri, 10 Dec 2021 17:49:43 GMT  
David Zeanah (zeanah): Approved for ANTH Committee Chair
6. Fri, 10 Dec 2021 17:52:12 GMT  
Michael Delacorte (mgdel): Approved for ANTH Chair
7. Fri, 25 Feb 2022 14:56:10 GMT  
Tristan Josephson (tristan.josephson): Approved for SSIS College Committee Chair
8. Tue, 01 Mar 2022 00:14:29 GMT  
Marya Endriga (mendriga): Approved for SSIS Dean

## New Course Proposal

Date Submitted: Thu, 09 Dec 2021 21:37:00 GMT

**Viewing: ANTH 198 : Biology and Feminism: A Co-Evolution**

**Last edit: Fri, 25 Feb 2022 14:56:00 GMT**

Changes proposed by: Nandini Singh (219695594)

Contact(s):

Name (First Last)	Email	Phone 999-999-9999
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**Catalog Title:**

Biology and Feminism: A Co-Evolution

**Class Schedule Title:**

Biology and Feminism

**Academic Group: (College)**

SSIS - Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Studies

**Academic Organization: (Department)**

Anthropology

**Will this course be offered through the College of Continuing Education (CCE)?**

Yes

**Please specify:**

CCE and Stateside

**Catalog Year Effective:**

Fall 2022 (2022/2023 Catalog)

**Subject Area: (prefix)**

ANTH - Anthropology

**Catalog Number: (course number)**

198

**Course ID: (For administrative use only.)**

TBD

**Units:**

3

**Is the primary purpose of this change to update the term typically offered or the enforcement of prerequisites at registration?**

No

**In what term(s) will this course typically be offered?**

Fall, Spring, Summer

**Does this course require a room for its final exam?**

No, final exam does not require a room

**Does this course replace an existing experimental course?**

No

**This course complies with the credit hour policy:**

Yes

**Justification for course proposal:**

We do not currently offer a course that discusses the role of gender in scientific research, specifically in human evolutionary biology. At first glance, "science" and "feminism" do not seem to go together. Science connotes objectivity and a lack of politics while feminism describes a way of understanding the world that is based on a struggle for gender equity, and often seen as political. Yet, socio-cultural stereotypes of sex and gender roles relating our evolutionary past to our present have been used to reify problematic images of modern gender roles. When a link is made from our ancestors to us, certain "fixed" notions of sex and gender attributes become credible and justifiable as they are then seen as "inherent" or "natural" to our species. Using a four-field anthropological perspective, this course brings together important themes in biosocial sciences to the forefront with the aim of providing students with in-depth understanding of how biology - scientific discourse in general - and feminism can be used side by side to mutually beneficial aims. Our current curriculum lacks a course that brings these perspectives together to address important bio-cultural themes from all four subfields of anthropology and related scientific scholarship. This course will be offered as an upper-division Area B5 to major and non-majors, and will be listed in the Electives category across all three concentrations in Anthropology. After consultation with WGS, we decided not to cross-list this course.

**Course Description: (Not to exceed 80 words and language should conform to catalog copy.)**

Examines key feminist and anthropological texts on the integral role of women, gender, and feminism in scientific inquiry and the production of scientific knowledge. Emphasis is placed on feminist perspectives in human evolutionary biology, and on what feminism and science have to offer one another.

**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."**

Course Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Examine the nature-culture context of scientific knowledge production from an intersectional, interdisciplinary feminist perspective
- 2) Discuss feminist studies of human evolutionary biology and the limitations of scientific "objectivity"
- 3) Examine how race, identity, and politics shape the nature of scientific inquiry and evidence-based conclusions
- 4) Synthesize information from primary scientific and feminist literature to develop summaries and analyses that demonstrate critical evaluation and synthesis of the cited arguments

GE Area B5 Student Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Cite critical observations, underlying assumptions and limitations to explain and apply important ideas and models in the physical and life sciences.
- 2) Recognize evidence-based conclusions and form reasoned opinions about science-related matters of personal, public and ethical concern.
- 3) Discuss historical or philosophical perspectives pertaining to the practice of science.

**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) Participation and in-class activities satisfies ELOs 1-3
- 2) Reflection pieces satisfy ELOs 1-4
- 3) Final project satisfies ELOs 1 & 4

**For whom is this course being developed?**

Majors in the Dept  
 Minors 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:**

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:**

Bio\_Fem\_Syllabus\_Singh.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 explores feminist analyses and critiques of evolutionary biology to understand the nature and nurture debates. Using key feminist texts, we will closely examine how the material body or “phenotype” emerges through complex interactions of genes and environment in an attempt to untangle the false binary of nature vs nurture (readings: Schiebinger; Keller & Longino). We will further build on this by exploring the relationship between biology (e.g. female reproductive cycle: estrus, menstruation) and culture with the aim of centering the role of females in prehistory (e.g. “Mitochondrial Eve,” “Woman the Gatherer”) as active participants in the evolutionary process (readings: Hager; Zihlman; Cann; Falk).

### **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.**

This course draws on scholarship from a range of disciplines such as human evolutionary biology, genetics, archaeology and women’s studies. The objective of this interdisciplinary approach is to examine the placement of women in science as well as women as producers of core scientific knowledge in the biological sciences specifically, and STEM fields in general (readings: Haraway; Subramaniam).

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

In this course, we will focus on the methodological approaches used in the biological sciences (i.e. hypotheses generating and testing, experimental designs, interpretations of empirical evidence) to understand the ways in which androcentric bias expresses itself in the processes of scientific research. For example, focusing on evolutionary studies, we will discuss the limitations of elevating theories (e.g. “Man the Hunter”) that engender masculine bias into frameworks within which data about the evolution of the human species are gathered and interpreted.

### **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.**

1. Examines the nature-culture context of scientific knowledge production from an intersectional, interdisciplinary feminist perspective
2. Discusses feminist studies of human evolutionary biology and the limitations of scientific “objectivity”
3. Describes how race, identity, and politics shape the nature of scientific inquiry and evidence-based conclusions

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

ELOs 1, 2, and 3 require students to use an intersectional and interdisciplinary approach to form reasoned opinions and discuss science-related matters of personal and ethical concerns.

ELO 4 requires students to recognize evidence-based conclusions presented in feminist science and technology scholarship.

4. Discuss information from primary scientific and feminist literature to develop summaries and analyses that demonstrate critical evaluation and synthesis of the cited arguments

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

We will examine key feminist science and technology texts on the integral role of women, gender, and feminism in scientific inquiry and the production of scientific knowledge. More specifically, in the first half of the course, we will discuss the cultural context – politics of gender and race – that influence the practice of science. In the second, we will focus on questions of unconscious gender bias in human evolutionary biology research.

## **Includes a writing component described on course syllabus**

- 1) **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.]**

Students will be doing several pieces of writing throughout the semester. This comprises: in-class activities, reflection papers, annotated bibliographies. These varied assignments are designed to evaluate students' writing as well as understanding of the material as it relates to their final project. A general rubric to evaluate writing and to serve as a guide (for students) is included in the syllabus.

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.**

The natural sciences have long assumed a place of authority in western intellectual life. This course will engage with the following questions from a feminist perspective: 1) are the sciences neutral with respect to social issues, and the harm or benefit arising from the use of such knowledge? 2) Or does scientific knowledge and the production of that knowledge develop from intimate interactions with their socio-cultural contexts, reflecting the underlying socio-cultural values? In doing so, this course will bring to the forefront the critical need to confront androcentric bias in the practice of science.

**Please attach any additional files not requested above:**

SupportLetterWGS.pdf  
SupportLetterWGS2.pdf  
SupportLetterBio.pdf

**Reviewer Comments:**

**David Zeanah (zeanah) (Sat, 11 Sep 2021 02:31:39 GMT):** Rollback: Hi Nandini think you saw the response from Tristan and have been talking to WGS. In addition RT offers the following comments- "The proposal suggests that the course will be cross listed with WGS. This being the case, I feel it would nice if we share the language used for justification with WGS and see if they are OK with the same. The proposal doesn't list a WGS course #. In response to "Do they meet together and fulfill the same requirement?" the response listed is "NO." I think the response should be listed as YES? In response to "For whom is this course being developed?" The response is listed as below: Majors in the Dept General Education Majors of other Depts I think the response must be listed as follows: Majors and Minors in Anthropology and WGS, and Students trying to satisfy GE B5 requirements I feel we shouldn't list "Majors in other departments", for we may have to be more specific, list the departments and show consultation. In response to "Will there be any departments affected by this proposed course?" the answer is listed as No. here again, I feel It should be Yes, because it is positively affecting WGS by increasing the options available to WGS majors. And the course proposal should include evidence to consultation. The sample syllabus must include ANTH course number and WGS course number"Let me know if you have questions or want to chat- DZ

**Tristan Josephson (tristan.josephson) (Thu, 21 Oct 2021 02:48:18 GMT):** Rollback: Please see email dated 10/20/21 for requested changes.

Key: 14545