1301.1 Course Syllabus

ANTH 1301 Introduction to Physical Anthropology and Archeology

1301.1 Introduction and Course Description

Is warfare a uniquely human behavior? Is it an inevitable human behavior? Do you know how many human races there are? What do IQ tests really measure? Have you ever wondered how evolution can be both a fact and a theory? Are humans really descended from monkeys? Are you related to the Neanderthals? ... How about the GEICO cavemen? Do you know what the most important human invention of all time was? I assume you've heard of the New World, but do you know what makes it new? Has it existed for any less time than the Old World? This semester we will engage in lively considerations of these and other big questions about who we are as a species, our relationship to the rest of the world, and how we got to where we are today.

The course is designed to provide an introduction to current scientific understandings of the origin and diversity of humans as revealed by research in paleoanthropology, primatology, archeology and ethnology. Topics will include the genetic and fossil evidence for human biological evolution, and evidence for the most important cultural evolutionary changes reflected in the archeological record. The level of instruction assumes no prior experience in anthropology or archeology.

The course content is intended to address four primary goals: 1) students should understand and be able to articulate how scientists know things about our world.
More specifically, you should understand how it is possible to know things about the ancient past ...what types of evidence are available, and what forms of reasoning are used to make sense of the evidence. Understanding the relationship between explanations and supporting evidence is critical; 2) students should develop a familiarity with the basic evidence for geological, biological and cultural change; that is, evolution. What characteristics of the fossils, artifacts, DNA, etc. provide the evidence for change?; 3) students should be able to discuss the circumstances that led to the outcomes for which we have evidence. In other words, why did things happen as they did? Why was agriculture invented when and where it was? Why was bipedal locomotion advantageous? etc.; and 4) you should be able to view the challenges currently facing our species in the context of long term developments affecting and/or caused by human biological and especially cultural evolution.

Course work will consist of reading, written discussions posted on discussion boards, short written assignments, and three major exams. It is expected that course activities will require about 9 hours per week. Each week I will provide some introductory and/or supplementary comments relating to the assigned readings. You should have these comments in mind as you do the reading, as it will help you attain more in-depth understanding of the material in the book or in the videos. Periodically, I'll ask you a series of three or four questions to be answered in short quiz papers. I'll be looking for your ability to synthesize the information you have received from the course materials and to discuss it in such a way to demonstrate your understanding of the topics involved.

In addition, each student is required to participate in on line discussions based on questions I will pose at the beginning of each week. Each discussion will require students to write at least 200 words in response to a set of questions, and then post at least one reply to the postings of other students (including at least one comment of 50 words or more). There will be two deadlines in the calendar, one for the 200 word response ("main discussion question due") and one for the replies to other students ("discussion board closes"). Discussion questions will be posted late Sunday or Monday, and student responses will need to be posted by Thursday and Saturday. Feel free to start reading the upcoming week's reading assignment before Monday if you need more than two days to prepare for your initial discussion post.

The discussion postings should focus on your ideas about the readings, not your pre-existing opinions. Your posts also need to be more than just summaries of the readings. I will grade your discussion based on whether your comments show evidence of your having read the material, evidence of thinking about and synthesizing the materials, and whether you support your statements effectively. Each discussion session is worth 60 points as follows: 54-60 pts (A) for extensive, knowledgeable and thoughtful discussion; 48-53 pts (B) for capable knowledge with less evidence of critical or in-depth thinking; 42-47 points (C) for mostly correct, but incomplete knowledge, partial mistakes, or incompletely thought-out discussion; 36-41 points (D) for minimally correct or involved discussions; and zero pts for clearly unprepared discussion or no discussion.

Participation in discussion sessions requires that participants be focused on the subject at hand, and that comments be substantive rather than personal in nature. You may disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully.
Major exams will be a combination of short essay and objective questions, arranged in a traditional format. The exams will emphasize 1) the basic facts that relate to the major findings and perspectives, 2) the major competing or alternative interpretations of those findings, and 3) your ability to synthesize information drawn from the various sources.

The grading scale for the course is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 exams @ 400pts</td>
<td>1200 pts</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1944-2160</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 quizzes @ 80 pts</td>
<td>240 pts</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1728-1943</td>
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<td>12 discussion sessions @ 60 pts</td>
<td>720 pts</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1512-1727</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2160 pts</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1296-1511</td>
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Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty Statement

Standard practices of academic integrity are required in the course. All material submitted for a grade must be the student's own work. Ideas and expressions cited from the work of others must be properly referenced. It is not appropriate to cut-and-paste answers from course materials or other sources into your discussion posts, papers or exams; doing so is an example of plagiarism. The course will follow the UTEP policies on academic honesty which may be found at: Student Affairs

Participation and Late Work Policy

Students may access Blackboard and submit assignments at any time of the day, but the class is not self-paced. The schedule will provide firm deadlines for the completion of assignments and the submission of work. Students are responsible for reading all instructions and assignments carefully and paying close attention to due dates. Students are responsible for reading all assignments in the time frame indicated and completing all activities (discussions, papers) in the announced time span. Each lesson will expire one week after its activation date and cannot be accessed after that. Exceptions will be made only for medical emergencies. Late assignments may be penalized up to 20% of the total possible points for each day late; assignments received more than three days late will receive a zero.

Required Textbook
About the Textbook

In past semesters, students in my online sections of this course were required to read a standard textbook in addition to the contents of the online modules or units. Over the years, many students remarked that they preferred the more accessible writing style of the online content, so last year I pulled the online content together into the textbook that you will be using this semester. The current version of the text is a preliminary edition. A preliminary edition is piloted or tested in an actual class setting to get student feedback before its formal publication for the national market. Preliminary editions are similar to the review copies that publishers distribute to select readers to test a book’s audience and elicit input. Because it is a preliminary edition, the book is offered to you at a discounted price.

As you use the text, please share any feedback about the book with me, as your recommendations will help me further develop the book in ways that are most useful to students. If you find any material that is challenging to understand, or which could be expanded to improve the usefulness of the text, please let me know. I hope you will find it interesting to be involved in this writing and review process.

Technical Assistance

If you have technical difficulties with Blackboard, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. The University Help Desk is located on the 3rd floor of the UTEP Library, and is your single point of contact for any technology related question.

**UTEP Library Room 300**
Phone: 915.747.4357 (HELP)
Email: Helpdesk@Utep.Edu

**Regular Semester Hours:**
Let me introduce myself and tell you a little about my background. My name is Dr. David Carmichael (I know it's a long name to type; most students just use Dr.C). I have about 45 years of experience doing archeology and anthropology, much of it in the El Paso region. I am from the Chicago area, but I spent many summers in New Mexico learning to appreciate the Southwest and its diverse cultures. I did my undergraduate training at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and then went on to graduate school at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where I earned my Masters and PhD in anthropology. My dissertation research was in the El Paso area, where I did a three-year archeology study of 1000 sq km of desert lands on Fort Bliss.

At that time I became interested in the question of why we have recorded so few Apache sites despite their use of the area in historic times. Upon my return to the U of I to complete my dissertation, I was introduced to a cultural anthropologist who worked among the Mescalero Apaches. I was eventually introduced to, and adopted by one of her Apache consultants, the head holy man of the Mescalero tribe. Over the years, I was fortunate to have the benefit of his insights on many issues. Not only do I study Apache archeological sites, but he taught me about traditional culture and cosmology, leading me to develop a research specialization in Native American sacred sites. One of the results of that experience has been my appreciation of the fact that there are different ways of knowing about the earth, and there are many creation stories, not just the one you or I were taught was the right one. My approach includes both a scientific, material culture approach to human behavior, combined with an ethnoarcheological and ideational perspective when appropriate. Much of my research now involves learning about Native American religions and sacred sites. I authored the U.S. Air Force guidelines on how to consult with Native Americans in the context of land use planning, and I have worked with Native peoples from many tribes in an effort to help protect their sacred sites from desecration and destruction.

I have directed UTEP archaeological field school excavations at Three Rivers, New Mexico, Santa Teresa, NM, Sierra Diablo Cave in Hudspeth County, TX, and at Chilicote Ranch near Valentine, TX. If you are interested in participating in field training activities, please contact me for help in organizing your course schedule to best anticipate the timing of the next field school.