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 which you should answer in 500 word short 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 online discussions based on questions I will pose at the beginning of each week. Each lesson will require students to write at least 200 words in response to a set of questions, and students will also 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 early 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 just summaries. 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 for extensive, knowledgeable and thoughtful discussion; 48-53 pts for capable knowledge with less evidence of critical or in-depth thinking; 42-47 points for mostly correct, but incomplete knowledge, partial mistakes, or incompletely thought-out discussion; 36-41 points 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, arrai
format. The exams will emphasize 1) the basic facts that relate to the major find materials, 2) the major competing or alternative interpretations of those findings interpretations, and 4) your ability to synthesize information drawn from the vari

The grading scale for the course is as follows:

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<td>3 papers @ 80 pts</td>
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<td>12 discussion sessions @ 60 pts</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 participate 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 will be penalized 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. You will see that there are very few illustrations in this edition; the ones included in the preliminary edition are just examples to see how they print, how they should be formatted, etc. We are still in the process of selecting and generating photos and drawings that will be included in the next version, so feedback that deals with issues other than illustrations would be most useful. 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:
Monday - Thursday 7:00am - 9:00pm
Friday 7:00am - 8:00pm
Saturday 9:00am - 2:00pm
Sunday 12:00pm - 5:00pm

Instructor Biography

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 35 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 did 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, as we shall see in Unit 3, 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 ethnoarchaeological 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.

Since 2005, I have directed the UTEP archeological field school at Three Rivers, New Mexico. The Three Rivers site is a major rock art (i.e., sacred) site, as well as a prehistoric village site encompassing an area larger than the UTEP campus. Excavations will be continuing, pending the future availability of funding. 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.

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