

# THEORY AND ITS APPLICATION IN BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

## ARKY 617 (Winter 2013)

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**Office hours:** Weds. 1:00-3:00 & by appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar will focus on basic issues in the study of evolutionary theory as it applies to biological anthropology. It is designed to provide you with a sound understanding of the history and current status of evolutionary theory and to give you the opportunity to apply this understanding to your sub-discipline within biological anthropology. We will spend the first half of the course considering the principles of evolutionary biology. The remainder of the semester will focus on the application of this theory to human and non-human primates. While evolutionary biology provides the theoretical foundation for this course, primates are both biological and cultural animals. Consequently, this course will take a biocultural approach; that is, we will consider both the biological and cultural adaptations which these species exhibit.

The course assumes some prior coursework in molecular and population genetics and evolutionary theory, such as that covered in entry-level biology and biological anthropology courses. Course content and structure will be geared to the level of students in the master's program who have completed some of their coursework, but have yet to fully embark on their thesis.

It is acknowledged that many students may find greater relevance of some aspects of evolutionary theory to their research interests. This affinity will be respected in the sense that no student will be forced to apply the less-relevant aspects of evolutionary theory to their area of study. However, all students will be expected to gain a familiarity with materials covered in the course. For example, evo-devo and the debate concerning adaptation may not be directly relevant to all students' work, but students should be able to provide a brief description of the implications of these topics to their area of research.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

*By the end of the course, students will be able to:*

- (1) Describe, in some detail, the history of science as a way of knowing and the development of evolutionary theory;
- (2) Justify their use of the scientific or other method in their own research;
- (3) Describe the state of the science of evolutionary biology and identify key questions in the field of evolutionary theory;

(4) Summarise and critique the application of evolutionary theory to their sub-discipline of biological anthropology;

(5) Verbally articulate the application of evolutionary theory to their particular research topic in a concise and compelling manner.

## READINGS

The bulk of the readings will come from selected book chapters and journal papers. Many of these are available as pdf files at the class Blackboard website. In addition, we will use the following book.

Darwin, Charles 1859. *On the Origin of Species*. **1<sup>st</sup> Edition**.

## ORGANIZATION

1. Meetings of the seminar will be devoted to discussion of selected topics. It is expected that you will accept the professional responsibility to carefully read the materials assigned and participate actively in the discussion.

2. Worksheets and/or essays will be assigned for each topic and collected periodically. All written work must be typed.

3. Each member of the seminar will be responsible for leading two class meetings and individually leading one class meeting.

a. *Round one*: Students will choose class #3, 4, 5, or 6 to lead.

b. *Round two*: The topics covered here will be determined by the students with input from me. The individual leading this class will also be responsible for handing in a 2500-3000 word summary-critique of the state of the science on the topic.

## EVALUATION

Readings and Discussion                      30%                      Due date: weekly

Each week a selection of readings and questions will be assigned. Questions will be designed to ensure comprehension of the material and to facilitate discussion. I will occasionally collect your answers to evaluate your understanding of the assigned material. The discussion should reflect a critical evaluation of the material presented. A critical evaluation requires a clear understanding of the evidence presented and a careful consideration of alternative explanations for the outcomes. It is to your advantage to cite relevant literature when discussing particular papers and topics. This literature may be from earlier class meetings and, hopefully, from material you have covered elsewhere.

Leading class (first time)	10%	Due date: depends on class lead
Leading class (second time)	15%	Due date: depends on class lead

Leading a class requires you to do the following:

1. *Select articles for the class* (due 11 days prior to the class):  
 These articles should provide the students with a bit of history on the topic as well as the state of the science. The class leader must send the articles selected to me at least 11 days prior to the class so that I have a bit of time to evaluate them before you post them for the other students. I generally have a list of papers which will provide you with a starting point on the topic. For the first class that you lead, you will have less flexibility in choosing articles as I want to ensure that the seminal pieces on each topic are covered.
2. *Write discussion questions* (due 8 days prior to the class):  
 These questions should lead the rest of us to write a summary and critique of each assigned reading and to stimulate discussion. It is often a good idea to ask your peers to compare and contrast articles which reach different conclusions. You may wish to ask provocative questions to stimulate discussion. While questions asking for a description of the studies in question can help to ensure comprehension, they do not often generate discussion. Please send your questions to me electronically.
3. *Write an introduction to the topic* (due 8 days prior to the class):  
 The introduction must summarize why the topic is relevant, how it ties in with topics covered in other class meetings, and what you hope will be achieved in the class. This should be roughly one paragraph. Please send the introduction to me electronically.
4. *Introduce the topic in class*:  
 This should be designed to give the students some background on the topic and last 15-20 minutes. While you will want to provide relevant history and perhaps more detail than is available in the readings, you need to avoid covering the material we will discuss as a class; that is, don't answer the questions which have been provided to stimulate class discussion.
5. *Facilitate discussion*:  
 This is often the most challenging aspect of leading the class as it requires you to think on your feet, asking the class questions to stimulate critical evaluation of the topic covered. You might ask for alternative explanations of observed outcomes, what we can learn from the author(s) research methods, and how we might improve upon the study.

In choosing a topic for the second class, you should choose one that is of interest to you, but not the topic you wish to cover in your term paper. I have provided a list of potential topics for the second class you lead. You do not have to choose one of these, I only provide them as they have proven interesting in the past.

Paper Assignment #1:	10%	Due date: March 15
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The state of evolutionary theory in your sub-discipline: This assignment requires you to review at least 5 papers in your sub-discipline published in the last 20 years to assess the state of evolutionary theory in your sub-discipline. That is, is evolutionary theory used in these works? If yes, how? If not, how might the paper be strengthened via an inclusion of evolutionary

theory? The papers considered must: (1) be seminal or at least very influential in the sub-discipline\*, (2) be drawn from disparate areas in the sub-discipline which address different questions and use different methods, (3) reflect at least different two schools of thought within the sub-discipline. In this paper, you should: (1) summarise the main points of the paper, (2) summarise the degree to which evolutionary theory\* explicitly or implicitly underlies the work (In this you must think about all aspects of evolutionary theory. Does the paper consider variation, mechanisms of evolution such as drift, mutation, gene flow, sexual & natural selection, etc.?) (3) critique, in light of evolutionary theory, the conclusions reached; (4) summarise the state of the sub-discipline's use of evolutionary theory. Essentially you should ask yourself whether or not each paper is well grounded in current evolutionary theory and may make recommendations for the direction of the discipline on the basis of your review. Note that I am only asking you to critique the paper as it relates to evolutionary theory; that is, you need not critique other perceived strengths / weaknesses of the paper. The paper must be 2500-3000 words and be submitted electronically.

\* Note that a "seminal paper" is one which is referenced very often and concerns the big, often theoretical, questions in the discipline. Examples include Wood et al. (1992) for human skeletal biology, Kappeler and van Schaik (2002) for primatology, Carroll (2000) for evo-devo, and Dufour (2006) for human population biology. While advances in methods are important, they rarely constitute seminal papers in the discipline.

Carroll (2000) Endless forms: The evolution of gene regulation and morphological diversity. *Cell* 101: 577-580.

Dufour (2006) Biocultural approaches in human biology. *American Journal of Human Biology*. 18:1-9.

Kappeler and van Schaik. 2002. Evolution of Primate Social Systems. *Int J Primatol* 23(4):707-740.

Wood et al. (1992). The Osteological Paradox: Problems of Inferring Prehistoric Health from Skeletal Samples. *Current Anthropology* 33(4): 342-370

**Paper Assignment #2:                      2%                      Due date: March 22**

Evaluating another student's work: Each student will read and evaluate another student's paper on the state of evolutionary theory in their subdiscipline. The critique will be returned directly to me and I will pass it along to the students. This paper must be submitted electronically.

**Term Paper Abstract:                      2%                      Due date: April 8**

This is a summary of the term paper. It must be 200 words or less and be submitted electronically.

**Presentation of Term Paper:              11%                      Due date: April 10\***

In class presentation of term paper: You will have a maximum of 20 minutes to describe your term paper. While you are free to use any type of media you wish to give this presentation, I will need to know, no later than 3 days prior to your presentation, if you will need anything in addition to a computer and digital projector.

Paper Assignment #3:

20%

Due date: April 17

Term paper: This should address a topic which is directly relevant to your research and demonstrate the application of evolutionary theory to your work. Many students have ended up using parts of this paper as either a chapter or section of their dissertation or thesis. **You must get my okay on your topic no later than 18 March.** The paper must be 5500-7000 words in length and must be submitted as both an electronic and hard copy.

### Assignment Format, Deadlines, & Mark Breakdown

#### Format for written work

- double space
- font: 12 point, Times New Roman
- 1 inch margins
- provide page numbers
- a separate title page is not necessary
- alignment – left (do not use the “justify” alignment)
- reference format- I don't care what format you use as long as it is easy for me to determine the source for the point referenced.

#### Deadlines

Work will **not** be accepted after **4:00 pm** on the due date.

#### Evaluation

Your final mark for the course will be based on the following:

Assignment	Percentage of Mark
Readings and Discussion	30%
Leading class (first time)	10%
Leading class (second time)	15%
Paper Assignment #1: Evolutionary theory in your sub-discipline	10%
Paper Assignment #2: Review of another's student's work	2%
Paper Assignment #3: Term paper	20%
Term Paper Abstract	2%
Presentation of Term Paper	11%

**Letter grade assignment:** At the end of the course, the numerical marks will be summed and a final letter grade will be assigned based on the following basis:

<u>Percentage range</u>	<u>Letter grade</u>	<u>Percentage range</u>	<u>Letter grade</u>
95 or higher	A+	68-72	C+
90-94	A	64-67	C
85-89	A-	59-63	C-
81-84	B+	54-58	D+
77-80	B	50-53	D
73-76	B-	49 or lower	F

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

Class	Date	Leader	Topic
1	Jan. 9	Warren	Introduction
2	Jan. 16	Warren	Fundamental concepts: Science, Biology, Lyell, and Malthus
3	Jan. 23	TBD	Fundamental concepts: Darwin
4	Jan. 30	TBD	The modern synthesis: the mechanism & process of evolution
5	Feb. 6	TBD	Sexual selection & Epigenetics
	Feb. 13		<i>Reading Break ~ No Class</i>
6	Feb. 20	TBD	A Newer Synthesis: post-modern-synthesis developments
7	Feb. 27	Benedikt	Evo-devo: explaining variation
8	Mar. 6	TBD	Problems in defining adaptation
9	Mar. 13	TBD	student choice
10	Mar. 20	TBD	student choice
11	Mar. 27	TBD	student choice
12	Apr. 3	TBD	student choice
13	April 10	TBD	Student presentations

\* Actual date to be determined.

**Topic ideas for the second class you lead:** As noted above, you do not have to choose one of these. I only provide them as they have proved interesting to students in the past.

- Adaptation in humans: genetic, physiological, and behavioral mechanisms
- Stress Theory-adaptation “upside down...”
- Kin selection\*\*
- Sexual selection\*\*
- Group Selection vs. Individual Selection
- Adaptation to hypoxia & thermal stress
- Adaptation to infectious disease
- Adaptation to nutritional stress
- The evolution and maintenance of polymorphism in populations

\*\* We will cover this topic briefly when discussing the modern synthesis. As both are important mechanisms of evolution, there will be much more to learn about them.

## ADDITIONAL CONTENT

### Writing across the Curriculum

Writing skills are not exclusive to English courses and, in fact, should cross all disciplines. The University supports the belief that throughout their University careers, students should be taught how to write well so that when they graduate their writing abilities will be far above the minimal standards required at entrance. Consistent with this belief, students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their University courses and, where appropriate, instructors can and may use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Centre in the Effective Writing Office can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance.

### Academic Accommodation Policy

The purpose of academic accommodation is to provide students with documented disabilities equal opportunity to master the essentials of a post-secondary education. Students with disabilities at the University of Calgary have met all admission requirements but may have done so with the use of accommodations. Similarly, they are expected to meet all academic and non-academic requirements. Adaptive technology and other academic accommodations do not relieve students of their responsibility to develop the essential skills and abilities expected of all students.

Please refer to the following web link for detailed information:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/node/71>

### Disability Resource Centre Accommodations

It is the responsibility of the student to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at (403) 220-8237.

Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Students are also required to discuss their needs with the instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

### Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

The University of Calgary is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals who work and study at the University or who otherwise interact with the University in accordance with the standards set out in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Please refer to the following link for detailed information:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip>

### Academic Misconduct

Academic dishonesty is an unacceptable activity at the University of Calgary and students are **strongly advised** to read the Student Misconduct section of the University Calendar. Quite often, students are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism. The most common are:

- 1) Presenting another student's work as your own
- 2) Presenting an author's work or ideas as you own without proper referencing
- 3) Using work completed for another course



This activity will not be tolerated and students conducting themselves in this manner will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the University Calendar. For detailed information on what constitutes academic misconduct, please refer to the following link:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work as if it were the student's own work when it is not. Any ideas or materials taken from another source written, electronic, or oral must be fully and formally acknowledged. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- (a) The work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) Parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) The whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) A student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis or dissertation.

### **Emergency Evacuation Assembly Points**

In the event of an emergency that requires evacuation, please refer to the following link to become familiar with the assembly points for the class:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

### **Safewalk Information**

Campus Security, in partnership with the Students' Union, provides the Safewalk service, 24 hours a day to any location on Campus including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones and University residences. Contact Campus Security at (403) 220-5333 or use a help phone, and Safewalkers or a Campus Security Officer will accompany you to your campus destination.

### **Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources**

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
- For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

## **Contact Information for Student and Faculty Representation**

Student Union Vice President – Academic

Phone: (403) 220-3911

Email: [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)

Student Union Faculty Representatives

Sarah Damberger                      [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca)                      587-7777-5244

Hana Kadri                              [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca)                      403-667-9220

Kelsy Norman                          [arts3@.su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@.su.ucalgary.ca)                      403-861-2624

Student Ombudsman's Office

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/>

Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts

[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca)

[arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca)

[arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca)

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