

Basic Course Information

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| Semester: | Winter 2026 | Instructor Name: | Dr. Arturo Marquez Jr. |
| Course Title & #: | Physical Anthropology 100 | Email: | arturo.marquezjr@imperial.edu |
| CRN #: | 15241 | Webpage (optional): | n/a |
| Classroom: | Online | Office #: | 2735 |
| Class Dates: | Jan. 05 – Feb. 04 | Office Hours: | By appointment |
| Class Days: | Online | Office Phone #: | 760-355-6282 |
| Class Times: | Online | Emergency Contact: | 760-355-6144 |
| Units: | 3 | Class Format/Modality: | Asynchronous |

Course Description

Physical anthropology is the study of humans as biological beings subject to the forces of both evolution and culture. Physical anthropology studies humans in a biological context and explains our relationship to other primates and the rest of the natural world. Throughout the course we will examine anatomical, behavioral, and genetic similarities and differences among the living primates, and by illustrating the scientific method, learn the basic mechanism of the evolutionary processes and trace a pathway of human evolution in relation to environmental adaptation as reconstructed from the fossil record. (CSU/UC)

Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

There are no prerequisites and/or corequisites for this course.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

- 1) Define the main goals and aims of physical anthropology.
- 2) Explain how Darwin's theory of natural selection results in evolution, adaptation, and design, and how evolution affects our daily lives.
- 3) Explain the basic pattern of hominid evolution over the last seven million years including dating methods, scientific methods, and the origin of Homo sapiens in Africa including global biological diversity.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

- 1) Define anthropology and describe its four major subfields, stating the major areas of research within physical anthropology.
- 2) Recall the development of evolutionary theory and individuals that contributed to its development.
- 3) Explain the basic principles of Mendelian, molecular and population genetics.
- 4) Formulate an argument for the importance of genetic variations and demonstrate how natural selection works with variation, including variation in skin color.
- 5) List an overview of dating techniques and recreate the geologic time scale in regards to vertebrae and mammalian evolution as it pertains to the human fossil record.
- 6) Use comparative primate taxonomy of commonly known primates in terms of physical characteristics, primate social behaviors and geographical locations, including the differences between the traditional and the cladistic taxonomic classification.



7) Recognize the major groups of hominin fossils and describe alternate phylogenies for human evolution. Identify the biological and cultural factors responsible for human variation.

Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

This is the required textbook this semester:

- Explorations: An Open Invitation to Biological Anthropology, 2nd Edition. 2023. Beth Shook, Katie Nelson, Kelsie Aguilera, and Lara Braff, editors. American Anthropological Association. Creative Commons (non-commercial) License.
ISBN (ebook): 978-1-931303-82-8
ISBN (print): 978-1-931303-81-1

Available for download here: <https://explorations.americananthro.org/>

Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

The Department of Education policy states that one (1) credit hour is the amount of student work that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of class time and two (2) hours of out-of-class time per week over the span of a semester. Because this is a three-credit course, students should expect to invest a minimum of nine hours per week.

This is an intensive 5-week course. Students need to dedicate time to this course on a daily basis in order to succeed. Students are assessed based on the following weekly assignments:

- **Discussion Posts** (25 points): There is one (1) discussion post due each week. Discussion posts synthesize key ideas in physical anthropology with clear links to the course textbook. To earn full points, it is crucial to post a minimum 200-word response to each prompt including evidence from the textbook, specifically by including quotes and page numbers from the readings. It is important to draw clear connections to the readings by providing the chapter and page numbers from the textbook for key terms, concepts, and examples. Discussion posts are worth four (4) points each and are due on Tuesday at 11:59pm. After publishing a discussion post, students are expected to read through posts and provide a constructive 50-word comment to at least one (1) colleague. Comments are worth one (1) point each and are due on Wednesday at 11:59pm.
- **Audio Reports** (25 points): There is one (1) Audio Report due each week that is uploaded on the provided Padlet, which is a platform that is embedded in our course Canvas. Audio Reports are opportunities for students to engage with key ideas by taking a screenshot from the textbook and include a short audio (4-6 minutes) discussing its significance on Padlet. It is important to include the chapter and page number of the chosen screenshot from the textbook. After posting the screenshot and audio on Padlet, students must provide comments to at least one (1) peer's report. Audio reports are worth 4 points and due on Thursdays at 11:59pm. Comments can be provided in writing or as audio. Comments are worth 1 point and due on Friday at 11:59pm.
- **Projects** (40 points): There is a project at the end of each week (except Week 5) that consolidates key ideas in the readings. Projects require time and attention – it is important to review project guidelines at the beginning of each week to know and begin working on these as soon as possible. As a general rule, each section of the project needs quotes with chapter and page number/s in parentheses at the end of the sentence. Projects are worth 10 points each and are due at the end of each week on Sunday at 11:59pm.
- **Quizzes** (50 points): There is a quiz at the end of each week based on the readings. Quizzes are timed – students must complete the quiz within 2 hours after they have begun. If you experience any difficulty accessing a quiz, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Quizzes are worth 10 points each.
- **Final Project** (35 points) – Students will complete a Final Project which synthesizes key ideas discussed throughout the semester. Students will be tasked with reviewing each Padlet for key ideas to include in their Final Project, which will take the form of a slide presentation uploaded by Wednesday February 4th at 11:59pm. After posting, students will review peers' projects and comment on at least two projects by Friday February 6th at 11:59pm.



- **Final Exam** (40 points): A cumulative Final Exam will be available Week 5 and is due Wednesday February 4th at 11:59pm.

Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

There is a total of 215 points possible in this course. Points earned will be calculated into percentages which correspond to the following final letter grade:

| Percentage (Canvas) | Letter Grade |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 100% - 90% | A |
| 89% - 80% | B |
| 79% - 70% | C |
| 69% - 60% | D |
| 59% - below | F |

Academic Honesty (Artificial Intelligence -AI)

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification.

Accessibility Statement

Imperial Valley College is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students, regardless of course modality. Every effort has been made to ensure that this course complies with all state and federal accessibility regulations, including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. However, if you encounter any content that is not accessible, please contact your instructor or the area dean for assistance. If you have specific accommodations through **DSPS**, contact them for additional assistance.

We are here to support you and ensure that you have equal access to all course materials.

Course Policies

Consistent participation in the discussion board and projects is crucial. If you experience any difficulty that keeps you from actively participating in this course, please inform the instructor as soon as possible.

Late work is accepted *only if* the instructor is informed with a detailed justification. If you experience any difficulty that impedes your ability to submit work by a due date, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. Meeting with the instructor (via Zoom) is ideal to address these situations. Make-up quizzes may be allowed at the instructor's discretion.

In order to achieve our course objectives, it is important to foster an engaged learning environment that is respectful and welcoming of everyone in class. Please refrain from behavior that might stifle or hinder others' learning and participation in this course. It is important to be respectful to others when commenting on their opinions and perspective, keeping in mind the aim is to actively learn about the evolution of human biology and diversity. Offensive language will not be tolerated. Please contact the instructor with any questions or concerns.

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in adverse consequences. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as one's own without citing the original source. It is crucial students understand the seriousness of plagiarism. Please do not copy and paste work from online sources or our textbook. Students are encouraged to reference their sources but always



in a way that highlights their original ideas and clearly cites their sources. If you are unsure about IVC's plagiarism policy, please contact the instructor or refer to IVC's student services.

Other Course Information

The instructor may modify the syllabus as necessary to ensure the learning objectives are met. If there are any modifications to the syllabus, students will be notified via email within 24 hours.

Office hours are available via Zoom. Please email the instructor to discuss a day and time to meet. Office hours are additional resource in your professional trajectory at IVC. The instructor is *always* open to dialogue and is committed to your success. Use office hours to receive one-to-one guidance on discussion posts, projects, quizzes, or final exam. Moreover, use office hours to discuss the many merits of anthropology as a major, or to discuss ways anthropology can contribute to your professional development beyond IVC.

Financial Aid

Your Grades Matter! In order to continue to receive financial aid, you must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement. Making SAP means that you are maintaining a 2.0 GPA, you have successfully completed 67% of your coursework, and you will graduate on time. If you do not maintain SAP, you may lose your financial aid. If you have questions, please contact financial aid at finaid@imperial.edu.

IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas.

Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

| Date or Week | Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic | Pages/ Due Dates/Tests |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Week 1 January 02 – 05 | The Scientific Method in Physical Anthropology Chapter 1 – Introduction to Biological Anthropology Chapter 2 – A History of Evolutionary Thought | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion post 1• Audio Report 1• Project 1• Quiz 1 |
| Week 2 January 6 – 12 | Genetics and Evolution Chapter 3 – Molecular Biology and Genetics Chapter 4 – Forces of Evolution Chapter 17 – Social and Biopolitical Dimensions of Evolutionary Thinking | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion post 2• Audio Report 2• Project 2• Quiz 2 |
| Week 3 January 13 – 19 | Primateology and Fossils Chapter 5 – Meet the Living Primates Chapter 6 – Primate Ecology and Behavior Chapter 7 – Stones and Bones: Studying the Fossil Record Chapter 8 – Primate Evolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion post 3• Audio Report 3• Project 3• Quiz 3 |
| Week 4 January 20 – 26 | Early Hominins Chapter 9 – Early Hominins Chapter 10 – Early Members of the Genus Homo Chapter 11 – Archaic Homo | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion post 4• Audio Report 4• Project 4 |



| Date or Week | Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic | Pages/ Due Dates/Tests |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| | Chapter 12 – Modern <i>Homo sapiens</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiz 4 |
| Week 5 January 27 – February 03 | Human Variation and Evolution Chapter 13 – Race and Human Variation Chapter 14 – Human Variation: An Adaptive Significance Approach Chapter 16 – Contemporary Topics: Human Biology and Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion post 5• Audio Report 5• Project 5• Quiz 5• Final Project• Final Exam |

Subject to change without prior notice