

ANTH 103 – THE EVOLUTION OF EVERYTHING: A LOOK AT BIG HISTORY

Instructor

Course Description:

This is a course that covers the history of the universe and earth, emphasizing biological, social, and technological evolution in humanity up to the present day.

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

Students will be able to

- Describe the scientific perspective
- Explain the physical forces that caused the Universe, Solar System, and Earth
- Recognize the role of evolution in all biology
- Discuss the details of human social evolution and transformation
- Identify the influences that shaped the major changes throughout prehistory and history
- Analyze the role and historical arc of social organization
- Discuss a comprehensive ‘Big Picture’ understanding of the world

Course Expectations

- I expect you to come to class prepared (having done the reading prior to class); and you should expect me to come to class prepared.
- I expect you to be courteous during our class discussions. If you are disruptive I will remove you from the course
- I expect you to be engaged in class discussions. Showing up to class and participating is one of the most important aspects of success
- I expect you to come to class on time—and I will end class on time (please don’t do the “shuffle”)
- You should expect to take notes during class. If you do not know how to take clear and helpful notes come see me, I can help or you may buddy up with a classmate who does know how to take clear notes.
- I will work with you if you are challenged by the course material. Come see me during office hours or by appointment. I also suggest forming study groups with one or more of your classmates
- I will answer questions via email in a timely manner—do not call my office phone unless it is an emergency

Textbooks

Maps of Time: an introduction to big history, David Christian, University of California Press, 2011.

The Universe Within, Neil Shubin, Vintage Books, 2013

Lecture schedule

Aug. 29 - Purpose of the course and intro to the scientific method

MoT, Introduction

Aug. 31 - Origins of the universe, birth and death of stars	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 1, 2
Sept. 5 - NO CLASS - LABOR DAY	
Sept. 7 - Geological processes leading to the shape of earth	<i>MoT</i> , Ch 3
Sept. 12 - Origins of life	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 4
Sept. 14 - Evolution	<i>TUW</i> Ch 3
Sept. 19 – Exam 1	
Sept. 21 - Overview of genetics	<i>TUW</i> , Ch 4
Sept. 26 - Photosynthesis and multicellular life	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 5
Sept. 28 - Cambrian explosion	<i>TUW</i> , Ch 5, 6
Oct. 3 - The evolution of fish and land animals	<i>TUW</i> , Ch 7, 8
Oct. 4 (Tuesday) - ANTHROPOLOGY OPEN HOUSE - EXTRA CREDIT	
Oct. 5 - The first proto-humans	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 6
Oct. 10 - The evolution of modern human	<i>TUW</i> , Ch. 9, 10
Oct. 12 - Exam 2	
Oct. 17 - The evolution of the brain and the role of communication	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 7
Oct. 19 – NO CLASS - PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE	
Oct. 24 – Chaos, complexity, and emergent systems	
Oct. 26 – The Neolithic transition	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 8
Oct. 31 - The rise of states and kingdoms	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 9
Nov. 2 – The role of power; religion and philosophy	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 10
Nov. 7 - Exam 3	
Nov. 9 - The enlightenment and the age of discovery	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 11
Nov. 14 - Industrial revolution and the steam engine	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 12
Nov. 16 - Trade and globalization	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 13
Nov. 21 - Modernity	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 12
Nov. 23 - Film 'Guns, Germs, and Steel'	
Nov. 28 - Technology and transformation to the information age	<i>MoT</i> , Ch. 14

Dec. 12 – Final Exam (1:00 PM)

Grading:

Four 1-hour exams will be given, and the final grade will be made up of the score from Exam 4 plus the other top two grades (one lowest exam will be discarded). You must take Exam 4. Since one exam is discarded, there will be **no** make-up exams. The last exam **is** a cumulative final exam. The three exams will be worth 30% each, plus a 2-page essay (10% - a list of topics is provided on the last page of the syllabus). If you attend the Anthropology Open House and turn in the stamped attendance sheet, you will receive 2% extra credit towards your final grade.

Class attendance: no attendance will be taken, but the exams will cover lecture material not found in the textbook. A missed lecture cannot be made up. Lecture slides (images only) will be posted on Webcampus. Since there is no text that covers all the topics for this course, I strongly urge attendance of all lectures.

2- Page Paper Topics

NOTE: If you have an idea for a different paper topic, see the instructor for approval.

1. How does the scientific perspective differ from those of traditional historians?
2. Explain three ways that physical forces or events in the early universe affected the course of human evolution or history.
3. How does demography affect other human social parameters?
4. Explain the role of information exchange and storage in human prehistory/history.
5. Briefly review three major non-biological cultural/social/technological transitions in human prehistory/history and explain their significance.
6. Review the biological transitions in human evolutionary prehistory.
7. What is the role of genetics in evolution? What can evolution do, what can it not do?
8. In what ways do human behave as animals? In what ways are they distinct?
9. What is the relationship between authority and knowledge in the distribution of the power between governments and individuals?
10. What are the various role that religion has played in societies across time, and what has caused changes in these roles? Papers should be 2-pages, double-spaced, 12-point Times-Roman or similarly sized font. No reference lists are necessary.

Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution.

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Copyright—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves **with** and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Religious Holidays Policy—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching—The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information:

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency>

Incomplete Grades—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Tutoring and Coaching—The **Academic Success Center (ASC)** provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

UNLV Writing Center—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.

Rebelmail—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students’ Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students’ e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

Final Examinations—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Library statement:

Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the Subject Librarian is (https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject). UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students’ access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.