Anthropology 726A: Advanced Biological Anthropology

**SEMESTER 1 – Thursdays 11-1pm,**

**SEMESTER 2 –** (726B details to be provided later)

# Schedule Facilitator Office Extension Email

Weeks 1–12 Judith Littleton HSB 721 8-8574 [j.littleton@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:j.littleton@auckland.ac.nz)

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| **Assignment**a **Due Dates:** | **Month** | **Day** | **Time** | **% of Mark** |
| Turn in Darwin &Wallace essay | March | 27 | 11.59 pm | 10% |
| Turn in 1st draft of 1st research essay | May | 8 | 11.59 pm |  |
| Complete review of colleague’s research essay | May | 15 | 11.59 pm | 10% |
| Turn in your revised essay with notes | May | 29 | 11.59 pm | 20% |
| Give Presentation |  |  |  | 10% |
| Turn in 2nd Research Essay |  |  |  | 30% |
| In class participation as defined – full year |  |  |  | 20% |
|  |  |  | Total: | 100% |
| a See details for each assignment below |  |  |  |  |

# Course Objectives

This course gives students an opportunity to critically read and thoughtfully evaluate several of the most important issues in biological anthropology, paying particular attention to theoretical perspectives, the hypotheses generated from them and the various assumptions and evidence underpinnings debates, past and current.

We anticipate that students successfully completing the course should:

* Have some understanding of a number of the most important theoretical perspectives and concepts relevant to our sub-discipline. Among these are macro- and micro- evolution, speciation, natural selection, adaptation, phenotypic plasticity, political economy and life-history theory
* Understand and be familiar with key historical developments in the discipline
* Be able to identify and thoughtfully evaluate hypotheses derived from various theories
* Recognize strengths and weaknesses or limitations to various arguments and be able to suggest what more could usefully be done to resolve disagreements or uncertainties
* Demonstrate effective library research skills including being able to track arguments and ideas both backwards and forwards and
* Formulate and organize a logical written argument
* Be able to give and respond to constructive comment on both written and oral work through oral participation in the class and responding to draft comments in written work
* Be able to present your opinions and work orally to a small group and participate in such discussions.

# Expectations about Course Conduct

This is a 30 point year-long course therefore we expect that you devote an average of 10 hours a week to this course through the year – this includes the period between the two semesters.

The course will be run as a series of two-hour seminar discussions. All of us are expected to have read the assigned readings by the time we meet – **no exceptions!** In the first class we will confirm a roster as students will take turns fulfilling the following roles each time we meet beginning in Week 2. Some of Week 23 and all of Week 24, however, is set aside for student presentations of their research essays.

# Roles to be filled by graduate students enrolled in ANTHRO 726 each week

**Class Roles Number of**

**Description of Responsibilities**

**Students**

1. Discussion

Leader 1

1. Definer of

Prepare a formal, written outline for the seminar/discussion based on the readings (2-3 pages); keep the seminar moving with transitional ideas/topics.

Prepare and disseminate a list of 10-15 key terms and concepts (defined and/or summarized) from the readings.

Key Terms or Concepts

1. Extra-Article

1 Be a resource person able to clarify key terms, provide examples or direct students to the relevant terms in the

literature.

Select, read and prepare a summary (300-400 words) of

Provider 1

Students not

an additional, related article and present the ideas therein

to the group as the relate to assigned readings

Write two short answer questions to be used as

1. Question Contributors

taking on one of three roles above

discussion starters. Think carefully about what constitutes a challenging question and the appropriate realm of possible answers.

# In class-participation fulfilling various defined roles (20%)

Each of the above roles includes a written component, as well as the in-class participative aspect of the role. Please disseminate copies of your written work to your fellow students at the start of each seminar. We are happy to print copies for you provided we receive your work at least one hour before class.

If you don’t understand something in a reading remember there are ways of sorting it out: for terminology go to a good biology dictionary or (for social science terms) a good dictionary of the social sciences (get used to reading these sources); for things where you are lacking a background go to a basic text for the background or find a relevant website; and for areas where you are missing part of the debate go to the WEB of SCIENCE online and track the relevant authors or topics.

If you haven’t done all the reading for a class, come to class but do not pretend that you have read something when you have not. Keep in mind that written preparation and active participation (assessed by us) are the criteria used to assess **the 10% in-class participation score each semester.** You will be given feedback as to how you are doing at least once midway through the year

# Darwin-Wallace Essay (10%)

A short essay is due on **25 March**. It should be a concise discussion of the similarities and differences in Darwin and Wallace’s conceptions of natural selection. Take advantage of your discussions from the 2nd class in drafting and polishing this short essay. It should be **typed double spaced using Times New Roman 12-point font with ~2.5 cm margins all around and 0.5 cm paragraph indents**. Citations should follow the format of the American Journal of Human Biology (available in Endnote and Refworks). Word count is secondary to content and organization, but aim at **1500 ± 100 words** plus the references cited section. Word count in this and all other relevant assignments assume you have carefully edited work before submission. This

assignment must be uploaded to turnitin.com by the due date.

# 1st Research Essay (30%)

In this assignment using a case study, you will evaluate the following proposition:

“An understanding of the extended evolutionary synthesis fundamentally changes our interpretation of human evolution.”

The essay should follow the same formatting and citation guidelines as above. Word count is secondary to content and organization, but a target of approximately **3000** ± **300 words** plus references cited should be aimed at. The essay should include a brief background on the debate and then focus upon your argument that is grounded in a case study from published literature and data.

This assignment will occur in three steps:

1. A complete first draft of the essay must be submitted to the convenor electronically by **11.59 pm, 13 MAY**;
2. You will then be assigned an essay from someone else in the class. You will review this essay

addressing the questions established by your convernors. Our objective is to get you familiar with identifying effective essay skills – it is generally in the reading and analysis of someone else’s work that you see what works, what doesn’t, and what those comments that we make really mean. I will also review these essays;

1. You will complete your **peer-review** by **11.59 pm, 20 May**- uploading into Canvas the marked up essay.
2. At that stage you will be sent (via email or Canvas) the reviews of your essay; and
3. You will then have two weeks to undertake those revisions and submit the final version to Canvas (as well as your response to reviewers’ comments) to your convenor by email on

# 11.59 pm, 3 June.

The final marking of the essay will involve your submission of the first draft, the reviewers’ comments, and the final version. Ten percent of your grade will be based on how well you review your peer’s work. The remaining 20% will rest on your final product BUT that marking will take into account whether or not you have responded to reviewers’ comments effectively.

This is a graduate class – it is not a competition. Theoretically you could all achieve a final grade in the A range. In other words you will learn the most from participating fully in the reviewing process.

# 2nd Research Essay (30%) and Presentation (10%)

Additional information to follow from Drs Floyd & Battles – Essay Length (4000 ± 400 words)

# NOTES ON ESSAY WRITING

The purpose of essays is for you to organize and express your thoughts on a particular topic in a clear, rational and well-informed way. This is a skill which is useful well beyond your university degree. Some of you will have had plenty of experience in writing essays but this handout is likely to be useful anyway. They also clarify for you what we are looking for when an essay is marked. For any of you who would like fuller advice I recommend that you go and see the Student Learning Centre. You should be aware that when any of us are writing professional work we produce, as an absolute minimum, three draft versions. In each instance, we typically get colleagues to criticise the work, further polishing and clarifying our argument before we submit it for publication. We recommend that you help each other in the same way.

1. Plan your timing carefully. Don't leave all the work till the last minute - you may find that readings aren't available when you want them, or that reading, planning and writing take longer than you think.
2. Read widely and attentively, and make notes, so that you can refer properly to what you have read. Be prepared to follow up references you have come across in your reading, and read original articles and chapters where possible - not just textbooks. Reasonably up- to-date sources are usually preferable, especially in fast-changing fields.
3. Plan your essay in outline before you start writing. A good essay plan should help you to build up a well-structured, logical argument, and to avoid inconsistency and repetition.
4. Think about the essay topic, and make sure that what you write is really relevant. An essay that misses points implied by the title, or that gives too much attention to other points, is a poor discussion of its topic, even if it is a good essay in itself.
5. Your approach should be independent and, where appropriate, critical. Your essay should express what you think, not just echo something you have read or heard, and so you should be ready to integrate and comment thoughtfully on material from different sources.
6. Aim for a balance between the general and the particular, so that general points are supported and illustrated by particular instances. Neither airy generalizations alone nor factual catalogues make for a good essay.
7. Clear expression in good English is worth taking trouble over. So check that what you write makes clear sense and means what you intend. Short sentences are usually clearer than long ones. Ordinary language is usually preferable to long technical words, except where the technical words are more exact or succinct. Grammar, spelling and punctuation also deserve reasonable care.
8. Be concise. Anything which does not add to what you are saying is best left out.
9. Try to keep to the suggested length, or not too far from it. If an essay becomes much too long, it may be because some of what you have written is irrelevant, repetitive or long- winded - and these are pitfalls we should all try to avoid.
10. Insert a reference in the text of your essay to substantiate a point from your reading. At the end of the essay list the publications you have referred to, alphabetically by author, with the usual bibliographical information. Do not include publications you have not referred to in the essay. Use the department's guidelines for formatting your bibliography.
11. Express yourself in your own words. Quotations, if you use them at all, should be occasional and short, and should be supported by a reference. There are, of course, penalties for plagiarism or any form of reliance on another source that is not properly acknowledge.
12. Presentation is less important than substance, but it does deserve some attention. Your essay must be legible. Diagrams or tables are sometimes a good way of presenting

information, and can therefore be a useful part of a good essay: generally it is best to draw up your own. If you do use someone else's diagram or data in a table you much reference the source.

1. Get someone else to read your essay. While your writing may seem perfectly clear to you, having your work read and commented upon by another person can generally improve the clarity and structure of an essay substantially. Everyone writes an essay differently and approaches a topic from different perspectives so exchange your essay with someone else in the class or someone from outside but get used to soliciting and then responding to constructive criticism.
2. Read marker's comments. As per #13, we don't mark essays for our own amusement or because we are sadists. Take note of the comments, see whoever marks your essay and go through it with them, and do a better job next time.

Adapted from R. Attenborough (1985)

**You are responsible for reading the University’s Guidelines on the Conduct of Coursework. Note particularly that coursework for one course cannot be used as coursework in another course.**

<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/fms/default/uoa/about/teaching/policiesprocedures/docs/conductcoursework.pdf>

# Policy on Late Work

Late work will **not** be accepted under most circumstances. The only exceptions may be made for severe extenuating circumstances beyond a student’s control (illness, serious accident, etc.) and only upon timely provision of an appropriate medical certificate or other appropriate documentary evidence.

# University statement on cheating

**The University of Auckland will not tolerate cheating, or assisting others to cheat, and views cheating in coursework as a serious academic offence. The work that a student submits for grading must be the student's own work, reflecting his or her learning. Where work from other sources is used, it must be properly acknowledged and referenced. This requirement also applies to sources on the world-wide web. A student's assessed work may be reviewed against electronic source material using computerised detection mechanisms. Upon reasonable request, students may be required to provide an electronic version of their work for computerised review.**

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| **Readings for Semester 1** | |
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| Week | Assigned Reading |
| [1]  7 Mar | Introduction to course: Go over course materials; schedule course roles  Discuss: Science, philosophy and human nature?  Laland KNK, Sterelny K, Odling-Smee J, Hoppitt W, Tobias U. 2011. Cause and effect in biology revisited: Is Mayr's proximate-ultimate dichotomy still useful? Science 334(6062):1512-1516. |
| [2]  14 Mar | What did Darwin say and know? How different are Darwin and Wallace?  Darwin C, Wallace A. 1858. On the Tendency of Species to form Varieties; and on the Perpetuation of Varieties and Species by Natural Means of Selection. Journal of the Proceedings of the Linnean Society of London. Zoology 3:45–62. doi: 10.1111/j.1096-3642.1858.tb02500.x  Darwin C. 1859. Origin of the Species *(Intro and Chapters 1-4)*  Wallace A. 1858. Contributions to the theory of natural selection: a series of essays. |
| [3]  21 Mar | Key concepts in Evolutionary Theory  Charlesworth and Charlesworth Evolution A very Short introduction. |
| [4]  28 Mar | Extended Synthesis  Müller GB. 2017. Why an extended evolutionary synthesis is necessary. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2017.0015  Futuyama DJ. 2017. Evolutionary biology today and the call for an extended synthesis. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0145 |
| [5]  4 Apr | Plasticity  Sultan SE. 2017. Developmental plasticity: re-conceiving the genotype. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2017.0009  Anton SC and Kuzawa CW. 2017. Early Homo, plasticity and the extended evolutionary synthesis. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2017.0004 |
|  | **Mid-Semester Study Period** |
| [6]  11 April | Epigenetics  Jablonka E. 2017. The evolutionary implications of epigenetic inheritance. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0135  Griffiths PE. 2017. Genetic, epigenetic and exogenetic information in development and evolution. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0152  10.1016/j.anbehav.2011.12.007  Malone N. et al. 2012. Variation in the social systems of extant hominoids.  International Journal of Primatology 33(6). DOI 10.1007/s10764-012-9617-0 |
| [7]  2 May | Adaptation  Godfrey-Smith P. 2017. The subject as cause and effect of evolution. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2017.0022  Bateson P. 2017. Adaptability and evolution. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0126  Gardner A. 2017. The purpose of adaptation. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2017.0005 |
| [8]  9 May | Niche construction  Laland et al. 2017. Niche construction, sources of selection and trait coevolution. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0147  Stotz K. 2017. Why developmental niche construction is not selective niche construction: and why it matters. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0157 |
| [9]  16 May | Cultural evolution; biology and culture  Lewens T. 2017. Human nature, human culture: the case of cultural evolution. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2017.0018  Fuentes A. 2017. Human niche, human behaviour, human nature. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0136 |
| [10]  23 May | Does the ESS make a difference?  Zeder MA. 2017. Domestication as a model system for the extended evolutionary synthesis. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0133  Nobel D. 2017. Evolution viewed from physics, physiology and medicine. Interface Focus 7(5). DOI: 10.1098/rsfs.2016.0159 |
| [11]  30 May | Species concepts  Zachos et al. 2013. Species inflation and taxonomic artefacts.  Groves CP. 2013. The nature of species: A rejoinder to Zachos et al. |
| [12]  6 Juny | Primate models  Foley RJ. 1999. Hominid behavioural evolution: missing links in comparative primate socioecology. Chapter in: Comparative Primate Socioecology. Cambridge University Press. [e-book]  Hare B. et al. 2011. The self-domestication hypothesis: evolution of bonobo psychology is due to selection against aggression. Animal Behaviour 83(3). DOI  Malone et al. |
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| **CLASS ROSTER** | | **ANTHRO 726A – Scheduling of Roles in Class** | |
| **Week** | **Day & Date** | **Roles Assumed** | **Students Assigned** |
| **1** | Tuesday  March 6 | Discussion Leader | Facilitator (Judith) |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **2** | Tuesday  March 13 | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **3** | Tuesday March 20 | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **4** | Tuesday March 29 | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **5** | Tuesday April 4 | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **6** | Tuesday April 11 | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
|  | Mid-Semester Study Period | |  |
| **7** | Tuesday | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **8** | Tuesday May | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |

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|  |  | Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **9** | Tuesday May | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **10** | Tuesday  May | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **11** | Tuesday May | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |
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| **12** | Tuesday June | Discussion Leader |  |
| Key Term Definer |  |
| Additional Article Provider |  |
| Question Contributor(s) |  |