**Course objectives**

This course covers the development of human physical and cultural endowments through a span of some 5 million years, from a hominoid stage and a foraging economy to the origins of agricultural practices and the rise of urban life. A consideration of humans’ place in nature as well as a review of evolutionary principles leads to discuss the archaeological findings of hominids in a diachronic framework. Further consideration is placed on the selective processes that led to the domestication of biomasses symbiotic with humans, and of the social causes and consequences of settled life. The journey through the bio-cultural transformations of humanity highlights the transition to bipedal locomotion, the acquisition of language, changes in subsistence economies, and an increase in societal complexity.

**Learning goals**

The aim of the course is for the student to have a basic and general understanding of the evolutionary paradigm as it applies to the biological and cultural makeup of humans. The major contributions from naturalists (Darwin and Wallace) as well as from molecular biology help contextualize major biological transformations of the human clade and to understand the polytypic nature of contemporary human populations. Applied to the cultural domain, a critical evaluation of the evolutionary paradigm stresses the need to decouple the notion of “progress” from that of learned symbolic adaptations, and to construe the evolutionary process as non-teleological and multidirectional. Students will have the opportunity to develop their critical thinking and their writing skills by engaging in class discussions and submitting short documentary reviews.
**Course outline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jun M 1</td>
<td>Introduction to the course and to Latte Framing paradigms: intelligent design versus evolution</td>
<td>Cartmill 2000, Marks 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun T 2</td>
<td>Physical anthropology and archaeology Inorganic dynamics of the blue planet: Plate tectonics and Pangaea</td>
<td>Hallam 1976; Kurtén 1976</td>
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<td>Jun Th 4</td>
<td>Natural selection: Darwin and Wallace</td>
<td>Tattersall 2009 Chapters 1, 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun M 8</td>
<td>Molecular biology and evolution</td>
<td>Tattersall 2009 Chapters 4, 9</td>
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<td>Jun T 9</td>
<td>The place of humans in nature</td>
<td>Johanson and Edey 1981; Tattersal 2009 Chapter 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun Th 11</td>
<td>Ethology of non-human primates</td>
<td>Wundram 1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun M 15</td>
<td>The evolution of Primates The Australopithecines</td>
<td>Tattersall 2009 Chapters 8, 10-11 and 15; Sabater et al 1997; Shipman 1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun T 16</td>
<td>Consequences and implications of bipedalism Video Surviving Africa (for review) Midterm posted on Latte</td>
<td>Hewes 1961; Devine 1985; Shreeve 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun Th 18</td>
<td>Derived Homo Video Review due</td>
<td>Tattersall 2009 Chapters 5-6, 13-14; Shipman 2003; Powledge 2006; Lister 1993</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun M 22</td>
<td>Archaic Homo sapiens and Neandertals Midterm due</td>
<td>Tattersall 2009 Chapters 15-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun T 23</td>
<td>Origins of symbolic adaptations</td>
<td>Burling 1993; Geertz 1964; White 1992</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun Th 25</td>
<td>Paleoanthropology and hominid stereotypes</td>
<td>Moser 1998; Tattersall 2009 Chapters 3, 12, 18-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun M 29</td>
<td>Global human diasporas Inception of agricultural economies</td>
<td>Grayson and Meltzer 2003; Fagan 2001;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Video Mystery of First Americans (for review) Flannery 1968

Jul T 30 Urban societies and complex political systems Hodder 2007; Andrews 1995,
Video Review due Chapters 3-5
Take-home final exam posted (due on Thursday July 3, noon)

Students with extra challenges
If you are a student with a documented disability at Brandeis University and if you wish to request a reasonable accommodation for this class, please see me immediately. Keep in mind that reasonable accommodations are not provided retroactively.

Course requirements

Reading assignments
Reading assignments from the textbook and additional sources (on Latte or through URL in the bibliography below) should be completed by the dates indicated above. Reading of these materials is essential for your participation in class (15% of the total grade). Attendance to class is obligatory. Absence from classes will only be accepted in cases of medical or extreme emergencies, and should be timely notified in person or by email.

Writing assignments
There are two written reviews of the videos Surviving Africa and Mystery of the First Americans. Each is due a class after the screening and should have a maximum of three double-spaced typed pages. The reviews need to address three points: 1) A synthetic summary of the core ideas, a critical evaluation of the main points, and a general assessment of the effectiveness of the video. The first review counts 10% of the final grade and the second 15%.

Exams
There will be two exams (each 30%). Each examination will include 1 or 2 essays. The essays are intended to foster critical thinking by comparing and contrasting assumptions, statements, or theoretical positions from different authors. The tests are not accumulative; that is, the final exam will cover only topics discussed after the midterm.

Summary of grading
Class participation 15%
Midterm exam 30%
Final exam 30%
First video review 10%
Second video review 15%

Use of laptops and tablets
Students are welcome to use a laptop computer or a tablet in class provided it is used for note taking or for web searches specifically related to the topic being discussed. If a student is found using the laptop for other purposes, his/her right to use it will be
immediately suspended for the rest of the summer session. The use of phones is not permitted.

**Academic Integrity**
Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence at Brandeis University. Each student is expected to be familiar with, and to follow, the University’s policies on academic integrity. Please consult Brandeis University [Rights and Responsibilities](http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/srcs/rr/) for all policies and procedures. All policies related to academic integrity apply to in-class and take home projects, assignments, exams, and quizzes. Students may only collaborate on assignments with express permission. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university.

**Required text**

Tattersall, Ian  

**Other readings (on LATTE or though URLS in the syllabus)**

Andrews, Anthony P.  

Burling, Robbins  
[http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0011-3204%28199302%2934%3A1%3C25%3APCHLAN%3E2.0.CO%3B2-5](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0011-3204%28199302%2934%3A1%3C25%3APCHLAN%3E2.0.CO%3B2-5)

Cartmill, Matt  

Devine, John  
[http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-7294%28198509%2987%3A3%3C550%3ATVOHL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-J](http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-7294%28198509%2987%3A3%3C550%3ATVOHL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-J)
Fagan, Brian

Flannery, K.

Geertz, Clifford

Grayson, Donald K., and David J. Meltzer

Hallam, A.

Hewes, Gordon W.

Hodder, Ian

Johanson, Donald, and Maitland A. Edey
Kurtén, Björn  

Lister, A.M.  

Marks, Jonathan  

Moser, Stephanie  

Powledge, Tabitha M  

Sabater Pi, Jordi, Joaquim J. Vea, and Jordi Serrallonga  

Scarre, Chris  

Shipman, Pat  


Shreeve, James  
White, Randall

Wundram, Ina Jane