

**EVOLUTION OF PRIMATE LIFE HISTORIES**  
**ANTH 6404: GRADUATE SECTION**  
SYLLABUS, SPRING 2012

WEEKLY LECTURE MEETINGS: Tuesday and Thursday @ 2:20 – 3:35 pm, Duques Rom 362  
WEEKLY GRAD SEMINAR: Monday @ 3:30-4:30pm, BB Seminar Room (2114 G. Street NW)

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

At the end of this course, students will:

- (1) understand the theoretical and conceptual foundation for the study of primate life history evolution, as well as relationships between life history features, growth and development, and socioecology;
- (2) understand diversity in primate life histories, the unique features and diversity of modern human life history, and the basic empirical evidence for human life history evolution;
- (3) be able to critically evaluate empirical studies and theoretical arguments in the current scientific literature concerning the selective pressures that may have shaped human and nonhuman primate life histories, through seminar discussions;
- (4) synthesize and use knowledge gained in this course to identify an outstanding research question of significance to the study of primate life history evolution, design a research program to address this question, and develop a mock grant proposal which summarizes this research program and its significance and incorporates feedback from peer-review.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS: To be discussed on January 23rd**

If you are enrolled in this course as a graduate student, you will be required to attend all meetings of ANTH 3491 (TR 2.20-3.35) plus a weekly one-hour seminar meeting (M 3.30-4.30pm). Your final course grade will be based on the following work, and calculated out of a total of 130 possible points. NOTE: Those requirements that are common to both ANTH 3491 and ANTH 6404 are described more fully on the ANTH 3491 syllabus.

ANTH 3491/6404 Requirements:

40 points	Two quizzes, worth 20 points each
15 points	Participation in Class Discussions

ANTH 6404 Requirements:

20 points	Participation in weekly Graduate Seminar Discussions
10 points	Presentation of Research Proposal (*replaces ANTH 3491 Presentation)
10 points	Peer reviews
35 points	Mock Research Grant Proposal (*replaces ANTH 3491 Research Paper)

Requirements specific to ANTH 6404 are further described below.

- (1) **GRADUATE SEMINAR DISCUSSION:** We will meet for an additional one hour/week for a seminar to discuss further readings from the primary scientific literature. This will be run as a Journal Club, whereby each of you will be responsible for presenting an article of your choice for discussion. Your participation in the seminar is worth **20 points**.
- (2) **MOCK RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSAL:** Using knowledge gained during the course and from your own independent reading of the literature, identify and develop a grant proposal to address an outstanding research question of significance for the study of primate life history evolution. This grant proposal should be written in accordance with Leakey Foundation guidelines, provided at [http://leakeyfoundation.org/grants/applicants/applying\\_general\\_grants/applying\\_research\\_proposal\\_detailed\\_instructions/](http://leakeyfoundation.org/grants/applicants/applying_general_grants/applying_research_proposal_detailed_instructions/)

Your grant proposal should include the following main components (adapted from the Leakey Foundation grant guidelines):

1. Concise statement of your research objectives, or the specific questions to be answered.
2. Description of the importance of the research project to your specific field and to the study of human origins. What is the relationship of your research to the mission of the Leakey Foundation?
3. Brief history of attempts to answer the same or related questions by other researchers.
4. Detailed explanation of the information needed to answer the research question(s) and your methods (how you plan to gather this information).
5. Statement of what kind of experience you must have to carry out this project, including any specialized skills or analysis techniques required by your methodology.
6. Summary of any broader implications and your future goals relevant to proposed research.
7. Brief description of your schedule for data collection, analysis, and report.

(3) **PEER REVIEW OF GRANT PROPOSALS:** Following the presentation of research proposals, you will write a grant proposal review for each of your peers. These reviews are to be approximately 2 pages in length, and will address the following main points:

1. Comment on the scientific merit of the proposal.
  - a. Is the proposed research novel? Will it contribute new and significant findings to the applicant's specific field and to the study of human and/or nonhuman primate life history evolution?
  - b. Is the rationale for the proposed research clearly explained, and well justified within the context of prior research?
  - c. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed research as outlined?
  - d. In your opinion, what is the broader relevance of the proposed research to the study of human and/or nonhuman primate life history evolution?
2. Comment on the methods and feasibility of the proposal.
  - a. Are the methods clearly explained, well justified, and feasible?
  - b. In your opinion, has the applicant outlined a plan of work that has a high likelihood of meeting the stated research objectives? In other words, are the methods appropriate, and can the resulting data actually answer the research questions as outlined?
3. In your opinion is the proposed schedule reasonable, considering the research outlined in the proposal.

**SCHEDULE:** (Subject to change)

January 23	Organizational Meeting
January 30	Journal Club
February 6	Journal Club
February 13	Journal Club
February 20	<i>PRESIDENT'S DAY HOLIDAY - NO MEETING</i>
February 27	Journal Club
March 5	Journal Club
March 12	<i>SPRING BREAK - NO MEETING</i>
March 19	Journal Club
March 26	Journal Club
April 2	Journal Club
April 9	Journal Club
April 16	<b>Presentation of Research Proposal; polished draft of proposal due</b>
April 23	<b>NO MEETING: Work on peer reviews; submit by Wednesday, April 25th</b>
April 30	Discussion of peer reviews
<b>TBD</b>	<b>Final Grant Proposals Due on Scheduled Final Exam Date, TBD</b>