

ANT 474/574: NEUROANTHROPOLOGY
Spring 2021 / Mon/Wed 2-3:15 / Lloyd 132

Zoom ID: 994-0614-0382

Dr. Christopher Lynn

Email: cdlynn@ua.edu

Website: <http://cdlynn.people.ua.edu/>

Office: 12 ten Hoor

Office phone: (205) 348-4162

Drop-in office hours: Tues/Thurs 3-4 or email for Zoom appointment

Zoom Personal Meeting Room: 348-35-1388

Mandy Guitar

Email: aeguitar@crimson.ua.edu

Website: <https://www.amandaguitar.com/>

Office hours: Email for Zoom appointment

Zoom Personal Meeting Room: 399-587-0559

Prerequisites: ANT 270, BSC 300, PY 413, or permission of instructor.

Course Description: This course introduces evolutionary and biocultural approaches within anthropology to the central and peripheral nervous systems and their interconnections. Topics include the evolution of the brain; how culture and social structure shape the brain, its development, and its activity; and anthropological perspectives on connections among culture, behavior, brain, mind, and body.

This is a writing course, so writing proficiency within anthropology is required for a passing grade in the course. You will be expected to complete three short research proposals and reading summaries and reflections on the course blog. Assignments due before mid-semester (some reflections and summaries and one research proposal) will be graded and feedback provided before mid-semester to provide a clear sense of the quality of your writing and suggestions for improvement.

Course Materials: All readings and other material will be posted on Blackboard. Be sure your Blackboard account is set up correctly so that you receive messages relevant to the course in your email inbox.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the semester, you should be able to

1. Display competency in the current state of knowledge regarding the biocultural evolution of the human brain.
2. Display competency in the current state of knowledge regarding enculturation effects on the functioning of the nervous system.
3. Outline theoretical and methodological issues in the anthropological study of culture-mind-body-behavior connections through the use of case studies in various populations.

4. Lead a classroom discussion and participate in online discussion by drawing in new material relevant to the course content.

Attendance and Participation: This is a discussion-oriented class; attendance is required and will be monitored. Unexcused absences will lower your grade. Classroom participation is important and will figure in your final grade.

Nondiscrimination Policy: In this class, we discuss many controversial social issues. As an academic community, our educational mission is enhanced by the robust exchange of ideas that occurs among a diverse student body, faculty, and staff within a respectful and inclusive learning environment. In that spirit, any opinion is welcome in class discussion, provided it is presented in a respectful way.



The University of Alabama is committed to providing an inclusive environment that is free from harassment or discrimination based on race, genetic information, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, socioeconomic status, political beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, age, ability, size, or veteran status. The University of Alabama prohibits any verbal or physical conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any individual or group, including physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, stalking, intimidation, harassment, sexual misconduct, coercion, or other communication or conduct that creates a hostile living or learning environment. Harassment or other illegal discrimination against individuals or groups not only is a violation of University Policy and subject to disciplinary action but also is inconsistent with the values and ideals of the University.

The UAct website (www.ua.edu/uact) provides a list of reporting channels that can be used to report incidents of illegal discrimination, harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, retaliation, threat assessment or fraud.

ASSIGNMENTS

Research Proposals

Your primary assignment for this course is three proposals for possible research projects. You will choose three topics related to the course that you'd like to know more about and outline research projects by which you could theoretically make unique contribution to knowledge in neuroanthropology. To do so, you must read about what we already know regarding the topics and figure out how to conduct neuroanthropological research (generally speaking, entailing some combination of ethnography and neurosciences). You should include at least 2 sources assigned in the course AND at least 3 other reliable, appropriate academic references you find on your own in developing each proposal. In other words, the assignment is much like a term paper in including a short review of relevant literature; but you will also be asked to propose the methodology you would use to conduct said research, how you would analyze the data you propose to collect, and what the significance of the research is. This will require serious critical thinking and reading not just about topics of interest but methodology as well.

This format is consistent with the application for funding for undergraduate research at UA, so we will use the directions and formatting for that application. Use the following format for each of the three proposals, numbering all pages except the title page.

- Page 1:
 - Title of the proposed project, along with your name, academic rank, and affiliation (i.e., your major department or program).
 - Abstract of the proposed work—This should not exceed 100 words and be suitable for general publication or dissemination to the general public. This should be double-spaced in 12-point type with 1-inch margins.
- Pages 2-4:
 - Proposal—The proposed work should be described (double-spaced; 12-point type with 1-inch margins). The proposed work should be described in sufficient detail to evaluate its impact within neuroanthropology but still at a level general enough for the non-specialist to appreciate. The proposal should address the following questions/areas:
 - What is the aim of the proposed work? Why is it important?
 - What is the plan for completing the project?
 - What is novel or creative about the project?
 - How is the project interdisciplinary or neuroanthropological?
- Page 5:
 - Reference List [1-page max]—Include at least 2 readings from class and 3 you have found. Citations should be used within the proposal, and all citations referenced in a consistent and appropriate scholarly style. Single or double-spacing is acceptable.
- Page 6:
 - Resume/Curriculum Vitae [1-page max]—This is typical for research proposals and funding; and you should get used to compiling vitae of all your professional, scholarly, and service activities. The resume should include (i) name and departmental affiliation/address; (ii) college level (i.e. freshmen, sophomore, etc.); (iii) synergistic activities to support the research or activity, and (iv) honors/awards. After the first proposal, your resume/CV will merely be revised based on feedback or new additions.

Peer Review: You will complete a peer review of proposals of at least one other member of the class for each proposal. A portion of your proposal grades will be based on providing constructive, thoughtful comments on other students' proposals.

Turn in all of these assignments in via Blackboard.

Discussant Summaries: For most weeks, two student discussants will be scheduled to compose a summary for 2-3 articles/chapters and post it a Blackboard discussion thread. The discussants will decide between themselves how to divide the labor. These summaries should briefly pull out the gist of the article or chapter and be used to facilitate discussion online and in class. Each summary should be 500-1000 words and include:

- A title that sums up your point for the summary,
- 1-2 paragraph summary of that outlines the hypothesis, the theory being tested, the methods used to test the hypothesis, the results;
- 1-2 paragraphs comparing the article/chapter to other material we have read in the course,
- 1-2 paragraphs discussing what you liked or didn't like about the article or how it relates to other material you have been exposed to or are interested in, and

- 3-5 incisive questions your classmates can address in their reflections or that we can discuss in class.

This is a writing class, so be sure to use coherent, logical, and carefully edited prose.

Summaries must be posted to Blackboard by 8 AM on the Sunday before your presentation week.

Reflections: Everyone not assigned to summarize/present as discussant on a given date must provide two written reflections on each post. The first reflection must be done by noon on Tuesday of the week we discuss those readings in class. The second reflection must be done before mid-semester, if reading is assigned during the first half of the course, or before dead week, if assigned during the second half. Reflections need not summarize the reading but should make it clear that you read and thought about the piece. The second reflection must show integration of material—that is, I want to see what you've learned and how other readings and discussion have shed new light on each respective reading.

Summaries and reflections posted by mid-semester will be graded and feedback provided before mid-semester to give a clear idea of the quality of your writing and suggestions for improvement.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Presentations: Assigned discussants will also give a PowerPoint presentation of their assigned reading and lead discussion on the assigned date. That means presenters must read the commentaries of classmates, collect their discussion comments, and use these as a means of generating conversation. Presentations can include traditional lectures, discussions, and/or activities (please!) that enable the class to process and integrate the material. Really and truly, creativity in this regard is encouraged, appreciated, and rewarded. The default fallback for those who cannot find a creative spark will be to bring in an outside recent, relevant article to facilitate discussion. Again, it is up to the discussants to divide and share the labor.

Presentations/discussions should include a PowerPoint outlining the points of the articles, present any theory introduced, include relevant visuals, and promote discussion. PowerPoints should be composed to be professional—use fewer words and more pictures to convey ideas. Slide titles should summarize each slide. Discussants are responsible for prompting conversation about the articles, which may involve calling on people to answer questions. It is recommended but not required that discussants come up with activities to facilitate the discussion through experience. Discussants should be prepared to fill the entire class period but may have to share the time with other course business. As discussants will work as pairs, confidential self- and partner-assessments will be used to evaluate teamwork.

Discussion: Bring readings to class every week so you have them available for discussions. Everyone is expected to participate in class and will be held accountable for doing so. I am watching and have my ways.

This may seem like a lot, but note, THERE ARE NO EXAMS.

ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOR ANT 574 STUDENTS

- Grad students will be discussants more than once and assist undergraduates as discussants some weeks.
- All assignments will be evaluated according to a standard appropriate for graduate-level coursework.

COURSE GRADING POLICY

- Research proposal 1 (Includes peer review) = 20%
- Research proposal 2 (Includes peer review) = 20%
- Research proposal 3 (Includes peer review) = 20%
- Reflections (Two per reading) = 20%
- Participation (Discussant presentations and interaction during discussions) = 20%

IMPORTANT NOTE: Because this is a writing course, to pass you **MUST** receive at least a passing grade in the final writing assignment. To receive a passing grade, you will need to show (at minimum) that you write with the skill normally required of an upper division student in Anthropology. This is true regardless of how well you do in other aspects of the course!

OUTLINE OF TOPICS

Dr. Lynn will lecture or lead discussion if no discussant indicated. This outline is subject to change without notice.

WEEK 0: Introduction and syllabus

1/13 Read: Lynn et al 2016, <https://jezebel.com/how-one-study-produced-a-bunch-of-untrue-headlines-abou-1765538077>

Part I: The Encultured Brain

WEEK 1: Nerves, synapses, & the brain

1/18 MLK DAY, NO CLASS

1/20 Read: Kalat chaps 2-4

Due: Complete a Discussion post introducing yourself and your favorite hobby.

WEEK 2: The encultured brain

Discussants: O'Malley & Clark

1/25 Read: Downey & Lende 2012 (ch 1-2), Roepstorff & Frith 2012

1/27 Read: Andrews-Hannah 2012, Hove et al 2016

WEEK 3: Primate social cognition

Discussants: Bulger, O'Malley, Kim

2/1 Read: MacKinnon & Fuentes 2012, Dunbar & Shultz 2007

2/3 Read: Konner 2010

WEEK 4: Evolution & the brain

Discussants: Cotton & Clark

2/8 Read: Downey & Lende 2012 (ch4)

2/10 Read: Balsters et al 2009

Due: Research Proposal #1

Part II: Research Methodologies in Neuroanthropology

WEEK 5: Methods and writing a research proposal

Discussants: Doheny & O'Malley

2/15 Read: Lynn, Stein, & Bishop 2014; Seligman & Brown 2009

2/17 Read: DeCaro 2016

Due: Peer review #1

Part III: Human Capacities & Skills

Discussant: Evans & Clark

WEEK 6: Mind & body

2/22 Read: Hay 2012

2/24 Read: Laughlin 1997

WEEK 7: Embodiment

Discussant: Beebe & Berger

3/1, Read: Campbell 2012

3/3 Read: Worthman 1999

Due: Reading summaries and reflections. (Will be graded with feedback by midterm.)

WEEK 8: Human development

Discussant: Cox & Schowalter

3/8 Read: Stevenson & Worthman 2014

3/10 Read: DeCaro & Worthman 2008

Part IV: Human Activities

WEEK 9: Physical activity

Discussants: Giesmann

3/15 MID-SEMESTER BREAK, NO CLASS

3/17 Read: Downey 2012 (ch6) & Heywood 2011

Due: Research Proposal #2

WEEK 10: Religious consciousness

Discussants: Hamner & MacGrath

3/22 Read: Beischel et al 2011

3/24 Read: Lynn et al. 2015

Due: Peer review #2

WEEK 11: Arts

Discussants: Hampton & Petsilis

3/29 Read: Mason 2009

3/31 Read: Trevarthen 2013

Part V: Human Problems & Pathologies

WEEK 12: Consciousness disorders & arts therapies

Discussants: Holland & 4/5 Read:

Fachner 2011; Vogl et al 2015

4/7 Read: Jeong et al. 2005

WEEK 13: Autism-dissociation spectrum

Discussants: Jacks & Smith

4/12 Read: Brezis 2012

4/14 Read: Seligman & Kirmayer 2008

Due: Research Proposal #3

WEEK 14: Smoking & addiction

Discussants: Joyner & Whyte

4/19 Read: Stromberg 2012

4/21 Read: Lende 2012 (ch13)

Due: Peer review #3; Reading summaries & reflections

POLICY ON MISSED EXAMS AND COURSEWORK

All summaries and reflections posted after the assigned date/time will still be accepted but only eligible for half credit. Your research proposals must be submitted electronically, using the appropriate Blackboard dropbox, by 11:59 pm on the day they are due for full credit. If you cannot attend class, you can turn the paper copy in later but must still submit it electronically by the due date. Turning things in late via Blackboard undermines the mechanisms set up to facilitate peer review, so assignments related to the research proposal that are turned in late, except by prior arrangement and with a very good reason, will lose 10% credit off of the maximum of 100% for each day (or part of a day) they are late. Many assignments being due at the same time is never a good reason, and extensions will not be authorized on that basis.

SOCIAL MEDIA

I use Twitter as a way to share information during and between classes. We use hashtag #ant474. You can follow me @Chris_Ly and the department @BamaAnthro. HOWEVER, it is rude to be constantly texting or using your smartphone if you are not doing it for class and only with express permission. Therefore, if I see you on your device during class, I will be looking for course-relevant tweets. If you need to use your devices for anything but coursework, take it into the hallway, or I will ask you to do so. I will warn you once if I see you using social media during class except to tweet notes about the class using the #ant474 hashtag. After the first warning, I will ask you to leave class and count you as absent that session.

Notification of Changes: I endeavor to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, I reserve the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, I will notify you in class or via email and endeavor to provide reasonable time for you to adjust to any changes.

Further Reading

1. Mendoza-Denton N, Eisenhauer S, Wilson W, Flores C. Gender, electrodermal activity, and videogames: Adding a psychophysiological dimension to sociolinguistic methods. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*. 2017;21: 547-575.
2. Lende DH. Neuroanthropology--2012 in Review. *PLoS*. 2012. Available: <http://blogs.plos.org/neuroanthropology/2012/12/28/neuroanthropology-2012-in-review/>.
3. Lende DH, Downey G, editors. *The encultured brain: An introduction to neuroanthropology*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; 2012.
4. Lende DH, Downey G. The encultured brain--Toward the future. In: Lende DH, Downey G, editors. *The encultured brain: An introduction to neuroanthropology*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; 2012. pp. 391-419.
5. Myers NAL. Toward an applied neuroanthropology of psychosis: the interplay of culture, brains, and experience. *Annals of Anthropological Practice*. 2012;36: 113.
6. Downey G. Brand Anthropology: New and Improved with Extra Diversity! . 2011. Available: <http://blogs.plos.org/neuroanthropology/2011/01/28/brand-anthropology-new-and-improved-with-extra-diversity/>.
7. Lende D. Florida governor: Anthropology not needed here. . 2011. Available: <http://blogs.plos.org/neuroanthropology/2011/10/11/florida-governor-anthropology-not-needed-here/>.
8. Dias AM. The foundations of neuroanthropology. *Frontiers in Evolutionary Neuroscience*. 2010;2: 1-2. doi: 10.3389/neuro.18.005.2010.
9. Domínguez Duque JF, Turner R, Lewis ED, Egan G. Neuroanthropology: a humanistic science for the study of the culture–brain nexus. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*. 2010;5: 138-147. doi: 10.1093/scan/nsp024.
10. Campbell BC, Garcia JR. Neuroanthropology: evolution and emotional embodiment. *Frontiers in Evolutionary Neuroscience*. 2009;1. doi: doi:10.3389/neuro.18.004.2009.
11. D JF D, Lewis ED, Turner R, Egan GF. The brain in culture and culture in the brain: a review of core issues in neuroanthropology. *Prog Brain Res*. 2009;178: 43.
12. Saniotis A. *Evolving Brain: Neuroanthropology, Emergence, and Cognitive Frontiers*. *NeuroQuantology*. 2009;7.
13. Saniotis A. *Evolving Brain: Neuroanthropology, Emergence, and Cognitive Frontiers*. *NeuroQuantology*. 2009;7.
14. Marcus JA. Neuroanthropology. In: Barfield T, editor. *The Dictionary of Anthropology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell; 1997. pp. 340-342.
15. Brezis R. Autism and religious development: a case for neuroanthropology.