

## Neuroanthropology

ANT 474 Section 001

Fall 2014, Seminar

Dr. Christopher Lynn

### Office Hours and Contact Information

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### Prerequisites

#### UA Course Catalog Prerequisites

Prerequisite(s): ANT 270 or BSC 300 or PY 413.

### Course Description

#### UA Course Catalog Information

This course provides an introduction to 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 this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course. You will be expected to complete a reading summary and/or reflections on the course blog and complete a research proposal. Assignments due before the midterm (some reflections and summaries, detailed proposal outline) will be graded and feedback provided before the midterm to provide a clear sense of the quality of your writing and suggestions for improvement.

## Student Learning Outcomes

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.

## Required Texts

### UA Supply Store Textbook Information

- LENDE, DANIEL H / THE ENCULTURED BRAIN:AN INTRODUCTION TO NEUROANTHROPOLOGY **(Required)**
- LENDE, DANIEL H (RENTAL) / (RENTAL) THE ENCULTURED BRAIN:AN INTRODUCTION TO NEUROANTHROPOLOGY **(RENTAL)**

## Other Course Materials

Additional readings posted to Blackboard as listed in Outline of Topics below.

# Outline of Topics

## Part I: The Encultured Brain

### 8/20 Nerves, synapses, & the brain

- READ: Kalat chaps 2-4 (Blackboard)

### 8/27 The encultured brain

- READ: EB chap 1 (Lende & Downey), EB chap 2 (Downey & Lende)

### 9/3 Primate social cognition

- READ: EB chap 3 (MacKinnon & Fuentes), Dunbar & Shultz 2007 (Blackboard)
- **Proposal topic due**
- PRESENTERS: Batchelder/Arzola

### 9/10 Evolution & the brain

- READ: EB chap 4 (Downey & Lende), Balsters et al 2009 (Blackboard)
- PRESENTERS: Burbach/Charles

## Part II: Research Methodologies in Neuroanthropology

### 9/17 Methods

- READ: Lynn, Stein, & Bishop 2014 (Blackboard); Seligman & Brown 2009 (Blackboard)

## Part III: Human Capacities & Skills

### 9/24 Mind & body

- READ: EB chap 5 (Hay); Laughlin 1997 (Blackboard)
- **Proposal outline due**
- PRESENTERS: Morgan/Fry

### 10/1 Emotions

- READ: EB chap 8 (Bouskill); Chiao et al. 2008 (Blackboard)
- PRESENTERS: Patterson/Vicente

### 10/8 Embodiment

- READ: chap 9 (Campbell), Worthman 1999 (Blackboard)
- PRESENTERS: Batchelder/Hartley

### 10/15 Arts

- READ: Mason 2009 (Blackboard); Trevarthen 2013 (Blackboard)
- PRESENTERS: Burbach/Kennedy
- **Reading summaries and reflections due. These will be graded and feedback provided by midterm.**

### 10/22 Physical activity

- READ: EB chap 6 (Downey); Heywood 2011 (Blackboard)
- PRESENTERS: Morgan/Miller

## **Part IV: Human Problems & Pathologies**

### 10/29 PTSD

- READ: EB chap 10 (Finley); Myers 2012 (Blackboard)
- PRESENTERS: Patterson/Nolan

### 11/5 Autism-dissociation spectrum

- READ: EB chap 11 (Brezis); Seligman & Kirmayer 2008 (Blackboard)
- **Research proposal due**
- PRESENTERS: Ray/Roulaine

### 11/12 Smoking & addiction

- READ: EB chap 12 (Stromberg); EB chap 13 (Lende)

- **Peer review due**
- PRESENTERS: Russo/Sproston

11/19 Depression & anxiety

- READ: chap 14 (Dressler); Kohrt et al. 2012 (Blackboard)
- TBD

## **Part V: Toward the Future**

12/3 The future

- READ: EB chap 15 (Lende & Downey); Malafouris 2009 (Blackboard)
- **Proposal revision due**
- TBD
- **Reading summaries & reflections due**

## **Exams and Assignments**

### **Research Proposal (turn in all of these assignments via Blackboard):**

Your primary assignment for this course--and that will make or break your grade--is a detailed proposal for a possible research project. You will choose a topic related to the course that you'd like to know more about and outline a research project by which you could theoretically make a unique contribution to knowledge in neuroanthropology. To do so, you must read about what we already know regarding the topic and figure out how to conduct neuroanthropological research (generally speaking, entailing some combination of ethnography and neurosciences). You will use at least 8 reliable, appropriate academic references over and above those already assigned in the course to develop your proposal. In other words, the assignment is much like a term paper in including a significant 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.

Topic and Outline: You will be required to submit a proposed topic by Sept. 3, a detailed outline of the proposal by Sept. 24, and the completed proposal by Nov. 3. The expectations of "detailed outline" will be discussed in class before the due date, and the proposal outline will be graded and returned before the midterm to provide clear feedback on the direction you have proposed to take and the

quality of your writing. Good resources for topic ideas are the [Neuroanthropology PLOS blog](#) by Daniel Lende and Greg Downey and the [Neuroanthropology Interest Group](#) on Facebook, which I expect you all to join (and for which I am an admin, so I will know if you do or not). Detailed instructions for the topic proposal, outline, and proposal expectations will be posted in a folder on Blackboard.

Proposal: Proposals are due Nov. 5. The proposal should follow the following formatting:

- Include a title page and references cited
- Should be 8-12 pages long (not including title page, references, or any tables or figures)
- Use double-spacing
- Use section headers
- Use 12-point Times New Roman font
- Use 1" margins
- Do not include additional spacing before or after paragraphs or around section headers

The proposal will be graded for intellectual content, originality, comprehension of reading material, coherence, logic, organization, grammar, punctuation, spelling, prose style, and demonstration of the anthropological perspective (interdisciplinarity, consideration of cultural and personal biases, holistic integration). You will receive a comprehensive style guide and an evaluation rubric in advance through Blackboard. Adherence to the style guide is required and will be reflected in your grade.

Peer Review and Revision: You will complete a revision to the proposal based on feedback from me and one other student in the class. The revision will be graded using the criteria listed above, with the added requirement that your revisions take the comments into account. A portion of your proposal revision grade will be based on providing constructive, thoughtful comments on another student's proposal. The peer review is due on Nov. 12, and the proposal revision on Dec. 3.

### **Blogging (post all of these assignments to the Anthropology Blog Network):**

Assigned Reading Reviews: For each assigned reading in the course, a student will be scheduled to compose a review and post it to the course blog ([Neuroanthropology: The Course](#)). These reviews, when appropriate, will also be included as part of the development of the Psych Table, an online resource for evolved psychological adaptations ([psychtable.org](#)). Instructions for reviewing will be provided via Blackboard.

These blog reviews and entries on the PsychTable will be accessible to the public and used by other students and researchers and should be composed using coherent, logical, and carefully edited prose. You will be asked to rate the scholarly contributions of the pieces you review, requiring you to demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills, including analysis and synthesis.

Reviews must be posted to course blog *no later than 6PM the day before class.*

Reflections: Everyone not assigned to review/present on a given date must provide two written reflections on each blog post. The first reflection must be done before we discuss the reading in class. The second reflection must be done before October 15 (if reading is assigned during the first half of the course) or December 5 (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 October 15 will be graded and feedback provided before midterm to give you a clear idea of the quality of your writing and suggestions for improvement.**

Web Log: Blog is short for web log, and you will use our course blog (or your personal blog, in the case of some graduate students) as a web log to summarize the articles you read for your research proposal. As you read articles, you will write posts summarizing the article in a way that is meaningful to you. Sometimes that will mean a complete summary of the article, others times it will simply pull out part of an article that relates to your research interest. You must indicate what about the article is of interest to you and how it relates to your own research proposal. You must use blog tags to highlight the salient aspects of your post, which is how you will be able to search for your posts later, as they accumulate. By logging your reading thus, you will integrate the material more deeply and accomplish much of the writing of your proposal well in advance of the deadlines. If you are unclear as to what I expect, John Hawks keeps an excellent web log ([johnhawks.net](http://johnhawks.net)), and I have modeled my own blogging after his ([Cheap Thrills thru Evolution](#)).

### **Class Participation:**

Presentations: Students assigned to post blog reviews 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 questions, and use these as a means of generating conversation.

Bring readings to class every week so you have them available for discussions.

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

*Except for the advance discussion questions, ALL take-home assignments are due by 11:59 PM on the date specified, and will be accepted only through the Blackboard dropbox created for that assignment. The official timestamp used by Blackboard will be used to determine whether an assignment is late or on time.*

## **Additional Expectations for ANT 574 Students**

There are several additional expectations for students enrolled in this class as ANT 574:

1. ANT 574 students will be required to conduct one more presentation than undergraduates in 474.
2. The research proposal will be 15-20 pages, rather than 8-12 pages.
3. ANT 574 students will be asked to select and read an additional article of their choice from current scientific literature, which is related to the topic of each day's class session, in advance of each class. Articles selected for this assignment should be original research reports rather than review articles whenever possible, published within the last 5 years. ANT 574 students will post a summary of these articles each week in the manner outlined above on the course or personal blog sites. When time permits, ANT 574 students may be asked to discuss their additional readings with the class and should come prepared to do so.
4. ANT 574 student blog commentaries should be longer and more detailed and should reference all readings (the ones assigned for the entire class and the one individually selected).
5. All assignments will be evaluated according to a standard appropriate for graduate-level coursework.

## **Grading Policy**

Blogging 45%

- Reviews 15%
- Commentaries 15%
- Web Log 15%

Presentation(s) 5%

Proposal 50%

- Topic 5%
- Outline 5%
- Proposal 15%
- Peer review 5%
- Revision 20%

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Because this is a writing course, to pass you **MUST** receive at least a passing grade in the final writing assignment, which is the research proposal revision. 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!*

## Policy on Missed Exams & Coursework

All article reviews and commentaries posted after the assigned date/time will still be accepted but will only be eligible for half credit. Advance discussion questions must be submitted on time even if you are excused from class. Additionally, comments/discussion questions must be posted before class for credit, though you are encouraged to continue dialogues on any and all blog posts.

However, two missed reading commentaries will be dropped from your grade (or, if none are missed, you will receive a course bonus point). Save these “free misses” to take care of emergencies that might arise.

Your topic, outline, proposal, peer review, and revision must be submitted electronically, using the appropriate Blackboard dropbox, by 11:59 pm on the day they are due for full credit. 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.

## Attendance Policy

This is a discussion-oriented class and attendance is required. Attendance will be monitored; unexcused absences will lower your grade. Classroom participation is an important requirement of the course, and it will figure in the final grade.

## Social Media

"Like" the UA Department of Anthropology ([www.facebook.com/UAAnthroDept](http://www.facebook.com/UAAnthroDept)) and the ALLELE series ([www.facebook.com/ALLELEseries](http://www.facebook.com/ALLELEseries)) on Facebook so that we can keep in touch with you and you can stay informed about our events and activities.

I also use Twitter as a way to share information during and between classes. We use hashtag #ant475. You can follow me [@Chris\\_Ly](https://twitter.com/Chris_Ly) and the department [@BamaAnthro](https://twitter.com/BamaAnthro).

*HOWEVER, it is extremely rude to be constantly texting or using your smartphone if you are not doing it for class. 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 course work, take it into the hallway or I will ask you to do so.*

## Extra Credit

You can receive extra credit by attending ALLELE events. I will award 2 points per event. Stay tuned for dates and instructions for receiving this credit.

Other opportunities may be announced

## Anthropology Major and Evolutionary Studies

This course fulfills an elective requirement in both the Anthropology major and Evolutionary Studies (EvoS) minor (<http://www.as.ua.edu/evolutionarystudies/>). If you are not an Anthropology major or minor and have not already decided to declare as such, we hope this course leads you to consider doing so. EvoS is an interdisciplinary minor, housed in the Department of Anthropology and is designed to introduce students to the fundamental importance of evolutionary theory as an explanatory model for life and behavior. This course fulfills an elective requirement in the EvoS minor. Other requirements of the minor include two capstone courses (including ANT 150 and ANT 450, offered every Spring), a 200-level course in the biological principles of evolution, and a foundational course in one of three disciplines. Minors are required to complete six elective hours in two separate disciplines.

This program is integrated with [UA's Evolution Working Group \(EVOWOG\) and its Alabama Lectures on Life's Evolution \(ALLELE\)](#) speaker series ("Like" us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/ALLELEseries](http://www.facebook.com/ALLELEseries) to stay informed!). You are strongly encouraged to attend the ALLELE lectures presented this semester. This minor is part of a larger EvoS Consortium, which includes approximately 42 other institutions worldwide, though we are only one of four full-fledged minors. We take pride in this fact, given that Alabama recently scored at the very bottom of the 50 states in teaching evolution at the k-12 levels (even worse than Mississippi!).

As part of the EvoS program, the students have started an [EvoS club](#) that hosts an annual [Darwin Day Colloquium](#). You are welcome to become part of this club whether you declare yourself an EvoS minor or simply maintain an abiding interest in evolutionary theory and its myriad applications and implications.

If you are interested in the EvoS minor (either to declare or for more information), contact either Dr. Lynn ([cdlynn@ua.edu](mailto:cdlynn@ua.edu)) or Dr. Rissler ([rissler@as.ua.edu](mailto:rissler@as.ua.edu)), who are co-directors of the program.

## Severe Weather Guidelines

The guiding principle at The University of Alabama is to promote the personal safety of our students, faculty and staff during severe weather events. It is impossible to develop policies which anticipate every weather-related emergency. These guidelines are intended to provide additional assistance for responding to severe weather on campus.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate life saving actions.

When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the [National Weather Service](#) and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take.

**The Office of University Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:**

- Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage
- Weather advisory sent out through UA Alerts to faculty, staff and students
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA-TV/WUOA-TV, and on the website at <http://wvuatv.com/content/weather>. WVUA-TV Home Team Weather provides a free service you can subscribe to which allows you to receive weather warnings for Tuscaloosa via e-mail or cell phone. Check <http://wvuatv.com/content/free-email-weather-alerts> for more details and to sign up for weather alerts.

In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar; sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

## Disability Statement

If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary.

If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call (205) 348-4285 (Voice) or (205) 348-3081 (TTY) or visit 133-B Martha Parham Hall East to register for services. Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are welcome to make an appointment to see me during office hours. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services, 133-B Martha Parham Hall East, before receiving academic adjustments.

## Policy on Academic Misconduct

All students in attendance at The University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University of Alabama expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. At the beginning of each semester and on examinations and projects, the professor, department, or division may require that each student sign the following Academic Honor Pledge: “I promise or affirm that I will not at any time be involved with cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation while enrolled as a student at The University of Alabama. I have read the Academic Honor Code, which explains disciplinary procedure resulting from the aforementioned. I understand that violation of this code will result in penalties as severe as indefinite suspension from the University.”

See the [Code of Student Conduct](#) for more information.

## Emergency Contact Information

UA's primary communication tool for sending out information is through its web site at [www.ua.edu](http://www.ua.edu). In the event of an emergency, students should consult this site for further directions. Additional course information will be posted using Blackboard Learn.