ASM 246x - Human Origins

I. COURSE OVERVIEW

In this introductory 8-week, three-credit lecture course, we will guide you through an exploration of the scientific evidence for the evolution of humans and our fossil relatives, and humankind's place in the natural world. This includes an introduction to evolutionary theory, an overview of the hominin fossil record and what that record teaches us about our place in nature. Dr. Donald Johanson, a world-renowned paleoanthropologist who found the skeleton known as Lucy will present an exciting in-depth exploration of paleoanthropological field research from his unique perspective.

Learning Objectives and Topics

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Outline the nature of science and explain how scientific research is conducted.
- Identify humans' place in the natural world from taxonomic/phylogenetic perspectives.
- Define the role of paleoanthropologist in human origins research.
- Identify how paleoanthropologists use the scientific method to formulate hypotheses and strategically conduct research.
- Articulate differences between scientific evidence for human evolution and non-scientific, non-testable, explanations for human origins.

II. WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AND TIME COMMITMENT

Class preparation means completing the assigned readings and reviewing all information required for that week. Attendance in an online course means logging into edX on a regular basis and participating in all of the activities that are posted.

This 8-week, three-credit course requires 135 hours of student work. Therefore, expect to spend approximately 18 hours per week (over 7 weeks) preparing for and actively participating in this course. Week 8 contains the final exam only.

Course Content and Assignments

Video and Audio

Lectures from your instructional team on specific topics, designed to help you learn key concepts.

Readings

Our course makes use of open educational resources (OERs), no purchase necessary. You will find required weekly readings on the subject matter, along with possible optional items.

Graded Assignments

Graded assignments are required, and count toward the final grade for ID Verified students planning to earn either credit or a verified certificate. Students *must* submit *all* assignments via the edX platform unless otherwise instructed. Each assessment has submission instructions.

Quizzes - 30%: There are **7** quizzes, one each week. Each quiz is open book, but must be completed by you (see the Academic Integrity section). The quizzes are multiple choice and based on the week's readings, lectures, and video materials. The seven quizzes are 30% of your total grade. You may take a quiz at any time during the week but must complete it by the stipulated deadline.

Midterm Exam - 20%: The midterm is 20% of your total grade and covers content from weeks 1 through 3. It is a proctored exam. (Proctoring is required for ID Verified students interested in pursuing credit. More information follows below, as well as in both the "Before the Course Begins" and in the "Midterm Exam Overview" sections of the course.)

Final Exam - 25%: The final exam is 25% of your total grade and covers content from weeks 4 through 7. Like the midterm, it is a proctored exam. (Again, proctoring is required for ID Verified students interested in pursuing credit. More information follows below, as well as in both the "Before the Course Begins" and in the "Final Exam Overview" sections of the course.)

Content Mastery - 25%: There are **7** interactive, content mastery exercises, at the rate of one per week. You must reach **level 0.1** on each interactive content mastery exercise to receive credit.

Ungraded Assignments

These assignments are optional but strongly encouraged in order to maximize your learning, as well as interaction with your peers and course team.

Reflection Boards: These optional discussion boards are for general questions about the topics in each week. It is a good place to ask questions about concepts, due dates, assignments, technology issues, and other items related to this course. These boards are monitored, but are mostly a chance for you to interact with one another.

Introductions: Please visit the "Introduce Yourself" subsection located in "Before the Course Begins," to tell the course team and class a little bit about yourself, your community, and your origins, in the course's Introductions Discussion Forum. *Please note that there are no extra credit assignments or points awarded in this course.*

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND COMMUNICATION

Course Requirements

Recommended Prior Knowledge: To be successful in this course, we recommend English language fluency and computer literacy.

Online Course Requirements: You will find all content and learning activities within the edX platform. There will be at least one, optional, live session via YouTube Live. (Live session(s) are recorded, and students can watch after the initial broadcast.) All course interactions use Internet technologies. It is your responsibility to watch all required videos and assigned readings, and complete all graded assessments (quizzes, exams, and Content Mastery exercises.) You are encouraged to interact with your peers and course team in the discussion forums, and ask questions there as well.

Course Communication

All communication will take place in discussion boards, course updates, and on the course home page.

Each week, there will be a dedicated discussion board where you can post general questions and comments about the subject matter, as well as direct inquiries for the instructor and course team. Please use this forum to ensure timely response.

IV. STUDENT EVALUATION

Here is the breakdown of your grade:

Item (number)	Weight	Verified/Proctored
Weekly Quizzes - Weeks 1-7	30%	No
Content Mastery (7)	25%	No
Midterm (1)	20%	Yes Proctored (ID

		Verified) No for Auditing Students
Final Exam (1)	25%	Yes Proctored (ID Verified) No for Auditing Students

Final grades are based on the number of points you earn on the course activities listed above. There is no extra credit available. You can see your percentage of the total points to date on your edX progress page. Final scores will be absolute as follows: 90% or better will receive an A, 80% or better a B, 70% or better a C, below 70% is a failing grade. There will be no + or - added to grades.

EdX does not supply a letter grade. **You must pass the course with a grade of C (70%) or higher, and be on the ID verified track, in order to be either eligible for credit from Arizona State University or receive a verified certificate.** Please note that exams that fail the proctoring review will result in an assignment grade of 0. A student earning an overall grade of a C or higher who fails proctoring is not eligible for a certificate. If your proctored exam is marked suspicious, you have up to 75 days from when you completed the exam to appeal the decision. After that time, appeals will not be accepted or reviewed.

*Note: You have **up to one year to purchase credit** after you become eligible. Please see Section IX, below, "Taking this Course for ASU Credit or edX Verified Certificate," for specifics on fees and deadlines.*

V. GFA POLICIES

Assignment Deadlines: This is an online course. Your instructional team will provide all content and learning activities on our edX platform. All course interactions will use Internet technologies; it is your responsibility to review all content, fulfill all assignments on time, and ask any questions you have in our designated discussion area.

Late assignments will not be accepted at any point during the course. We recommend that you establish your time management schedule for this course during the first two days that the course is open to meet all course obligations.

For time management tips, sign up for the [GFA Orientation course](#) and review the Time Management section. Please also review our "Tips for Student Success" video in the "Before the Course Begins" section.

Subject to Change Notice: This syllabus is to be used as a guide only. Information contained here, such as assignments, grading scales, deadlines, and other materials are subject to change. It is your responsibility to read the course announcements regularly to be aware of any changes or updates in the course.

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is expected of all students in all coursework and exams. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification, and dismissal. For more information, review ASU's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and [edX's Terms of Service](#).

VI. UTC TIME ZONE

To accommodate students from across the globe, all deadlines are posted in UTC time, the global standard. Please see the "Course Information and Support" or "Important Deadlines" subsections in "Before the Course Begins" for a detailed explanation.

Remember, it is your responsibility to understand UTC and determine the due dates and times for your timezone. Make sure you address this, ideally before the first set of assignments is due, and definitely before the midterm, to avoid any

unnecessary stress. **Deadline extensions will *NOT* be granted for misunderstanding UTC time.**

VII. GENERAL AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

This course is best accessed by a reasonably modern browser on a laptop or desktop computer. Course videos can be accessed using the edX app for iPhone and Android. For more information about mobile, review [edX on the Go](#)**.**

Students who are interested in taking the course for credit will need additional computer requirements and skills to access the remote proctor service. Please see the [Software Secure](#) site, which details Proctor Now's requirements.

If you are not certain about your system, it is highly recommended that you complete the practice proctored exam to confirm system compatibility.

VIII. GENERAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Student Support and General Technical Issues: Please access the [edX Help Center](#) for solutions to common problems. Please also be sure to review our "Before the Course Begins" section for further information. If you are still experiencing issues, you can reach out to [gfa@edx.org](#).

Accessibility: If you are a student with a disability, and you would like to request an accommodation, please send an email to [accessibility@edx.org](#).

Proctoring: For students taking the midterm and final exams proctored, please do the following to address any technical issues:

1. Contact our proctoring partner, Software Secure, at 1-855-436-2039 for US and Canada and 1-617-658-2879 for International (Outside US and Canada).

2. Send an email to edX at gfa@edx.org.

Both Software Secure and edX must be informed of the issue to ensure resolution.

Please put "Problem with proctored exam" in the subject line. Also, provide as much information as possible, including screenshots, error messages, and urgency due to upcoming deadlines.

IX. TAKING THIS COURSE FOR ASU CREDIT OR edX VERIFIED CERTIFICATE

ASU Credit: Students wishing to take this course for ASU credit are required to do the following:
- ID verify by the deadline
- Opt in to proctoring for **both the midterm and final exams**
- Pass the course with a C or better (70% or higher)

Verified Certificate: Students wishing to take this course for a verified certificate are required to do the following:
- ID Verify by the deadline
- Pass the course with a C or better (70% or higher)

Cost: The course is 3 credits.
- ID verification: $49 USD/course
- Credit: $600 USD/course.

Please note that exams that fail the proctoring review will result in an assignment grade of 0. A student earning an overall grade of a C or higher who fails proctoring is not eligible for a certificate. If your proctored exam is marked suspicious, you have up to 75 days from when you completed the exam to appeal the decision. After that time, appeals will not be accepted or reviewed.

Important: Provided you have met all requirements for this course, you can purchase credit ($600 USD) from ASU for **up to one year** after you become credit eligible.

Your date of eligibility **may differ** from the course end date or the date certificates are issued. Please visit your course progress page, specifically the "Requirements for Course Credit" section, to see the status of your credit eligibility.

Please review "Credit Eligibility and Proctoring" in your "Before the Course Begins" section for additional details.

Note: Potential limitations of internet connectivity by some countries are beyond the control of Arizona State University and may limit the ability of an ID Verified student residing in those countries to complete all the assessments, and therefore potentially impede the eligibility to earn college credit. Students impacted by such limitations should contact gfa@edx.org.