

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

INSTITUTE OF ANTHROPOLOGY, GENDER AND AFRICAN STUDIES

NAF 104: INTRODUCTION TO PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY (2013/2014)

Instructor: Mulu Muia **E-mail:** mulu.muia@uonbi.ac.ke **Credit Hours:** 3

Venue: ED 1 (Education Building) **Office Hours:** Wed/Thur 2pm-5pm.

Introduction

This course explains the origins and development of humans including physical evolution and cultural development. It also examines fossil and archeological evidence of human evolution.

Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- ✓ Explain the relation of physical anthropology to the other fields of anthropology and to other sciences.
- ✓ Explain the focus of each of the subfields of physical anthropology
- ✓ Present a brief history of the development of evolutionary thought.
- ✓ Explain the major principles and mechanisms of biological evolution.
- ✓ Discuss the relation between human physical characteristics and cultural development

Major topics to be covered

1. The relation of physical anthropology to the other fields of anthropology
2. Biological evolutionary theory
3. Early theories of Evolution/Pre-Darwin Theorists
4. Modern Theories of Evolution/Darwin and Natural Selection
5. Mechanisms of Evolution (Mutation, natural selection, gene flow, genetic drift [small population size effects], and recombination)
6. Primate Behaviour (Social structure, adaptations of group living, communication)
7. Early Hominin Evolution (Discovery of early hominins, analysis of early hominins)
8. Early Human Evolution (Early transitional humans, *Homo erectus*, climate change and human evolution, early human culture)
9. Evolution of Modern Humans (*Homo heidelbergensis*, *Neandertals*, archaic human culture, early modern *Homo sapiens*, early modern human culture)
10. Modern Human Variation (Models of classification, Distribution of blood types)
11. Modern Human Adaptability (Adapting to climate extremes, adapting to high altitude, skin colour adaptation, nutritional adaptation)

Recommended readings

Jurmain, R. 2001. *Essentials of physical anthropology* 4th Edition. Australia. Wadsworth.

Feder, Kenneth L. and Park, Michael Alan. 2001. *Human antiquity : an introduction to physical anthropology and archaeology* 4th Edition. London : Mayfield Publishing Company.

Other readings will be provided as the need arises.