

ASM 246: Human Origins



Overview

The course will take you on a fascinating journey through the scientific evidence for human evolution. Dr. Donald Johanson, the paleoanthropologist who found the famous skeleton “Lucy,” will guide you through an overview of the hominin fossil record as well as introduce you to evolutionary theory. Take advantage of this unprecedented opportunity to dive deeper into the world of paleoanthropological field research from Dr. Johanson’s perspective.

Course Prerequisites and Requirements

To be successful in this course, we recommend English language fluency and computer literacy. We also encourage you to make sure your laptop or desktop computer meets the technical requirements.

What You’ll Learn

- 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 paleoanthropologists 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

Transcript

This course appears on your transcript identically to how it appears on the transcript of an enrolled ASU student who has taken the course on one of ASU’s campuses.

This course satisfies 3 credit hours toward the Social-Behavioral Sciences (SB) General Studies requirement at Arizona State University. It is strongly encouraged that you consult with your institution of choice to determine how these credits will be applied to their degree requirements prior to transferring your credit.

Exams and Grading

30%

Quizzes (8)

15%

Midterm Exam

30%

Final Exam

25%

Content Mastery (7)

Creators

Donald C. Johanson

Founding Director, Institute of Human Origins Virginia M. Ullman
Chair in Human Origins
Professor, School of Human Evolution and Social Change

Donald C. Johanson is the Founding Director of the Institute of Human Origins now located at Arizona State University in the School of Human Evolution and Social Change. For the past 45 years he has conducted field and laboratory research in paleoanthropology. He is best known for his discovery of the 3.18 million year old hominid skeleton from Ethiopia, popularly known as “Lucy.”



Through grants from the National Science Foundation, the L.S.B Leakey Foundation and the National Geographic Society, Johanson has carried out field research in Ethiopia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and Tanzania. He is an Honorary Board Member of the Explorers Club, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, a member of many other professional organizations and recipient of several international prizes and awards.

In addition to his scholarly contributions, he has co authored some 7 books including the widely read “Lucy: The Beginnings of Humankind” and most recently “Lucy’s Legacy: The Quest for Human Origins.” He hosted and narrated the three part NOVA television series In Search of Human Origins seen by more than 100 million people worldwide. Johanson is a frequent lecturer at university and other forums in the United States and abroad.

Sara Marsteller

Lecturer,
School of Human Evolution and Social Change

Sara Marsteller is a teaching postdoctoral scholar in the School of Human Evolution and Social Change at Arizona State University. She received her Ph.D. in Anthropology from the Arizona State University in 2015. A bioarchaeologist, Marsteller is broadly trained in methods and theory in biological anthropology, archaeology, and cultural anthropology and specializes in online anthropology course development and instruction. In her research, Marsteller uses biological and chemical data from archaeological human skeletal remains to reconstruct past human behavior and social relationships. Her current project in Lima, Peru, focuses on patterns of diet and residential mobility to investigate how the Wari and Inka Empires influenced local communities in this important regional hub in the Central Andes.

