



University of Nicosia, Cyprus

Course Code BIOL-402	Course Title Human Biology and Culture	ECTS 6
Department Life and Health Sciences	Semester Spring	Prerequisites BIOL-205, -206 Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II; PSY-110, -111 General Psychology I, II
Type of Course Health Sciences Elective	Field Biology	Language of Instruction English
Level of Course 1 st Level	Year of Study 3 rd	Lecturer Dr. Stylianos Stellios
Mode of Delivery face-to-face	Work Placement N/A	Co-requisites None

Objectives of the Course:

The aim of this course is to give a theoretical framework to help students understand the interplay of biology and culture by exploring aspects of modern human biology, behavior and culture from an evolutionary perspective, and by discussing the adaptive significance of key biological traits that form the basis of the diversity in human life, behavior and culture.

The main objectives of the course are to:

- Make students aware of how natural selection has influenced the development of characteristics and biological traits, which have contributed to cultural human diversity.
- Provide a factual understanding of how environmental stressors, culture and society affect human biology, nutrition and health.
- Discuss the biological mechanisms and adaptive process operating at individual and population levels, including fertility and birth spacing strategies.
- Discuss the concepts of sex and gender and how cultural and social aspects influence gender role and the roles of man vs. Woman in various societies.
- Provide an overview of global diversity in cultural beliefs and behaviour.
- Enable students to develop communication and writing skills.

Learning Outcomes:

After completion of the course students are expected to be able to:

1. Use evolutionary perspectives in the context of biological continuity including human language and brain development, to assess aspects of human behavior

- and culture.
2. Examine the interrelationships between biomedical, sociocultural, and ecological factors, and their influence on the ability of humans to respond to variability.
 3. Describe and explain the social and cultural similarities and differences including technology, traditions, kinship, language, and social roles as well as the biological consequences of inequality and of collisions between biology and culture.
 4. Critically examine the beliefs on differences between sexes and the interrelations between biology and culture on certain behaviours such as mating, parental investment, subsistence, aggressiveness, and risk-taking.
 5. Explain and discuss the concepts of gender, racism and class, and discuss racial and class prejudice, explain its functions in society and the lack of scientific validity.
 6. Discuss the issues of biological vs. environmental determinism and the role of cultural selection, modern genetics and behaviour.
 7. Recognize some of the cultural conditions that constitute templates and frameworks that shape common beliefs, and practices.
 8. Use supportive evidence from a range of scholarly sources to critically debate or write for or against, a relevant topic or proposition in the field.

Course Contents:

1. Human biology and prehistoric culture
2. How diversity in nature and culture makes us humans
3. Body and behaviour
4. Biology and culture in the evolution of brain and language
5. Intelligence, diet, culture and individualized societies
6. The role of biology in beliefs and perceptions
7. Race and racisms; Eugenics and Culture
8. Genes, Cultures and the human prospect
9. Asymmetry in Biology and Culture
10. Sex differences and Culture
11. How Biology and culture shape the way we parent
12. Phylogenetics and the cultural basis for mental illness
13. The biological consequences of inequality
14. Collisions between biology and Culture

Learning Activities and Teaching Methods:

Lectures, discussions of scientific literature, independent and cooperative learning.

Assessment Methods:

Assignments, Tests and Mid-term Exam; Final Exam

Required Textbooks/Reading:

Authors	Title	Publisher	Year	ISBN
1. N.	Concepts of biology;	Prentice-Hall	2000	ISBN: 013166

Dollison Buffaloe	a cultural perspective			
2. P.R. Ehrlich	Human Natures: Genes, Cultures, and the Human Prospect	Penguin	2002	ISBN:0142000531

Recommended Textbooks/Reading:

Authors	Title	Publisher	Year	ISBN
P. Weingart, P.J. Richerson, S.D. Mitchell, S. Maasen	Human by Nature: Between Biology and the Social Sciences	Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc	1997	ISBN: 0805821546
P. J. Richerson, Robert Boyd	Not By Genes Alone: How Culture Transformed Human Evolution	Univer sity Of Chicago	1 st edition 2004	ISBN-10: 0226712842
L. H. Ginsberg, L. Nackerud, C. R. Larrison	Human Biology for Social Workers	Pearson	2004	ISBN-10: 0-205- 34405-4
Meredith Small	Our Babies, Ourselves: How Biology and Culture Shape the Way We Parent	New York : Anchor Books,	1 st ed. 1998	ISBN-10: 0385482574
R. G. Klein	The Dawn of Human Culture	Wiley;	1 st ed. 2002	ISBN-10: 0471252522
L. Stone P. F. Lurquin, L. Luca Cavalli-Sforza	Genes, Culture, and Human Evolution: A Synthesis	Wiley- Blackwell;	1 st edition 2006	ISBN-10: 1405131667
C. Stanford, J. S. Allen B001ILFOX5 S. C. Anton	Exploring Biological Anthropology: The Essentials	Prenti ce Hall; 1 st ed.	20 07	ISBN-10: 0132288575
Andrea S. Wiley B001H6RSQ0 John S. Allen	Medical Anthropology: A Biocultural Approach	Oxfor d University Press, USA	20 08	ISBN-10: 0195308832