ANTH 357
THE HUMAN ANIMAL

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Alison Macintosh

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
A central question in anthropology is “Why are humans the way we are?” Human evolutionary biology examines how evolutionary forces have shaped human growth and development, anatomy, biology, genetics, and behaviour. From an evolutionary biology perspective, we can ask several questions, which will form the basis of this course:

• What are the selective factors operating over the course of human evolution that have shaped modern humans in terms of our genetics, metabolism, anatomy, and behaviour?
• What are the genetic, physiological, developmental, and ecological bases of human phenotypic variability and diversity?
• How do social and cultural factors interact with genetic and environmental factors to contribute to problems in modern human health that we face today?

In this course, we will explore topics in human evolutionary biology related to the evolution of human life history, ontogeny, and biological plasticity. The potential for mismatch between our species' evolutionary environment and our modern environment will be a central theme.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Students in this course will learn to:

• perceive the importance of both our evolutionary history and our environment (ecological and social) in shaping human life history, phenotypic variation, behaviour, and metabolic health
• think critically about evolutionary explanations as they are applied to human diversity and health
• identify and integrate ideas and evidence presented in the human evolutionary biology literature