ANTH 501: Primate Behavioral Ecology

PREREQUISITES: ANTH 301, ANTH 355, or equivalent

** Please note that this is an advanced course in primatology, meaning that I expect you to already be familiar with the taxonomy, distribution, and overall morphological and behavioral features of the primate order. If you are concerned about your preparedness for the course, please see me ASAP. **

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Erin P. Riley
Email: epriley@mail.sdsu.edu
Office: AL 457; Phone: 619.594.8628
Office hours: T 11 – 12 pm, Th 12 – 1 pm, or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW:
The primary focus of this course is the application of behavioral ecology theory to the study of primate behavior and ecology. Behavioral ecology examines the responses of animals to their environment using an evolutionary perspective: How and why did a given behavior evolve? How does this behavior contribute to survival and reproduction? At the same time, because this is an anthropology course, we will contextualize the study of primatology within the broader field of anthropology by exploring the history and nature of field primatology and its application in the realm of conservation.

The course is divided into three phases, each with a blended classroom format (i.e., lecture, discussion, and hands-on activities). The three phases are: 1. Introduction to primate behavioral ecology; 2. Theorizing in primatology; and 3. Doing, interpreting, and applying primatology. In the first phase, we will cover the development of the field of primatology and its place in anthropology, and examine the key tenets of behavioral ecology theory. In the second phase, we will explore three major topical areas in primate behavioral ecology: explaining primate social systems, evolution and sex, and primate community ecology. The final phase will entail you developing skills in primate behavioral observation (at the San Diego Zoo) and critically examining the nature of fieldwork in anthropological primatology.

Because this is a split upper division undergraduate-graduate course, I expect a high level of participation from everyone. This course will only be successful if everyone comes prepared for class. Therefore, please structure your time well so that you can not only complete all of the readings before class but also have sufficient time to think about them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course, you will be able to:
(1) Explain how the study of nonhuman primates fits within the broader field of anthropology.
(2) Critically evaluate the major theoretical perspectives used in primatology.
(3) Apply methods in primatology to observe primate behavior.
(4) Review and critically assess scientific research publications in primatology.
(5) Develop and hone your scientific writing and oral presentation skills.
BLACKBOARD (BB)
This course is a web facilitated course, using Blackboard. All students can access the course Blackboard using their SDSU red ID login and password at https://blackboard.sdsu.edu/webapps/login.

- I regularly send emails through Blackboard to the class. Therefore, please be sure to frequently check the email address associated with your BB account.

REQUIRED TEXTS


(3) We will also read primary literature in primatology. These readings will be posted as pdfs on Blackboard under “Readings” (see course schedule)

* NOTE: Also required is a College Study Pass to the San Diego Zoo (cost = $25) *

BUYING YOUR BOOKS AT AMAZON?
If you buy your texts through Amazon, please remember to access Amazon using the link on the American Society of Primatologists webpage. A portion of the proceeds will support primate conservation!

Here's the link: https://www.asp.org/index.cfm

RECOMMENDED TEXTS
I highly recommend that you purchase the following texts to assist you in the development of your papers—these will be useful THROUGHOUT your careers (trust me!)

- *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing)* by Kate L. Turabian (Paperback - April 1, 1996)
- *The Curious Case of the Misplaced Modifier: How to Solve the Mysteries of Weak Writing* by Bonnie Trenga (Hardback, August 2006)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Your overall grade for this course will be based on five components:

- Leading discussion = 15%
- Class participation = 30%
- Class presentation = 10%
- Zoo project = 15%
- Position paper = 30%
Leading Discussion (15%)
Each week (weeks 4 – 9 & 12 – 16) a team of students (# contingent on final class size) will lead-off our discussion of the week’s assigned readings. Here are some guidelines for how to lead discussion:
- Please note that leading discussion does mean simply summarizing readings. Instead, begin with a brief statement of the primary theme(s) covered in the readings. Keep this brief as the assumption is that everyone has completed the readings.
- The bulk of the discussion should then address the key points/issues raised in the readings, including the apparent agendas of the authors, critiques of the readings (i.e., strengths, weaknesses, problems with the data/methods etc.), and how the readings contribute to primatology and anthropology, in general.
  - For example, present opposing views on a subject in order to foster debate. See tips below.
- Feel free to be creative in how you structure the discussion (e.g., create an exercise or assignment for the class to work through or show a video clip that addresses the themes of the reading and stimulates discussion).

Class preparation and participation (30%):
In-class participation: I expect you to actively participate in each week’s discussion. This means that I expect each and every student to have read and thought about all of the assigned readings before coming to class.
- Your participation grade will be based on the quality (and thus, not necessarily the quantity) and relevancy of your contributions to discussion; that is, are you thinking critically about class topics?

Class preparation assignment: In order to demonstrate your preparation for class (weeks 2 – 9, 12 – 16) you will submit a one-page written document in which you:
- Discuss 2 key points/ideas/themes covered in the readings
- Formulate 2 discussion questions
  - Please note that your discussion questions should reflect your thinking analytically and critically about the readings (NOT what you don’t understand about the topic).

TIPS
Here are some things to keep in mind when reading the material and formulating your discussion questions:
- What is theme of the readings?
- How do the readings link with previous week’s readings?
- What are the apparent agendas of the authors?
- What are the broader implications of the research?
- Are there any flaws in the logic and/or methodology used by the authors?
- What theoretical position or point of view is the author trying to advocate? Is it implicit or explicit?
- How does the article/research fit within the broader theoretical context? What are its contributions?
- How does the article contribute to the field of primatology? Does is advance the discipline?
- Does the reading have relevance beyond primatology? (that is, for broader field of anthropology, other disciplines?)
Class Presentation (10%)
During weeks 4 – 9, and 15 - 16, one or more students will give a presentation on a topic related to the week’s assigned readings (and on their assigned species or genus). The presentations should be 12 minutes long, prepared in Powerpoint (or similar program), and should provide both a review and a critical analysis of the key literature on the topic.

- Undergraduates must consult at least three (3) primary literature sources (beyond assigned class readings) in preparation for your presentation.
- Graduate students must consult at least five (5) primary literature sources (beyond assigned class readings) in preparation for your presentation.
- Be sure to reference the literature within the presentation, and include a references slide at the end of your presentation (using APA format: [http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa](http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa)).
- A pdf of your presentation must be uploaded to Blackboard the week of your presentation.


To help you prepare your oral presentation, please be sure to consult the following sources (posted as pdfs on BB under Course Docs)

- American Society of Primatologists (ASP 2007) Guidelines for giving an effective oral presentation
- Davis 2005, Ch. 16: The Oral Presentation

Zoo project (15%)
Early in the semester I will assign you a primate species to observe. I expect you to spend the semester “getting to know” your species by spending time at the zoo observing them on your own. We will meet as a class at the zoo on Wed, Nov 6th at 12:30 pm to conduct formal observations.

- The project will require: observations of primate behavior and a formal write-up. I will provide more details later in the semester.
- To prepare you for this assignment we will cover *Methods in Observing Behavior & Scientific Research* in class on Wed, October 30th.
- The San Diego Zoo offers discounted passes for students ($25) which are good for the semester. You can pick up your pass at the Guest Relations booth at the zoo—be sure to bring your student ID!
- This project will be due by noon (in the main Anthro office, AL 448) on Wed, November 27th

Position Paper (30%)
This assignment will give you a chance to explore in more depth an issue, question, or controversy raised in the readings and our discussion throughout the semester. In this paper, you will describe your chosen issue/question/controversy and outline your position on it based on a critical evaluation of the literature. I expect you to incorporate additional scholarly research beyond the assigned readings. Remember that this paper
should not simply be a literature review. The purpose of the paper is for you to develop skills in organizing your ideas about a topic/issue and effectively defend your position on it. Your paper will not be graded on the position you take, but rather on how effectively you present and defend that issue. In-text citations and the reference list should follow the APA style (http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa). Due: Wednesday, December 18th at noon in Anthro main office, AL 448.

- Undergraduates: must consult a minimum of five (5) primary literature sources beyond course readings; paper length = 5 pages, double-spaced, 12pt font, 1 inch margins
- Graduate students: must consult a minimum of ten (10) primary literature sources beyond course readings; paper length = 10 pages, double-spaced, 12pt font, 1 inch margins

To ensure you are on the right track with this assignment, I expect you to:

1. Consult the following sources on how to plan & write a research paper
   - http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/kingch/how_to_write_a_research_paper.htm
   - Davis 2005, ch. 4: Searching & reviewing scientific literature (pdf on BB under Readings & Course Docs)

2. Submit a preliminary proposal (Due: October 30th, in class)
   - Statement of your research topic and brief outline of material to cover
   - Initial bibliography (Undergrads: at least 3 primary sources; Grads: at least 5 primary sources)

ASSESSMENT/GRADING
Your grade for class participation will be based on how actively you participate and the quality & depth of your class preparation assignments. In-class participation will be graded as follows:
60 & below = rarely, if ever, contribute; 70 = occasional participation, but generally non-substantive, adding little new information; 80 = occasional participation, but generally well thought out, useful contributions; 90 = regular participation, mostly useful; 100 = regular participation, usually useful.

Your grade for leading discussion will be based on your ability to effectively summarize and synthesize the readings, and your ability to stimulate discussion.

Your papers will be graded on: the quality & depth of the discussion of the issue/controversy/question, how well you defend your position, and the clarity, style, and succinctness of your writing.

** I will provide scoring rubrics for your oral presentations, leading of discussion, and position papers (to be posted on BB).

I am very strict about sloppy writing. Never turn in a paper that you have not already checked, double-checked, better still, triple-checked for spelling and grammatical errors. Not so good at proofreading? Have one of your peers proofread it for you!
Final grades in the course will be assigned to the following scales, based on percentages:

- \( A = 93 - 100; \ A- = 90 - 92.9; \ B+ = 87 - 89.9; \ B = 83 - 86.9; \ B- = 80 - 82.9; \ C+ = 77 - 79.9; \ C = 73 - 76.9; \ C- = 70 - 72.9; \ D+ = 67 - 69.9; \ D = 63 - 66.9; \ D- = 60 - 62.9; \ F < 60 \)

COURSE POLICIES

- **Attendance policy:** Class attendance is mandatory. A large percentage of your grade is based on your participation in class, so you will not do well in this course if you do not come to class. Please understand that if you do miss class, you are responsible for the missed material (including any handouts given and/or announcements made). I would recommend borrowing notes from a classmate, as I do not hand-out or post lecture notes or powerpoints. In order for an absence to be excused, you must provide formal documentation of severe illness, injury, or family emergency.

- **Classroom behavior:**
  - You are expected to complete the readings and assignments before coming to class. I also expect all students to participate during discussions and in-class exercises.
  - Please be on time. It is extremely disrupting for the instructor and other students when students arrive late to class (AND to leave early).
  - Please do not have conversations with other classmates once the lectures begin, except those that are a part of our class discussions. Personal conversations are distracting for both myself and your fellow classmates, so please be courteous.
  - Please turn off and secure all electronic entertainment devices (i.e., cell phones, iPods, etc.) prior to the start of class. If you are using your cell phone or using your laptop to check email/FB/etc. in class, you are missing out on a lot of information. SO, it's in YOUR best interest to just put your them away.

- **Late Papers:** Papers turned in late (only in person) will receive a 5 percentage point deduction for each day they are late. I will not accept late class participation assignments.

- **Email:** Email is the best way to get in touch with me. However, please keep in the mind the following points on email etiquette:
  - Please check your syllabus first for information BEFORE you email me. If you have questions about the course, it is likely that the information is in the syllabus.
  - Be sure to keep your questions concise and specific. If you have a problem with the material, please come see me during office hours as it will be easier for us to address the issue in person.
  - Please be formal and respectful in your emails, and most certainly, do not vent to me via email. Come talk to me!
  - Please be patient with email communication. I receive many emails a day, but do know that I will get back to as soon as I can.

- **Academic Dishonesty:** I will not tolerate academic dishonesty in this course. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarizing, unauthorized collaborating on course work, letting students copy your work, stealing course examinations or materials, falsifying records or data, or intentionally assisting another individual in any of the above. Please familiarize yourself with SDSU’s policies ASAP at the following websites: [http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/judicial/detailsMisconduct.html](http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/judicial/detailsMisconduct.html) and [http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/judicial/CheatingDisruption.html](http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/judicial/CheatingDisruption.html). Students who engage in ANY form of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” for the course grade and will be
reported to the Anthropology Department’s Undergraduate Coordinator and SDSU’s Judicial Coordinator, who will then take appropriate action.

- **Physical and Learning Disabilities**: If you have a disability that impedes your learning or test taking, please visit Student Disabilities Services, located in Calpulli Center, Suite 3100 (third floor). Student Disabilities Services is responsible for providing appropriate academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Their website is: http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/dss/dss_home.html

- **Athletes**: Please know that it is **your responsibility** to discuss with me your athletic schedule by the second week of the semester (at the latest) to ensure that you will be able to complete all required assignments.
## COURSE SCHEDULE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Discussion Leader</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I. Introduction to Primate Behavioral Ecology</strong></td>
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| Week 1: Aug 28<sup>th</sup> | Introduction to course  
Scientific reading & writing  
Readings:  
- Strier, Ch. 2  
- Reading a scientific paper (pdf)  
- Lertzman 1995 - Notes on writing papers & theses (pdf)  
- Davis 2005, ch. 4: Searching & reviewing scientific literature (pdf) | Riley             |           |
| Week 2: Sept 4<sup>th</sup> | The Development of Primatology  
Readings:  
- Strier, Ch. 1  
- MacClancy & Fuentes, Ch. 4 (Sussman)  
- Hooton 1955: Importance of primate studies (pdf)  
- Washburn 1973: The promise of primatology (pdf)  
- Strier 2011: Why anthropology needs primatology (pdf) | Graduate students | NA        |
| Week 3: Sept 11<sup>th</sup> | What is Behavioral Ecology?  
Readings:  
- Strier, Ch. 4 & 6  
- Donati et al. 2009: Proximate & ultimate determinants of cathemeral activity in brown lemurs (pdf) | Riley             |           |
| **II. Theorizing in Primatology** |                                                                      |                   |
| Week 4: Sept 18<sup>th</sup> | Explaining Primate Social Systems, part 1: The Socioecological Model  
Readings:  
- Strier, Ch. 7 (168 – 188)  
- Thierry 2008: Primate socioecology—the lost dream of ecological determinism (pdf)  
- Clutton-Brock & Janson 2012: Primate socioecology at the crossroads—past, present, and future (pdf) |                   |           |
| Week 5: Sept 25<sup>th</sup> | Explaining Primate Social Systems, part 2: Socioecology & Anthropogenic Factors  
Readings:  
- Strier, Ch. 7 (pp. 189 – 195)  
- Sinha 2005: Ecology proposes, behavior disposes (pdf)  
- Hockings et al. 2012: Socioecological adaptations by chimpanzees inhabiting an anthropogenically impacted habitat (pdf) |                   |           |
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<tr>
<th>Week 6: Oct 2(^{nd})</th>
<th>Explaining Primate Social systems, part 3: Male Social Strategies</th>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strier, Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strum 1982: Agonistic dominance in male baboons—an alternative view (pdf)</td>
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<td>- van Hooff &amp; van Schaik 1994: Male bonds—affiliative relationships among nonhuman primate males (pdf)</td>
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<td>- Schülke et al. 2010: Social bonds enhance reproductive success in male macaques (pdf)</td>
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<th>Week 7: Oct 9(^{th})</th>
<th>Evolution &amp; Sex, part 1: Sexual Selection &amp; Mate Choice</th>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strier, Ch. 5 (pp. 113 – 119, 136 – 144)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Palombit et al. 2001: Female-female competition for male “friends” in chacma baboons (pdf)</td>
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<td>- Stumpf &amp; Boesch 2006: The efficacy of female choice in chimpanzees (pdf)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 8: Oct 16(^{th})</th>
<th>Evolution &amp; Sex, part 2: Mating Patterns &amp; the Evolution of Monogamy</th>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strier, Ch. 5 (pp. 119 – 136)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fuentes 1999: Re-evaluating primate monogamy (pdf)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Opie et al. 2013: Infanticide &amp; social monogamy (pdf)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Lukas &amp; Clutton-Brock 2013: The evolution of social monogamy (pdf)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9: Oct 23(^{rd})</th>
<th>Primate Community Ecology: Life with Others (including humans!)</th>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strier, Ch. 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fuentes &amp; Hockings 2010: The ethnoprimalatological approach in primatology</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Duarte et al. 2011: Noisy human neighbors affect where urban monkeys live (pdf)</td>
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### III. Doing, Interpreting, and Applying Primatology

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<tr>
<th>Week 10: Oct 30(^{th})</th>
<th>Methods in Behavioral Observation</th>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<td>- Martin &amp; Bateson 2007: Behavior recording methods</td>
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**Due:** (in class)  
Preliminary proposal for paper  

<p>| NA | NA |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week 11: Nov 6th</th>
<th>Observing Primate Behavior (at the San Diego Zoo)</th>
<th>NA</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Meet at zoo at 12:30 pm</td>
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<td>Week 12: Nov 13th</td>
<td>The Nature of Fieldwork</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>- Strum 2012: Darwin’s monkey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- MacClancy &amp; Fuentes, Ch. 6 (Yamagiwa), Ch. 7 (Kutsukake) and Ch. 8 (Fuentes)</td>
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<td>Week 13: Nov 20th</td>
<td>NO CLASS – AAAs</td>
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<td>Use time to work on zoo project</td>
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<td>Week 14: Nov 27th</td>
<td>NO CLASS—Gobble gobble!</td>
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<td>Zoo project</td>
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<td>Week 15: Dec 4th</td>
<td>Ethics in Field Primatology</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Doran-Sheehy et al. 2007: Habituation of western gorillas</td>
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<td>- Blog post:</td>
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<td><a href="http://seriousmonkeybusiness.wordpress.com/2010/12/22/is-habituation-ethically-permissible-from-a-biocentric-perspective/">http://seriousmonkeybusiness.wordpress.com/2010/12/22/is-habituation-ethically-permissible-from-a-biocentric-perspective/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- MacKinnon &amp; Riley 2010: Field primatology of today (pdf)</td>
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<td>- Fedigan 2010: Ethical issues faced by field primatologists (pdf)</td>
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<td>- Bezanson et al. 2012: Reducing the ecological impact of field research (pdf)</td>
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<td>Week 16: Dec 11th</td>
<td>Primate Conservation</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Strier, Ch. 12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- MacClancy &amp; Fuentes, Ch. 5 (Lee)</td>
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<td>- Oates 2013: Primate conservation, unmet challenges (pdf)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Estrada 2013: Socioeconomic contexts of primate conservation (pdf)</td>
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<td>Dec 18th</td>
<td>Papers due, by noon in Anthro main office, AL 448</td>
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**NOTE:** This syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and will be announced in class. Students absent from class are responsible for determining if any modifications were announced.