



THE UNIVERSITY of LIVERPOOL

An Introduction to Hominin Palaeontology ALGY120

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Background information

Instructor: Emma Nelson
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Time of lecture: Second semester, Tuesdays 13:00 -15:00

Duration of lecture: 2 hours - 1 hour lecture followed by a 1 hour practical session

Place of lecture: M108 Lithics Lab, Hartley Building Annex

Module description

This module is a *basic* introduction and overview to the hominin fossil record and some of the techniques used to compare fossils. Major anatomical changes through human evolution, such as bipedalism and brain size increase will be addressed.

Discussions about controversies that surround some of the discoveries and how has shaped our ideas of human evolution.

The module comprises of lectures and short practicals, in which the students will be encouraged to observe and learn the differences between the major fossil taxa from fossil casts.

Aims

To gain an overview of the current hominin fossil record and to understand how fossils are named and categorised. To gain an overview of the analytical methods used to process and appreciate some of the pitfalls of these processes. To be able to identify the most well known hominin fossil species and some of the main anatomical features used to define these species.

Learning outcomes

The student will acquire knowledge in basic methods of hominin systematics and nomenclature and will be familiar with the main methods used to process and analyse fossils. The student will be able to identify main hominin fossil taxa and the sites from which they derive.

Core texts: Lewin, R. & Foley, R. 2004. *Principles of Human Evolution*.
Blackwell Science Ltd

Jones, S. Martin, R. & Pilbeam, D. (Eds) 1994. *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Human Evolution*. Cambridge University Press

Assessment: 2 hour practical exam (70%)
1500 word essay (30%), set in week 9

Other information: Information about the lectures will be posted on VITAL

Lecture schedule

(L & P = Lecture and Practical)

Week	Title of lecture
1	Introduction to module Naming and framing; taxonomy and systematics (L)
2	Cranial features (L & P)
3	Jaws and mastication (L& P)
4	Teeth (L&P)
5	Post-cranials I – shape and size (L)
6	Morphometrics – Post-cranials Indices (P)
7	Post-cranials II - bipedalism(L & P)
8	The process; fossilisation to publication (L)
9	Pre-Homo hominins (L)
10	Homo (L&P) Essay questions and subject for week 11
11	The students choice – a more in-depth look! (L & P)
12	Revision week (quiz and questions)

Exam