

UC Davis Department of Anthropology Museum

Education Outreach Presentation Topics

Archaeological Methods

How do archaeologists find, excavate, and interpret the material traces of ancient cultures? How do they know how old the artifacts are, and what do they tell us about past human behavior?

Californian Prehistory

Cultures and lifeways of groups that occupied our state before the beginning of written history.

North American Prehistory

Our continent was first occupied roughly 14,000 years ago by Siberian groups traveling across a massive land bridge which spanned the Bering Sea. Learn about the archaeological and genetic evidence for this migration and the activities of the first Americans.

Prehistoric Technology

A live, hands-on demonstration of how humans made tools from stone and wood before the advent of metallurgy. See stone and wooden tools from a variety of prehistoric cultures.

Human Physical Variation

Humans are the most geographically widespread mammals on earth. Though many of us look very different, we are very similar genetically. See skulls and pictures of humans from a variety of different populations and learn how the environment has contributed to the physical differences between groups.

Human Cultural Variation

Along with our widespread geography and physical appearance humans are extremely diverse in their cultures and religions. Get a sense of the differences and similarities among humans living across the world.

Human Evolution

Our excellent hominin cast collection contains some of the most famous prehistoric fossils, including “Lucy”, “the Strapping Youth”, and Neandertals. Come learn about the major milestones in our species evolution: our first steps, large brains, and stone tool cultures.

Microevolution

How Darwin’s contribution to biology is relevant in conjunction with today’s sophisticated understanding of genetics. How “evolution” is defined by biologists and some examples of its occurrence in recent human populations.

Human Behavioral Ecology

Human behavior can be complex and sometimes difficult to understand. Why do women prefer to marry wealthier men? Why is polygamy (one man married to multiple women) so common in human groups? How do human groups make decisions about what to eat and how to move around the landscape? Learn how our environment can influence individual behavior and decisions.

Primates

An overview of our closest living relatives; from the exotic Titi monkeys in South America to the well-known gorillas of the African rain-forest, come learn what makes a primate a primate and how we are different from all other mammals.

Ancient DNA

Major strides in recovering ancient DNA have been made in the past several years. We've now recovered DNA from Neandertals and a woolly mammoth! This presentation will explain how we find ancient DNA and what it can tell us about humans.

Careers in Anthropology

What do anthropologists do? What research paths and types of careers are available for students of anthropology.