



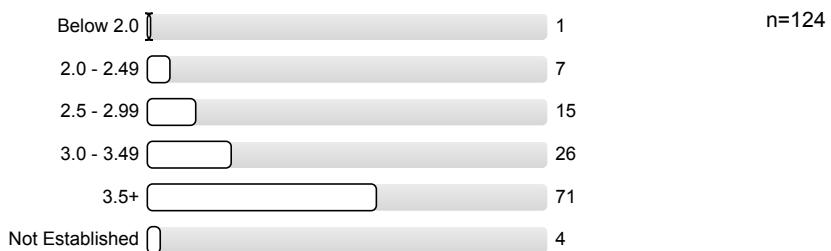
**D. FESSLER**  
**Evaluation of Instruction Program Report**  
 20W: ANTHRO 1 LEC 1: HUMAN EVOLUTION  
 No. of responses = 126  
 Enrollment = 247  
 Response Rate = 51.01%

**1. Background Information:**

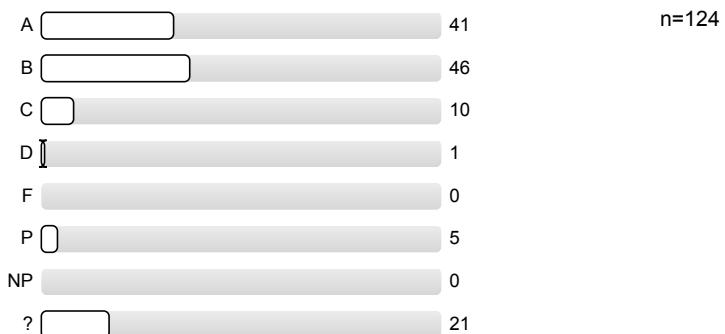
**1.1) Year in School:**



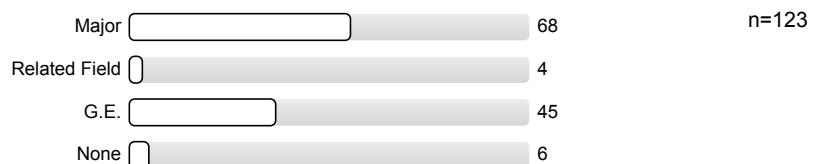
**1.2) UCLA GPA:**



**1.3) Expected Grade:**

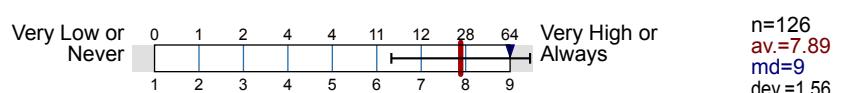


**1.4) What requirements does this course fulfill?**

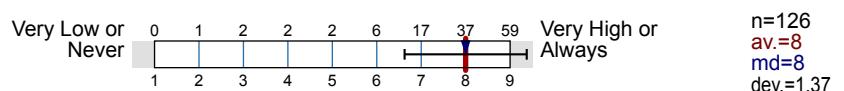


## 2. To What Extent Do You Feel That:

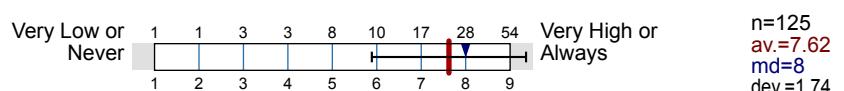
- 2.1) Instructor Concern – The instructor was concerned about student learning.



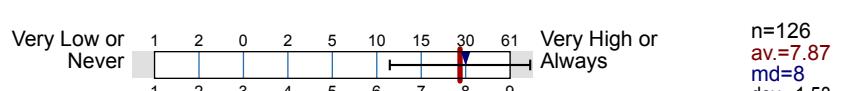
- 2.2) Organization – Class presentations were well prepared and organized.



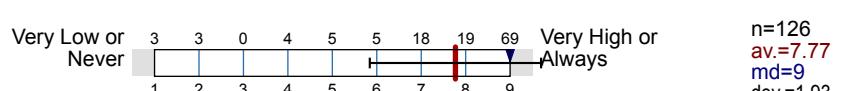
- 2.3) Interaction – Students felt welcome in seeking help in or outside of the class.



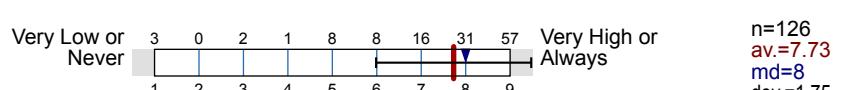
- 2.4) Communication Skills – The instructor had good communication skills.



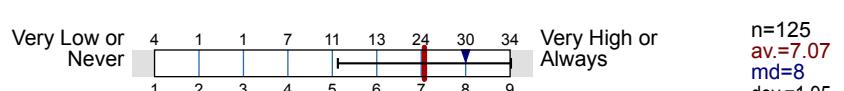
- 2.5) Value – You have learned something you consider valuable.



- 2.6) Overall – Your overall rating of the instructor.



- 2.7) Overall – Your overall rating of the course.

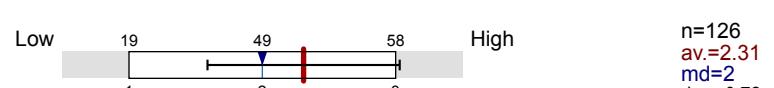


## 3. Your View of Course Characteristics:

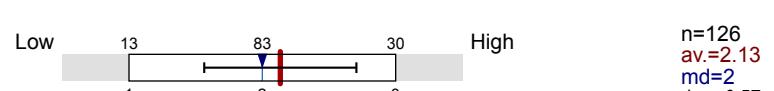
- 3.1) Subject interest before course



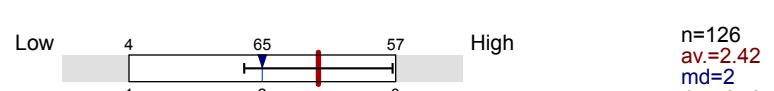
- 3.2) Subject interest after course



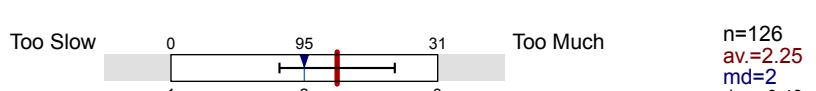
- 3.3) Mastery of course material



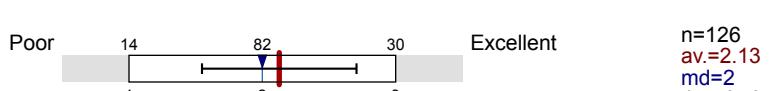
- 3.4) Difficulty (relative to other courses)



- 3.5) Workload/pace was



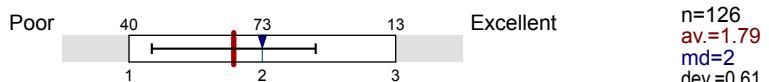
- 3.6) Texts, required readings



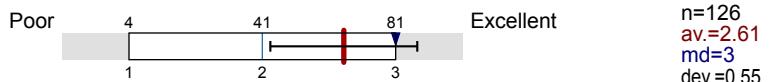
## 3.7) Homework assignments



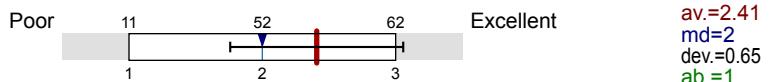
## 3.8) Graded materials, examinations



## 3.9) Lecture presentations



## 3.10) Class discussions



## 4. Comments:

- 4.1) Please identify what you perceive to be the real strengths and weaknesses of this instructor and course.
- Although he did a great job explaining the concepts in a straightforward manner and was overall a good professor, he spent a lot of unnecessary time trying to be funny and make jokes during class. I understood all of them and they were all related to the class material but they were just corny and not funny at all.
  - Although most of the lecture slides and explanation of the slides were thorough, the exams and grading system made it difficult to attain an appropriate grade for the material presented. More often than not, it was difficult to anticipate how much information was being asked for, and some of the questions were difficult to interpret what was being asked.
  - Class was structured very well and the professor was very engaging in lecture
  - Dr. Fessler has one of the best manners about him when he presents. Most professors I've been exposed to merely teach the material, but Dr. Fessler manages to capture the class in his lectures. He speaks about the material in a way where it makes sense, gives plenty of examples, makes it interesting and engages the class. He also asked for the students opinions more than once, which shows he is only looking to improve himself and the course in order to reach and teach all the students. The only downside to the course is that the lectures are not posted in regards to the audio because he does post the slides onto CCLE. He has explained why he chooses not to post the audio of the lecture and it is very easy to understand why he wants students to come to lecture, as it is proven that engaging in the class is more effective than a recording, but it would be nice to refer back in case one does miss lecture. He allows you to record the lectures, which I found useful. Overall, I believe that Dr. Fessler is a fantastic professor and I found myself actually enjoying the material presented in class a lot more than I had expected to.
  - Dr. Fessler is a decent professor who makes the Anthropology 1 course very rigorous. I would say without a doubt that this was the hardest GE I have taken here at UCLA.
  - Dr. Fessler is a good professor who cares very much about all of his students. His exams are very hard and a bit unrealistic. It's like he wants us to fail which only affects students attitudes towards the rest of the course.
  - Dr. Fessler is a great professor who really cares about his students and their learning. He tries especially hard to make sure that students know they can always contact him and that we are not a bother. His exams were longer and harder than expected, and the reading and material covered each week was a little too much and a little too confusing at times.
  - Dr. Fessler is a great teacher. His funny anecdotes/comments always made it worth it to come to

lecture. He explained the material very well and was quite clear about its relevance to the course. I have really enjoyed this class and definitely feel like I'm walking out of it with more insight on us as a species.

- Dr. Fessler is a very engaging lecturer, and I always look forward to his classes. He connects everything to how and why we live our lives today in order to emphasize the significance of everything we're learning. The weekly homework and Inquisitive assignments are reasonable and helpful. I do not think that the examinations are great, although I don't know how much of my opinion is biased by how low the class averages are. Upon reviewing my last midterm, I just think that the grading scheme used is too rigid and almost sets students up for failure. The point system expects students to include more details than they are even able to fit onto, say, a fill-in-the-blank question. Aside from the exams, I have greatly enjoyed my time in this class and it has forced me to think more about how anthropology plays an integral role into my daily life.
- Dr. Fessler is a very enthusiastic lecturer who cares a lot about his students' learning and showed his passion for teaching and anthropology at every lecture. However, the exams were very difficult and a lot of the questions were not covered in the textbook and lecture. So, I would ask Dr. Fessler to provide materials outside of those two resources to help us do better on the exams, as the averages were relatively low in my opinion. Overall, Anthro 1 is a very interesting and challenging class!
- Dr. Fessler is an excellent professor who truly demonstrates knowledge and passion for student learning. His dedication to the subject is obvious. He cares not only about the material, but also about his students. He creates very useful, informational slides that he presents in an engaging way that is filled with stories and jokes that help students to remember course material. While he may go on tangents, I feel that these tangents and anecdotes often help with remembering important course topics. In addition, he creates very useful analogies and metaphors that allow dense material to be more digestible. While the tests are difficult, they are reflective of the material and to some extent fair. I attended almost every lecture and have been to each discussion section and still found the tests to be tricky; however, if a person studies enough, they are doable. My only concern with the class is that the reading is quite dense and the reading assignments can be very heavy, making it hard to keep up with the material along with the online quizzes; however, the reading, complemented by lectures, really does help students to better understand course material. While the class is difficult at times, Fessler is an excellent professor, and I would definitely take him again.
- Dr. Fessler is indeed very knowledgeable in the material but needs to focus on not going off on tangents. Additionally, the exams are pretty difficult and have a particular wording to them that makes it time consuming just to understand what is being asked on top of trying to figure out which multiple choice option is correct.
- Dr. Fessler is so clearly passionate about anthropology and makes the class very interesting. It's quite easy to pay attention in lecture and be engaged. My only critique would be that we sometimes get sidetracked on tangents he goes on--usually I enjoy them, but I also have to admit that we get very behind on course material because of this. There's also a lot to memorize that I'm not sure it would be useful to memorize. For example, memorizing the general trends of human evolution is quite useful, but memorizing each individual hominid species takes a lot of brain energy, to the point where it feels as though I'm more likely to forget.

(Also, this is an aside, but I didn't read the textbook at all and I was one of the top scoring student for the last midterm. In the future maybe less emphasis should be put on the book because your lectures are far more valuable and I know students spend a lot of time trying to memorize the unnecessary details of the book instead of paying attention to the general trends you present on)

- Dr. Fessler really makes the subject interesting and I really enjoyed taking this class with him. The readings could be a little long at times but was necessary to do well in the class. He also genuinely cares about student learning and is very welcoming to all.
- Dr. Fessler was extremely knowledgeable about the content and did a wonderful job teaching the course. My only suggestion would be to clarify the learning objectives and exam objectives more for students before the midterm and final exam.

- EVERYTHING WAS FAIR ABOUT THIS PROFESSOR. HE HAS A GREAT ATTITUDE, IS REALLY KNOWLEDGABLE, AND JUST TAUGHT A REALLY GREAT AND ORGANIZED CLASS. THE ONLY THING BAD WAS HIS EXAMS WERE HORRENDOUS. I KNOW MY MATERIAL AND GOT SPEARED IN THE NECK WITH THIS EXAMS FOR NO REASON. My TA told me that my exam answers weren't wrong, but that they weren't general enough...ARE YOU KIDDING ME!!! I'm an anthro major, and love my major. Bc I love it so much, I'm really passionate about learning the material and generally do really well bc of it. This is the first anthro class I will be taking that will be lower than an A- (and I've only gotten one of those, the rest were As). THIS IS ANTHRO 1, IT SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN LIKE THIS. MY UPPER DIV ANTHRO WAS EASIER, AND THAT MATERIAL WAS MORE COMPLICATED.
- Enthusiastic about course material and teaching students. Some of the in-lecture tangents were very informative. While I acknowledged the Professor's attempt to reduce 'test-taking skills' on exams, I still felt like that was still a large part of the exams.
- Fessler has become one of my favorite professors at UCLA! He turned a required course for my major into a course I have a genuine passion for... I've even considered minoring in Anthropology after taking this course. It's so evident that Fessler has tons of knowledge and passion for Anthro. He also engages so well with his students and never makes us feel like a burden to him. Fessler is a wonderful addition to the Anthropology department and to UCLA.
- Fessler is hands down the best professor I've had so far, his class is really organized and the information he's teaching is relevant. Even the tangents he goes on sometimes are still engaging and important to know. He's also patient with students and their questions during lectures, other professors rush through answering but Fessler takes the time to answer fully. A weakness is maybe that he talks fast sometimes but other than that he is a fantastic professor.
- Fessler knew the material well and did his best to relay it using interesting analogies and jokes when teaching. Fessler had a tendency to talk over his allotted time period, and those who had to leave would sometimes miss out on important information. He would be behind on his slides because of going off tangents, so sometimes we were behind in instruction. The first midterm was quite difficult and students were not given a study guide or direction of any sort, just that they needed to know everything on the slides which was just a bunch of information (much of which was not on the exam). The average on the 2nd midterm was a 67%, and the professor concluded that the midterm was too easy and he would make the final harder which is unfair to the students who put in a lot of time and effort to make sure they did better on the second midterm. A TA also revealed to us that the tests were designed so that we would not get 100% which is unfair because that means they take points away at the slightest thing and could be an indicator as to why grades are so low in this course.
- Fessler was a very good lecturer and talked about many interesting topics related to human evolution that I found interesting and useful. A lot of examples were given so that the reader could connect the lecture material to real life. The only concern I have with this class is that the first graded examination was much too long, and had students severely pressed for time. Rather than the test subject being too hard to understand, it was simply too much material to complete in 50 minutes of class time. Overall, Fessler as a professor was great, but his tests were not.
- Fessler was a very strong lecturer, but I do think one of his weaknesses is examining the students. His tests set the student up for failure due to unrealistic expectations of remembering things word for word on some portions, where I believe it should be more conceptual.
- Good lecturer
- Great lecturer and overall a good instructor for Human Evolution. Weakness is not so much him, but the Inquisitive assignments.
- Great professor but exams deviate a little from the course material and focus too much on the small details that I usually wouldn't think about memorizing. Additionally, exams relied strongly on memorization.
- He is super knowledgeable and funny! you can tell he really cares about what he is teaching and is

passionate about the subject.

- His lectures are very engaging and informative. But he can improve his lecture pace, sometimes it's too fast for me to keep up with even if I did the weekly readings. I like the subject itself as I learnt a lot about human evolution but weekly readings are too heavy
- I believe that Professor Fessler has a great way of keeping his classes entertaining and interesting. He is able to explain concepts with real world examples and in a way that makes it relatable and easy to understand. He is honest and expects his students to be the same. He is all about being fair to all of his students and making us feel comfortable in asking for help. The only real issue I had with this course was the first midterm and the wording of its questions. Although, I did feel that it was a fair test, I think it was a little hard to understand exactly what the question or answer choices were really asking. However, I believe that the second midterm was better in the sense that the questions were clear and that it was an easier test to time manage for.
- I believe there was too much information presented in this class for the pace of it. The slides weren't finished very often and the end of lectures always felt rushed. I would suggest slimming down on the material covered so you can take the full time needed to present the information thoroughly. Additionally, the midterms were very specific and difficult. The second midterm was much more manageable. However, the first one (especially the fill in the blank) was too specific given the amount of material we were taught.
- I do not understand why the grading scheme of this class is what it is. If you know that students are going to consistently fail midterms and finals, it seems to be more indicative of the fact that the tests are not created fairly, not that students are not doing well enough on them to have a normal grading scheme. Dr. Fessler is an interesting teacher and has good lectures, but I do not believe he has his students' best interest in mind, shown by his harsh grading style and skewed grading scheme.
- I enjoyed the lectures and found Professor Fessler's presentation of the material to be interesting and relevant! The exams were a little difficult for a lower division course, and especially the wording of the multiple choice questions was confusing at times. Providing a study guide before the exam would be useful. In addition, I remember that Professor Fessler asked the class whether the future classes should get pop quizzes since the lecture slides are provided. I honestly think this adds unnecessary stress on students. Low attendance this quarter especially could have been due to the common cold/flu because I personally missed some lectures from having the cold three times this quarter! I don't think it is fair to penalize students for this.
- I hated the homework assignments and the long textbook reading we had to do. Also, the tests were overly hard for the material that we had been given. However the professor is a great one and his lectures are clear. If he changed the way his tests were made and graded I would say this is a great class overall.
- I really appreciated the structure of this course. The weekly readings and online assignments fit pretty well with the material covered in lecture. The professor made clear most all of the concepts we needed to learn, and he did so in an efficient and concise way that was just the right pace. I liked how he used a lot of examples in his teaching; personally this allows me to really get a concrete idea solidified in my mind. The tests were rather difficult though, and at times some of the material didn't seem to match with what we were tested on. This is a bit frustrating because both the midterms and final count for a good portion of our grade in the class. Overall, I was satisfied with the professor's teaching.
- I really didn't like the way the professor wanted us to memorize so much detail of the primate history. He did not offer a study guide so we just had to assume what he'd test us on. There were a lot of readings before midterms which stressed me out because, again, I did not know what to study for specifically so I always ended up studying the wrong things.  
The fact that his grading scheme is so low should say something about his teaching skills and the exams he gives. I did not like this introduction to anthropology which sucks because this would have been my next major choice if I did not get into my first major choice.
- I really enjoyed having you as a professor, I'm so so glad to have had you. The instructor was so great

at explaining the content of the work and making it interesting for the students and also adding some humor in it. I really felt like there was someone who cared about my education. I also really appreciated that you made it easy and comfortable to go to office hours. I went once and would like to have gone more times but it was really great to go.

- I really enjoyed this course, specifically because the professor was very invested in the subject material. His enthusiasm sparked my interest, and I felt that he was very engaging and made me look forward to lectures. I did not initially plan on taking this class, but I am very glad I did because it helped me realize that I find social sciences more interesting than physical sciences. I'm now considering changing my major. I don't feel that Fessler has any weaknesses as a professor, he is very funny and manages to keep students' attention while still providing a lot of relevant information.
- I think Professor Fessler did a good job of making the class content very relatable and relevant. At times he can get side-tracked which makes us have to rush on certain aspects, but his tangents are always pretty interesting.
- I think Professor Fessler is a great instructor in that he knows the material very well and that he does a good job displaying that info to students. The way he lectures may seem odd at times but I think that they help get the point across, and that they overall help with understanding the course concepts. I do think that the pacing of his lectures could go smoother though. I often feel as if he can get through a lot of slides in a short amount of time, which is fine because he tends to upload slides before lecture, but there have been times when they weren't and it was a tossup trying to choose what to listen and take notes on more, his slides or what he is saying. I do also think that the exams are a bit skewed too. I feel as if our exams tend to be vague at times, which makes them a bit easier to write, but I noticed that their required answers tend to be very specific, to the point that it felt like some questions didn't point us to what we were being asked. I think that making the wording for some of the questions should be made a bit more specific as to not confuse us when we're taking it.
- I think Professor Fessler is very good at communicating the material across to us and I think that his teaching methods were very effective in helping students understand concepts. However, I don't like that he has a tendency to make himself and his lectures inaccessible to students with different needs. He refused to inform his students about AAP even though he informed us about many other things that were not as helpful or related to the course as PLF's, and his adamant belief that punishing the students as a collective by removing his lecture pdf's to prompt more class attendance was very wrong to me. I understand the sentiment that students need to and learn better when they're there in person, but he does not seem to grasp the fact that students have much more going in their lives outside of the course. Nonetheless, I think that his lectures and his teachings were invaluable and were extremely thorough and enlightening,
- I think he was good in not only teaching the material, but taught good life advice.
- I think that this was an overall excellent course, but the exams were too hard and required too much of the students, although the curve helped to rectify this.
- I think the course could have been a much easier course, but there were so many random facts that I had to memorize. The test was brutally hard, and it's basically impossible to get an A.
- I think the strength of this professor is his ability to give an engaging lecture. I find his lectures super interesting and they are always well prepared. He has a wealth of knowledge about anthropology so it does not seem like he is ever reading off of his slides, his slides are just there to aid in our note taking and for more visual learners. He is very good at posting the slides on CCLE before class and I find that very helpful. The one thing I find a bit weak about this course is the amount of textbook material on the exam. He is very adamant about us reading the textbook and it is sometimes helpful but the exams are mainly based on information learned in class so I think the emphasis on the textbook is a bit unnecessary.
- I thought this was a very interesting course, but the evaluations were difficult due to the amount of content in the course & relatively short exams.

- I took the Fiat Lux, Animals in Translation, with this professor and felt very inspired to learn about evolution and the field of anthropology. I enrolled in this course solely to learn more from this professor and don't regret a second of it. I love the teaching style, topics covered, and true passion Dr. Fessler has for the material. He truly cares about his students. favorite course i have taken at UCLA.
- I wasn't really sure what to expect when I signed up for this course but I really enjoyed it! Seeing the grade curve initially scared me because I thought the class was going to be really hard, however, I honestly think the exams were fair aside from the slight lack of time on the first midterm. This class was always interesting to attend and I really enjoyed Professor Fessler's teaching style. He clearly has mastered what he teaches and enjoys educating his students - even in realms slightly beyond the course. Great class!
- In this class, the majority of the students are freshmen and sophomores, taking it as a general education course. I decided to take this course for two reasons, 1) it fulfilled a GE for me and 2) it was something I had considered minoring in. Unfortunately, after taking this class, that will not be the case. This class has possibly THE MOST DIFFICULT exams I have ever taken. When the average grade in a general education course on a midterm is 50%, it should be acknowledged that there is some sort of difference between the information given during the lecture, homework, and readings, and the material placed on a midterm exam. Time and time again, it has been stated that this class is curved as a whole, which means the grading scale is different from other classes. A 70% is a B. A grade in the 50% range is a passing, 'C' grade. This is a scale that I expect to see in a difficult upper-division with a specialized focus, not in a GE. I have never felt as much stress and discomfort in a class as I have in Anthropology 1. Unfortunately, I will not be minoring in the subject or sparing it another thought after the quarter ends.
- Initially, I thought that Fessler was a kind, inclusive person and that I would really enjoy this course. However, with time, I found his demeanor to be crabby and frankly just a little hard to approach. I have a problem with professors who don't answer questions during lectures, as if you are comfortable moving forward when people still don't understand the material you just taught, you probably didn't explain it very well. This happened on a few occasions, which I didn't expect from a professor who had seemed so welcoming in terms of office hours. Even upon attending office hours, I felt that his attitude, despite him saying he welcomed you there, was a bit frustrating because his answers to questions seemed like he was just rushing through and spewing out facts. I don't think I saw him smile once during office hours, and combined with the short way he talked this made me feel uncomfortable. Also, the midterms were frustrating, as the questions that were asked did not necessitate specificity in the answers, and yet we were graded as such. For example, if a question simply says to explain a term and provide an example, you would not expect to be torn apart for doing just that. There were many questions that I looked over with my TA where even he didn't understand why the answers were graded so harshly, and it really obliterated my confidence. Furthermore, if a question is missed by the majority of the class, such as people writing in ancestral rather than homologous, it is probably because you didn't explain the differences in the context that these words can be used, and penalizing the class for something you didn't teach well just makes you seem unnecessarily mean. Ultimately, a subject that I found interesting before taking this course now has a bitter taste in my mouth.
- It is said that understanding the concepts is very helpful for studying for exams, but I wish there was a list that was provided underlining those concepts. Also, I hate Inquizitive.
- It is triggering that Fessler announced that he does not like the concept of examinations, but then makes his exams impossible to get higher than a C on. I truly go to class, discussion, and self study and understand the material. However, if I get the question completely right, but do not word it the way he wants, I lose points on that entire question. Yes, he's a great lecturer, but I could care less if it does not reflect in my grade. I would like to receive the grade I think I worked for, not lose my GPA because of his pride in making exams too difficult and near impossible.
- Lectures are really engaging and interesting  
I know you tried but you could make more clear the importance of knowing different primate species
- Lots of material to cover in very little time, but overall very interesting to learn about. Professor does not always adhere fully to the material that is on the slides, however, the information given is still always

relevant to the topic.

- Material was difficult, but Professor was good at explaining. Forms of examination varied, and it was hard to know what to expect on exam.
- More explanation of concepts outside of the lecture slides and the book. I believe the course would benefit greatly from more organization of the information and the different classifications and more emphasis on similarities/differences between different species in order to clarify the distinctions between sections.
- My instructor did not make his lectures interesting and the tests were very hard.
- Pro:  
The professor engages the students well in most of his lectures with clear presentations and occasional appropriate humor.
- Con:  
The grade curve could be reinforced in this course, especially when there are hundreds of students whose grades are heavily reliant on the average grade distribution.
- Prof Fessler is really nice and funny. He puts a lot of work into the lectures and is always on time posting the slides online. One thing I would say is the exams are very detail-oriented while his pacing is very fast, so it's difficult to pay attention to details.
- Professor Fessler is a great professor. He was passionate about the subject matter and lectured in a very eloquent and intelligent manner. My biggest objection to the class was the difficulty of the exams. It seems unnecessary for an introductory class like this to have exams of this difficulty (just for the entire class to be curved with an 84 as an A).
- Professor Fessler is an amazing lecturer and I have a genuine interest in anthropology because of taking his class. However, I feel that on many occasions he poorly graded the exams.
- Professor Fessler is clearly very passionate and knowledgeable about what he teaches. I think that really helped me stay focused in the content and actually LISTEN rather than write everything down. He cares a lot about having students understand the material and think critically, which shows in how much he cares about academic integrity, class attendance, and the way he writes his final questions. That's why I understand how frustrating it must've been for the quarter to end with a take home exam but I appreciate his work in handling a very difficult situation and want him to know that!

The actual course content was structured really well. It flowed nicely and integrated well between lectures and the content itself was really eye-opening in helping me understand more about how humans behave. I've always been fascinated by this subject even though I'm not anything close to an anthropology major but this class covered just enough to satisfy my interest and challenge me to think further. Some people might not have liked that he went off on small tangents at times but I found them insightful and entertaining. I also like how Fessler included concerns about the real world into his lectures and made these connections with course content because then I could see how what I was learning actually impacted my life outside the classroom.

I do think that the way the long response questions were graded could be improved. A lot of points were docked for information that was not included that was not made clear. If there was a way to make it more clear to students how much detail is expected of them I think that would help.

- Professor Fessler is honestly an amazing lecturer. I feel like I've learned something very valuable from this class, and hope he continues to provide the lecture slides before class to students and perhaps will soon start to broadcast his lectures.
- Professor Fessler is one of the first lecturers at UCLA who was able to keep me engaged and interested for the entire 50 minutes of every single lecture. The content of this course is relevant, fascinating, and important to understand, and the way he engages with the material ensures a clear understanding for

every student that attends class. However, I will say that the exams were very difficult, and there was little guidance provided for how we should study. The short answer questions were very specific, and even the vague questions required specific answers that were not clearly indicated. I would have liked to see more partial credit, or at least clearer wording that specified exactly how much detail we needed to provide in our responses. Overall, this is one of my favorite classes at UCLA. I have never had a lecturer like Fessler, and I'm grateful to have taken a class with such valuable material.

- Professor Fessler is one the most dynamic and animated people in the world. Despite not being a STEM or Life Science major, I enjoyed immensely how he incorporates his personality and humor into the material, making it a loss let dry. The slides at times contain a little too much information, making it difficult to hone in on the major points without being lost in the material. At the same time, the textbook readings are vast and sometimes go beyond the scope of the course, making it initially difficult to know what to prioritize. Fessler as a teacher, however, is passionate and clearly has a genuine interest in our well being, which is evident through his lectures. I am glad to have taken the class with him and actually gone to every single lecture my freshman year, and despite anthropology perhaps not being the subject for me, I was able to learn a lot more and gain a genuine interest in the course material because of his personality and teaching methods.
- Professor Fessler is very interested and knows the concepts really well and he made the lectures interesting but it was also never very clear what exams were going to be like so there is very little to no guidance on how to study or what to study which makes studying and test taking pretty difficult.
- Professor Fessler was an excellent lecturer. He was very engaging and easy to listen to and he clearly put a lot of thought and effort into his lecture materials (amazing transitions!). I appreciated his repetition of key concepts and his use of examples to illustrate his points. His lectures were always a pleasure to attend. My one critique is that the exams were somewhat inconsistent: the first one seemed too long for the allotted time, while the second one was a little bit too short, and the final again felt too long for the 3 hour time estimate. Otherwise, I found the course very enjoyable and the material fascinating. Out of all my courses this quarter, I was most excited to talk to my mom about this one.
- Professor was amazing, funny and engaging and knew exactly what he was talking about. I never was interested in Anthro at all but after taking the class I might consider it!
- Professor was excellent in conveying highly technical ideas in a crisp manner. In relevant places, he was able to link abstract ideas to concrete examples in real life, integrating many areas of knowledge. The textbook was annoyingly long to read, and the quizzes were annoying as well but at least forced you to stay on track with the class.

The Professor had strong political opinions relevant to the material at hand, which is not a bad thing at all since politics cannot be just ignored in a such a relevant area as this.

I personally disagreed with some of the earlier treatment of the Professor regarding this history of evolutionary thought. For example, the treatment of the Enlightenment period, seen as separating science from religion, is a rather conventional view of this period but I am afraid does not present a true picture of Europe at that point in time. However these are not central to the content in the course.

I would've liked a more in-depth treatment of the naturalistic fallacy. It often seemed a convenient way of brushing past potentially touchy issues, when in my opinion there was a more grey area. Often there is also the anti-naturalistic fallacy; seeing nature as a lower state and being human as an advanced state. Also in some similar touchy cases, it was hard to see whether the content being presented was the Professor/textbook authors' (highly informed) opinions, or rather THE consensus on the field, for example in matters related to race.

Overall highly enjoyable class and would recommend anyone reading this to take it (although you have to put in a bit of work!)

- Really fast paced, a lot of memorization which was difficult for me but might be easier for others. Professor Fessler is an amazing lecturer, funny and real and clearly extremely eloquent and knowledgeable. My favorite things were when he would tell us to stop copying the slide and just listen to

him, that he would let us record the lectures, and also when he would bring up concepts that relate to us as humans right now; ex, lactose intolerance. That was what interested me the most! Great professor.

- Strength: welcoming and accessible, good communication, thorough explanations about material  
Weakness: sometimes went off on unrelated tangents, discussions didn't always coincide with emphasis on exams
- Strengths:  
- Dr. Fessler was knowledgeable about all the material and conveyed in an engaging way to students  
- skillfully used multiple common examples in order to teach somewhat complicated concepts
- Weaknesses:  
- some tangents but all for the enjoyment of the course
- Strengths: Great lecturer! Super Engaging, makes class interesting and fun! Great real world connections that makes students want to learn!  
Weaknesses: Exams were very difficult and some topics were not emphasized or always covered
- Strengths: Lectures were informative and interesting, accompanying slides were very helpful. The combination prepared me well for exams.
- Strengths: the professor had well-delivered lectures, explained concepts well, and was very engaged with students and people could see he cared about the students doing well in his class.  
Weakness: the first exam was probably the only weakness, but only because it was too lengthy for the time given.
- Subject material is interesting and is presented in an interesting way. However, some topics were not explained very well/clearly. Lectures also tended towards a quicker pace, so class often felt like listening to a bunch of information rather than the application and concepts of the material.
- TLDR: If you are a North campus major with STEM-phobia, consider taking this course with Dr. Fessler to overcome your fear.  
I have no background or skill in STEM. In fact, I have something of a phobia regarding the STEM disciplines. In part, I would blame this phobia on my deep entrenchment in the humanities. Maybe it is propaganda generated by the North-South rivalry, but I admit I am used to regarding the sciences with a certain degree of suspicion as "unfeeling" and dangerous. When I hear "human evolution", some of the first words to come to mind are "social Darwinism" and "eugenics". Dr. Fessler did not convert me into a South campus major. What he did do for me at least was help me to (somewhat) overcome my prejudices against the sciences. Now I see that my distrust towards the sciences was based on my own misconceptions. Several times throughout the quarter, Dr. Fessler explained that biology and genetics (and the people that study them) are not as deterministic or reductionistic as I understood them to be. I will never understand for myself what it means to feel passionate about any sort of natural or formal science, and I am probably not going to do well in this course. However, I have a new, more favorable and comfortable perspective towards the sciences, and for that I thank Dr. Fessler.
- Thank you so much for teaching us. I enjoyed your lectures, but it was so hard for me.
- The course was interesting and I found the lectures fun and informative. I thought that there was a lot of content and memorizing involved in the course and felt very unprepared for the first midterm so if practice problems or past exams can be given for practice prior to the midterms and finals that would be helpful
- The instructor is highly charismatic and engaging during the lectures. He is also understanding especially after the first midterm which felt too difficult for the time allotted.
- The lectures are wonderful, but the tests can be a little difficult and tricky.
- The material is super engaging. Fessler clearly knows a lot about the subject and is passionate about what he teaches. The readings and discussions are extremely useful and clear. Material and content-

wise, this class is amazing. The tests on the other hand, are not a good representation of the breadth of material over the course of the quarter. Studying and having a complete understanding of the material does not guarantee a B or an A on an exam. These tests do a better job at testing one's ability to take a test whether than how well one knows the material.

- The professor is amazing, not going to lie. He's very passionate about what he teaches and he makes lectures very interesting. He's funny, caring, and just a great person overall. The material learned in the course was very interesting, and I enjoyed learning about everything. The class is fast paced and there's a lot of information to take in. It's not too bad if you pay attention in class. After the midterm, I got very sick, which threw me off. I have a lot of information to catch up on and it's a little difficult for me because I don't understand how the things we learned in weeks 8 and 9 really connect with each other. Overall, I really enjoyed this class, but I wish I took it during my 2nd or 3rd year.
- The professor was always very engaging during his lectures. His materials were always very well prepared, and he made the course very applicable to life.
- The professor was great. He was engaging and funny but still taught the material well in lecture and was clearly knowledgeable about the material. The readings some weeks were too much because we'd have to read 2+ chapters to complete the inquisitives and homework questions, and since my discussions were on Mondays I didn't have time throughout the week to work on it. The tests were fair I think, obviously, the timing for the first one was a little off but overall I think it was okay. Although, I wish they made it clear the extent of information we had to know about the characteristics of each primate group and of each homo species. I spent way too long memorizing most of the differences between each species and it was tested so lightly and in such a basic way that I felt like I wasted my time, but none of the TAs gave a clear response as to how in-depth we needed to know it. Beyond that though, I can honestly say this was my favorite class I've taken so far. It's definitely not easy and you have to work for an A, but I didn't mind it too much considering the lectures, discussion, and most of the material was engaging and interesting.
- The strength of Dr. Fessler is that he definitely has a very unique and interesting way of teaching that made me excited to come to lecture. I felt like Anthropology was presented to me during this class as something extremely important in relation to all other subjects and I could not agree more, Anthropology is something that all students striving for higher education should encounter. A weakness I would say for this course is that during my discussion I felt like there was no structure, information was just spitted out at us and there was no guidance to help us study. Dr. Fessler is very charismatic and very invested in his job, I really appreciated that he took the time to step back and change his tests to make them less about speed and more about reflecting how much we have learned. A weakness I would say was that Dr. Fessler should not bring up topics for discussion during lecture such as "should slides be accessible or not to students" ask us for our opinion and rather than just taking our feedback he undermined our concerns as students who were present and participating. Finally, I know for a fact that I could not have been as successful as I have been in this course if it would not have been for AAP which was an amazing tool to my learning, helping me form study groups, and relate concepts to my daily life and I believe Dr. Fessler should take the time to advertise it or even simply put up a poster of it so more students in the class like myself can exponentially improve their performance in the class because of it.
- This class was very difficult and required a lot of effort, but it was so worth it. I loved learning in this class and I loved Fessler! I am sad to not have him a professor but look forward to possibly taking another class of his. He is so engaging and passionate about what he teaches.
- This course is a mess for a life science course. The expectation from the professor is a mastery of concepts, but then the exams test memorization of facts, and there is no support for this style of teaching. There is no study guide or breakdown of the material, but then there is the expectation to list specific points. Essay questions on the exams do not allow for demonstration of mastery of concepts; they ask for a recitation of information drawn from multiple lectures as opposed to asking students to show that they understand the concepts. The course is taught as a social studies course but tested as a life science course, specifically for the essay questions. Additionally, the professor's lecture style does not work for me. He gets distracted often with tangents or with jokes. I would much rather have a drier, more focused lecture, especially for the short length of the lectures.

- This course was really interesting to me and I was very excited because I enjoyed learning about evolution in LS7B. However, I thought the first midterm was particularly unfair because it was extremely long and we had very limited time. There was no time for me to think and really understand some questions because I felt very rushed. That was the only weakness I thought this class had. The instructor is engaging and the material was very interesting. It was just unfortunate because the midterm is a big chunk of our overall grade, and now my overall grade is going to be heavily affected because of that one midterm.
- This has been by far my least favorite professor and least favorite class at UCLA. This instructor made the tests much harder than they should be for a "GE". Paying attention in class, doing the readings, doing the homework, and attending discussions/office hours wasn't even enough to master this class. After reviewing both midterms separately with my TA, I left the office hours more frustrated than I was beforehand. The exams are intended to trick you and they "answer key" is more subjective than objective. Just because you "imply" something in an open ended question and explain the concept in a completely acceptable way, there is an excellent chance you won't get any credit for it when it is being graded if you lack their "key terms". Aside from the "difficulty", this professor was just completely unenjoyable to be around. He would go on random rants that had nothing to do with the course, and most students felt like he believed he was "above" us the way he lectured. His "jokes" were not funny and overall, I resented attending this class every week. I was very interested in the course material going into this class, but this professor has nearly ruined that experience for me.
- This instructor really cares about student learning and his lectures. He is able to engage any student who is willing to learn. He also makes you feel welcomed to ask any question in class or in office hours. Thats what I appreciate the most from this professor; he wants us to come to office hours. Most professors make you feel like they are doing you a favor by being in office hours, but Fessler doesn't. His exams are only hard if you didn't study or pay attention in lecture because 90% of the questions in the exam come straight off his lectures.
- This instructor would often go on tangents during lecture and then insist he has covered all important concepts. His tests were unfair in that it depended more on memorizing the slides word for word rather than knowing the concepts. Even if one were to answer a question correctly on a test their answer was subjected to opinionated grading as you could answer all parts on a rubric but not receive full points because it is not a "perfect answer". There is no way to be prepared for his exams as he will side blind you with questions you've never even been encountered with and the discussions do less of a job preparing you for it. He has terrible communication skills as he treats everyone like an idiot child whom he needs to preach to in a condescending manner in order to save them from themselves. Every person who has taken this course with another instructor has not run into the same issues that students in this class have faced. He is well aware of these difficulties, referring to averages of 59% on a midterm for an INTRO to anthropology class. Members of the class who are Anthro majors have even stated that their Upper division courses aren't nearly as difficult or complex as Dr. Fessler has made his course.
- Very good and interesting lectures usually. I felt there was wayyyyyyy to much about monkeys and even though we explained its importance I feel we spend to long on them. I found it very interesting when we were learning about the human evolution of intelligence, mutations, and mating. Also, the exams should be changed. They are too long for the time, have ambiguous questions and subjective answers.
- Very passionate about what he's teaching, always giving additional information to make sure students understand the logic behind the topics. I've learned in this class some of the most interesting and I believe valuable knowledge in my undergraduate years.
- While Fessler is very knowledgeable about the topic, his opinions about exams did not make him seem like he was putting student learning first. His lectures were clear and detailed, but the exams made me feel discouraged because the grading was super harsh. This made me feel like my learning was not prioritized and turned my interest for the subject off.
- exams could have been worded better there was often tricky questions where I wasn't sure what I was being asked exactly. Good lecturer

- he seemed to really like what he was teaching about and made concepts easy to understand
- he was good at lecturing. good at explaining. slides were pretty good. i would take a class with him again.
- he was really funny and made things applicable to life when possible, but the course load was more than expected for a GE.
- i LOVED this class. one of my favorite classes at UCLA. has completely opened up my eyes to understanding the evolution of our species. incredibly engaging instructor and feel that ive learned SO much in one quarter. i dont always feel the exams are totally reflective of all the content we learned though (meat q at very end of last midterm i feel may have been unfair if folks didn't know it was meat). that being said, i still LOVE this class and actually looked into being an anthro minor after it.
- interesting lectures and I think the 50 minute three times a week schedule works well. I think the work load was a little too heavy, lots of reading and the inquisitive stuff was excessive. I know that you're required to assign inquisitive stuff when you use the textbook but I think there's a way around making students loose points for not doing the inquisitive tests that often times didn't align with the lecture material. maybe you could just offer extra credit for some activity that would grade boost 5% so students could get a 0 on the 5% of the inquisitive portion of the grade but the 5% extra credit would let them still get a 100% in the class. interesting material but it's just too much stuff in my opinion, cut back a little on your expectations, students have other classes they have work for too.
- n/a
- very good lecturer and very passionate about subject

# Profile

Subunit: **ANTHRO**  
 Name of the instructor: **D. FESSLER**  
 Name of the course: **20W: ANTHRO 1 LEC 1: HUMAN EVOLUTION**  
 (Name of the survey)

Values used in the profile line: Mean

## 2. To What Extent Do You Feel That:

2.1) Instructor Concern – The instructor was concerned about student learning.	Very Low or Never							Very High or Always	n=126	av.=7.89
2.2) Organization – Class presentations were well prepared and organized.	Very Low or Never							Very High or Always	n=126	av.=8.00
2.3) Interaction – Students felt welcome in seeking help in or outside of the class.	Very Low or Never							Very High or Always	n=125	av.=7.62
2.4) Communication Skills – The instructor had good communication skills.	Very Low or Never							Very High or Always	n=126	av.=7.87
2.5) Value – You have learned something you consider valuable.	Very Low or Never							Very High or Always	n=126	av.=7.77
2.6) Overall – Your overall rating of the instructor.	Very Low or Never							Very High or Always	n=126	av.=7.73
2.7) Overall – Your overall rating of the course.	Very Low or Never							Very High or Always	n=125	av.=7.07

## 3. Your View of Course Characteristics:

3.1) Subject interest before course	Low							High	n=126	av.=1.88
3.2) Subject interest after course	Low							High	n=126	av.=2.31
3.3) Mastery of course material	Low							High	n=126	av.=2.13
3.4) Difficulty (relative to other courses)	Low							High	n=126	av.=2.42
3.5) Workload/pace was	Too Slow							Too Much	n=126	av.=2.25
3.6) Texts, required readings	Poor							Excellent	n=126	av.=2.13
3.7) Homework assignments	Poor							Excellent	n=126	av.=2.31
3.8) Graded materials, examinations	Poor							Excellent	n=126	av.=1.79
3.9) Lecture presentations	Poor							Excellent	n=126	av.=2.61
3.10) Class discussions	Poor							Excellent	n=125	av.=2.41