

Arch/BioAnth Lunch Talk

Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 12-1pm

Join us in SS1 Room 261 or via Zoom (link provided in email)

Dr. Tyler Faith

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Rethinking the Ecological Drivers of Hominin Evolution

A central goal of paleoanthropology is understanding the role of ecological change in hominin evolution. This research focus has fueled the recovery of late Cenozoic paleoclimatic, paleoenvironmental, and paleoecological archives, but this progress has not always led to enduring evolutionary insights. In this presentation, I examine why hominin paleoecology has remained in this rut for decades, and point to new research that is tackling longstanding obstacles by (i) confronting an incomplete fossil record, (ii) contending with datasets spanning varied spatiotemporal scales, and (iii) using theoretical frameworks to build stronger inferences. Expanding on this work promises to transform challenges into opportunities and set the stage for a new phase of paleoanthropological research.



Tyler Faith received a BA in Anthropology from the University of Washington (2005) and a PhD in Hominid Paleobiology from the George Washington University (2011). After a six-year stint as a postdoctoral fellow and Senior Research at University of Queensland, he moved to University of Utah where he is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Curator of Archaeology at the Natural History Museum of Utah. Faith's research addresses the relationships between Quaternary mammal communities, climate-driven environmental change, and hominin-environment interactions in Africa.