

Faculty Biography

Melissa Tallman

Teaching Disciplines:

Human Anatomy

Scientific interests:

Primate evolution, functional morphology, locomotor biomechanics, and comparative anatomy.

Research Interests:

I am broadly interested in the evolution of locomotor diversity in primates. My research uses three-dimensional geometric morphometrics (analysis of shape in three dimensions) to examine patterns of postcranial variation in the forelimb and hindlimb of human ancestors. I am using this data to investigate the underlying processes that drive shape variation in the postcranial skeleton of primates (e.g., patterns of integration/modularity, potential ontogenetic shifts, functional constraints) and the environmental factors that could have been instrumental in past selective events. I am also currently working at La Venta, a 11-13 million year old fossil site in Colombia that records some of the earliest clear members of modern primate groups.

Link to research publications:

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=Vv6hl5YAAAAJ&hl=en>

Professional Activities:

- Former associate editor for Journal of Human Evolution
- GVSU Women in Science and Engineering Faculty Mentor
- Member of the University Academic Senate representing the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Grants:

Co-PI, 2018. The evolution of niche differentiation among platyrrhine primates. Funded by the Leakey Foundation.

Personal Interests:

Reading, hiking, yoga, and keeping my dog out of trouble.



FACULTY

DEGREES:

Ph.D. (Biological Anthropology) 2010
CUNY Graduate Center

B.A. (Anthropology & English) 2002
George Washington University

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