

University of Guelph

PSYC*3100 Course Outline: Fall 2019

General Information

Course Title: Evolutionary Psychology

Course Description:

Evolutionary psychology is often described as an approach to psychology rather than a specific branch of psychology (so it would be more like behaviorism than, say, social psychology). It begins from the premise that just as our bodies have evolved by the process of natural selection, our minds have so evolved. So, just as our eye is an adaptation produced by a historical, biological process of adaptation over stretches of evolutionary time, the mind and at least some of its various functions have been shaped by historical processes that have “designed” it for solving specific information processing problems. While there is wide agreement that evolution matters to psychology, it may matter in a number of ways. We shall examine a number of key ways in which it is thought to matter, developing a basic competence in Darwinian, evolutionary thinking, and looking to its application in areas such as sex differences, familial relationships, social life, emotion, and culture. The main learning outcome of this course: to provide the student with tools to think about the role of evolution in the understanding of cognition.

Credit Weight: 0.5

Academic Department (or campus): Psychology

Semester Offering: F19

Class Schedule and Location:

LEC Tues, Thur
02:30PM - 03:50PM
RICH, Room 2520

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Don Dedrick
Instructor Email: ddedrick@uoguelph.ca
Office location and office hours: Rm. 329 MacKinnon Bldg. Office Hours: Thursday 11-2pm. and by appointment, please email your request.

GTA Information

Please see CourseLink website for information about TAs.

Course Content

Specific Learning Outcomes:

1. To understand the ways in which evolution informs traditional psychological topics.
2. To apply the basics of evolutionary thinking to psychologically relevant topics.
3. To comprehend basics of Darwinian evolutionary thinking about living organisms.
4. To develop and apply tools for evaluating evolutionary psychological claims.
5. To differentiate distinct evolutionary approaches to psychological topics.
6. To write clearly about evolutionary-psychological topics.

[Other more specific learning objectives listed at the beginning of each chapter of EP]

Lecture Content (Topics within a week may continue from the Tuesday to the Thursday class)

Week 1

Thursday only

Introduction to the class

Reading: EP 1.1 & 1.2

Week 2

T: Design and natural selection--key concepts. Reading: EP Ch. 1.3

TR : Evolutionary approaches in psychology. Reading: EP Ch. 1.4

Week 3

T: Continuation of Week 2 + Brain and evolution. Reading EP Ch. 1.5

TR: Brain and evolution. Reading EP Ch. 1.5 with special attention to the "fear circuit."

Week 4

T: 3 approaches to evolutionary problem solving: Modular Evolutionary Psychology, Human Behavioural Ecology, Cultural Evolution (Gene-Culture coevolution) Reading: EP Ch. 2.1, 2.2 pp. 35-39.

TR: Obesity, a case study. Reading EP Ch.2.2, pp. 40-43 + Levels of complexity Reading EP Ch. 2.4.

Week 5

T: In-class Quiz #1 [Tuesday Oct. 1]

TR: Human and animal--*homo sapiens* place in nature. Reading EP Ch. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3. 3.4

Week 6

T: What makes us human? Reading EP Ch. 3.5 + Discussion of the quiz questions

TR: Continuation of T class + in class video: *The Minds Big Bang*.

Week 7

T: Thanksgiving break (class to be replaced in the last week)

TR: Sex and sexual selection. Reading: EP Ch. 4.1, 4.2, 4.3

Week 8

T & TR: Mating systems and mating preferences. Reading: EP Ch. 4.4, 4.5

Week 9

T & TR: The family and inbreeding avoidance. Reading: EP Ch. 5.1, 5.2

+ The origin of the family. Reading: EP Ch. 5.3, 5.4, 5.5.

Week 10

T: In-class Quiz # 2 [Thurs. Nov. 5]

TR: the social evolution of primates. Reading: EP Ch. 6.1,6.2, 6.3

Week 11

T & TR: cooperation, reciprocity, prisoner's dilemmas, sociality, and evolution + the cognitive capacities for cooperation. Reading: EP Ch. 6.4, 6.5

Week 12

T: Emotions and their evolution. Reading: EP Ch.7

TR: Brain and cognition and their evolution. Reading: EP Ch. 8

Week 13 Written Assignment due on T [Nov. 25th, before midnight] in dropbox.

T: Culture and cultural inheritance. Reading: EP 10.2, 10.3

TR: incorporating culture into evolutionary theory. Reading: EP 10.4, 10.5

Course Assignments and Tests:

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
In class Quiz #1	Oct. 1	20	1,2,3
In class Quiz # 2	Nov. 5	20	1,2 4, 5
Written assignment	Nov. 25	30	2,4,5,6

Final examination date and time:

EXAM Mon

11:30AM - 01:30PM (2019/12/09)

Room TBA

Final exam weighting:

The final exam = 30% of the total grade. It will focus mainly but not exclusively on the material covered in weeks 10-13. A study outline will be provided.

Course Resources**Required Texts:**

Evolutionary Psychology. [EP] Hans van de Braak. Pearson. 2013. ISBN 978-0-273-73794-0

Other Resources:

Supplementary texts will be made available on the Courselink website.

Course Policies**Grading Policies**

Quizzes 1 and 2 are to be completed in class, on the specified dates.

The Written assignment is to be submitted to dropbox, available on the Courselink site for the course, on the date specified.

Late work is not accepted without a reason (medical or otherwise). There is no late penalty: either a piece of work is accepted late (with a reason) or it is not accepted at all and the student receives a grade of 0 (zero) for that course component. If you are aware you will miss a deadline, contact the instructor as soon as possible and discuss potential solutions to the missed deadline.

Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor

University Policies**Academic Consideration**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email accessibility@uoguelph.ca or see the website: [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

Course Evaluation Information

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) .

Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is **Friday November 29**.

For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Academic Calendar:

[Current Undergraduate Calendar](#)