Course time and location:
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 6:30-9:20pm, BSB 108
May 6-June 21, 2013

Instructor:
Jillian O’Connor
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Phone: x21401
Office: PC 321
Office hours: By appointment

Please note: This syllabus, including scheduling, topic order, topics themselves, and assessment strategy, is subject to change. You will be informed of any changes in class and on our Avenue to Learn website.

Course Description
This course concerns the relevance of contemporary evolutionary theories and knowledge for understanding human psychology and behaviour, especially social behaviour. The subject matter is interdisciplinary: required readings and lectures will include recent research by anthropologists, biologists, economists, health scientists, and psychologists. While developing an appreciation of the ways in which evolutionary thinking can inform the study of human psychology and behaviour, you will also gain experience in understanding and evaluating primary research reports. You will thereby acquire a more critical grasp of the relationships among research methods, data, and interpretations, and this capability will assist you in evaluating research-based claims that you encounter elsewhere.

Readings
There is no textbook for this course. The required readings are articles and excerpts from both primary research literature and more elementary sources. Students are responsible for all of these readings, which, unless otherwise noted, can be accessed through the McMaster library online. It is recommended that you use Web of Knowledge, which can be accessed through the University's Library Website (http://library.mcmaster.ca/). You will be tested on readings even if their content is not discussed in class. You are expected to know the key concepts of the papers, including motivation, methods, results, and interpretation. You will not be required to memorize trivial details.

Assessment
Grades will be assigned on the basis of (1) a 3-hour in-class final exam on Thursday June 20th, worth 50% of the total grade, and (2) performance on two in-class tests, to be held in class on Tuesday May 21 and Tuesday June 4, each of which will each count 25% of the final mark. Term tests will assess knowledge and comprehension of lectures prior to the test night and of assigned readings up to the test night. Term tests and the final exam may include multiple choice and/or short answer and/or essay questions.
Missed Tests
There will be no make-up tests under any circumstances. If you file acceptable documentation with your Dean of Studies, your grade will be based on the test(s) and exam that you completed, with appropriate re-weighting. For further information about missed work, medical exemptions (including the McMaster medical certificate), exam conflicts, and deferred exams see http://www.science.mcmaster.ca/associatedean/. A deferred final exam will not necessarily be of the same format as the original final exam.

Final Grade Calculation
Grades will be computed out of 100 points using the McMaster Grading system. The instructor reserves the right to adjust final marks up or down, on an individual basis, in light of special circumstances and/or the student's total performance in the course.

Communication Policy
Any student wishing to contact the instructor should use e-mail. All e-mail must be sent from a McMaster e-mail account. E-mails must use proper grammar and spelling. I cannot guarantee that I will receive all voice mail messages. The instructor is not responsible for returning long distance calls from students. To ensure a proper response from your instructor, include your full name and student number in each email to your instructor.

Policy on the Recording of Lectures
Students must obtain permission from the instructor to record lectures in this class.

A note on Dates and Deadlines
The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with an explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Academic Integrity
Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in any way which results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. Any student who infringes one of these resolutions will be treated according to the published policy. This behavior will result in serious consequences, e.g., a grade of zero (0) on an assignment, loss of course credit with a notation on the transcript (“grade F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on academic dishonesty, please refer to Mac’s Academic Integrity Policy, at http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.
SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Topic 1. Introduction to Evolutionary Psychology

http://www.psych.ucsb.edu/research/cep/primer.html

Topic 2. Mate Choice


Topic 3. Intrasexual Competition


Topic 4. Marriage & Conflict


Topic 5. Inclusive Fitness & Kinship


Topic 6. Parent-Offspring Conflict


Topic 7. Altruism


Topic 8. Culture


Topic 9. Cognition
