PSYCHOLOGY 3F03: Evolution & Human Behaviour

Fall 2019
Where: LR Wilson Hall B1007
When: Mondays & Thursdays 2:30-3:20, and Friday - 4:30-5:20

Instructor: David Filice  filicd1@mcmaster.ca

TAs: Jessica Ostrega
    Paz Fortier
    Cameron Anderson
    Tim Foley

Office Hours:
Instructor: Available by appointment
TAs: Posted weekly

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. Ideally, you will thereby acquire a more critical grasp of the relationships among research methods, data, and interpretations, and this critical capability will assist you in evaluating research-based claims that you encounter elsewhere.

Course Website:
All online communication will take place on Avenue to Learn. Any changes to the course will be posted here, along with announcements, the course syllabus, reading list, and lecture slides. There is also a monitored discussion board for any course content.

Required Readings:
There is no required textbook for this course. Rather, students are responsible for reading a variety of primary and secondary literature listed below in the course schedule. All readings can be accessed via the McMaster library using an internet connection on campus, or by logging in with a MAC ID while off campus.

Grading:
Midterm 1 (Sept 30): 20%
Midterm 2 (Nov 1): 20%
Assignment (Dec 1): 20%
Final Exam (TBD): 40%
The midterms are not cumulative and will assess your knowledge and comprehension of lectures and readings assigned prior to the day of the test. The final exam will cover the content of the entire course—lectures, readings, and all. Tests and the final exam may include multiple choice and/or short answer and/or essay questions. There will be no “make-up” midterms. A deferred final exam will not necessarily be of the same format as the original final exam. The assignment will be provided after the second midterm. It may be submitted late but at a penalty of -15%/day. If you file acceptable documentation online with the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) or with your Dean of Studies, your final grade will be based on the test(s) and exam that you completed, with appropriate re-weighting of the final exam. For further information about missed work, medical exemptions, exam conflicts, and deferred exams, see http://mcmaster.ca/msaf/.

Grades will be computed out of 100 points and converted to a letter grade as follows:


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.

**Schedule and Readings:**

| Week 1 | Topic: Intro & History  
|        | No reading |
| Week 2 | Topic: Evolution  
| Week 3 | Topic: Evolution & Behaviour  
| Week 4 | Topic: Foraging & Fleeing  
| Week 5 | Sept 30: Midterm 1  
|        | Topic: Sex  
| Week 6 | Topic: Sex  
| Week 7 | READING WEEK |
| Week 8 | Topic: Conflict  
| Week 9 | Topic: Conflict  
|---|---|
| Week 10 | **Nov 4: Midterm 2**  
Topic: Parental care  
| Week 11 | Topic: Cooperation  
| Week 12 | Topic: Evolutionary medicine and language  
| Week 13 | Topic: Evolutionary psychology: The bigger picture  
Reading: TBD |
| Week 14 | **Dec 1: Assignment due**  
Topic: Exam review  
No reading |

**Academic dishonesty:**
Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of 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 the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, under the Senate Policy Statements in the online calendar.

**General university rules:**
Please read and adhere to the General Academic Regulations and Senate Policy Statements in the online calendar.