



## PSY 410: Evolutionary Psychology (Fall 2012)

Mon-Weds 4:00-5:20 pm

McKenzie Hall 221

Instructor: Ryan Giuliano ([giuliano@uoregon.edu](mailto:giuliano@uoregon.edu))

Office hours: Straub 302\*, Fri 1-3 pm or by appt.

### Course Overview

Evolutionary psychology is the application of Darwinian analysis to the study of human behavior. Evolutionary psychology is *not* a sub-field within psychology (i.e., cognitive, developmental, or clinical psychology), but rather an *approach* to answering questions about behavior. Thus, this course will emphasize *critical thinking* via evolutionary theory to tackle questions from a variety of fields in psychology. Topics will cover the biological basis of a wide range of human behaviors, such as sex, emotion, stress, morality, culture, religion, and consciousness.

### Course Materials

There is no textbook assigned for this course. Weekly readings will be posted on Blackboard at least one week prior to in-class discussions. Exams will feature multiple questions from each reading, so it is recommended that students not only read all material but read them thoroughly enough to be able to think critically about the content.

### Class Format

Most class meetings will be lecture-based, with presentations used during lecture available for download on Blackboard. Lectures will cover assigned readings that should be read *before* class, so that coordinated group discussion may be possible. Students are encouraged to speak up during lecture and offer comments on the material being presented. Coordinated discussions will take place during some lectures, where students will be split into groups of 5-6 to discuss specific questions raised by the lecture.

### Assignments and Evaluation

Mini-quizzes	5%	<i><u>*No late assignments will be accepted without medical documentation. This is for your own good. Temptations to incur late penalties lead to greater loss.</u></i>
Participation	10%	
Info-graphic	10%	
Info-graphic Write-up	10%	
Evolution Intro Exam	15%	
Midterm Exam	25%	
Final Exam	25%	

*Mini-quizzes:* In lieu of an attendance requirement, a mini-quiz will be given at the end of each lecture, consisting of a single multiple-choice question. There will be roughly 15 quizzes throughout the term, the best 13 of which will count toward your grade. Thus, it may not be critical for you to take each quiz. **5% of final grade.**

*Participation:* A key focus of this course is to encourage critical thinking and skepticism about controversies within the field of evolutionary psychology. There will be ample opportunity for participation during lectures, as students are encouraged to speak up at any time, and also during discussion segments that will be coordinated during class. Engaging with these discussions will form a not insignificant **10% of your final grade**.

*Evolution Info-Graphic:* You and a partner will write a create an 'info-graphic' that characterizes a phenomenon within evolutionary psychology. Your info-graphic must be based on a review of the current empirical and theoretical literature on the relevant topics, while the best info-graphics will also include an original contribution to the issue, either via a reframing of the theory or a unique marriage of disparate topics. In addition, a write-up of 1-2 pages (double-spaced) must be turned in that summarizes the content of the info-graphic and includes proper citations and references in APA format. Only one paper and graphic should be submitted per group. Grading will be broken down as follows:

<i>Engagingness, style, &amp; factual accuracy of graphic</i>	10%
<i>+ Breadth &amp; understanding of research in write-up</i>	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20% of final grade</b>

*Exams:* All exams will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions covering material from readings, class lectures, and discussions. Since course material will be building upon the foundations of evolutionary theory covered early in the course, some elements of the final exam will be cumulative. **Intro: 15%. Midterm: 25%. Final: 25%.**

*Experimental Credits:* You may earn up to 2% on top of your final grade for participating in two hours worth of experiment through the Department of Psychology's Human Subjects Pool (<https://uopsych.sona-systems.com/>). Alternatively, you can also earn these 2% by completing a methodological critique of a recent (2009-2012) empirical paper from the journal *Evolution and Human Behavior*. **2% bonus.**

### **Disability Services**

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability related barriers to your participation, please notify me as soon as possible. You may also wish to contact Disability Services in 164 Oregon Hall, at 346-1155, or [disabsrv@uoregon.edu](mailto:disabsrv@uoregon.edu).

### **Academic Misconduct**

If you knowingly engage in academic misconduct, you are not only cheating your fellow students, but are missing the point of a college education. If caught, you will get a 0 on the assignment or test, and possibly face more severe punishment. Please inform yourself about the student conduct code (<http://conduct.uoregon.edu>) and about plagiarism, a particularly common form of misconduct

(<http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students>). This includes falsifying information about absences. All excused absences must be approved through Oregon Hall (see me for details).

### Class Schedule\*

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>
1	M (9/24) W (9/26)	Syllabus & Intro to Evolution Core Concepts of EP	Cosmides & Tooby Buss et al.
2	M (10/1) W (10/3)	Sexual Selection Genes & Kin Selection	Miller Nowak et al.
3	M (10/8) W (10/10)	Challenges & Controversies <b>EVOLUTION INTRO EXAM</b>	deWall; Angier; Chopra
4	M (10/15) W (10/17)	Stress & Status Hierarchies Emotion	Sapolsky (2004; 2005) Ekman
5	M (10/22) W (10/24)	Brain Evolution Language & Cognition	Krubitzer Ghazanfar; Hauser et al.
6	M (10/29) W (10/31)	Social Intelligence & ToM Development & Epigenetics	Baron-Cohen Hernandez et al.
7	M (11/5) W (11/7)	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b> Morality	Henrich; Pinker
8	M (11/12) W (11/14)	Cultural Evolution Religion	Mesoudi et al. Norenzayan & Shariff
9	M (11/19) W (11/21)	Memetics <b>NO CLASS: Evolution Info-graphic Assignments</b>	Dawkins
10	M (11/26) W (11/28)	Consciousness & the Self <b>Presentations</b>	Dennett
Final	R (12/6)	<b>FINAL EXAM @ 3:15 pm</b>	

\*subject to change (see Blackboard)