

PSYC.607

Advanced Evolutionary Psychology

Tuesday 11:30am-1:50pm (143 Straub Hall)

Instructor: Azim Shariff
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Class Format: The first few classes will serve as an introduction to evolutionary psychology, and the challenges involved in testing evolutionarily oriented hypotheses in psychology.

Subsequently, the last seven classes will provide us with active examples by featuring different guest discussants from the department, and student presentations on evolutionary approaches to their research topics (see below). The outcome of this should be that students have a good eye for what kinds of research questions can be fruitfully addressed and tested from an evolutionary perspective.

Following discussion of the presentations, we will discuss an assigned reading on a specific theme or methodology. Readings will be emailed by the Friday preceding the class. Rough Schedule for Classes 4 through 10:

Presentation	Presentation Discussion	Break	Paper Discussion
45 min	45 min	10 min	45 min

Assignments and Evaluation:

Presentation	40%
Final Paper	40%*
Participation	20%

** No late papers will be accepted without medical documentation. This is a protective mechanism for you guys. The temptation—especially prevalent in graduate school—to ‘buy’ more time with late penalties too often leads to the unnecessary hemorrhaging of grades, which makes it difficult to give the high grades that I want.*

Presentations: Buss argues that one day *all* psychology will be evolutionary psychology, and, like with biology, we will no longer need the “evolutionary” descriptor, as it will be assumed. This was actually presaged by Darwin himself, and we are going to put the idea to the test. There is a huge amount of very interesting psychology research going on in this department every day, but very little of it could right now reasonably be described as *evolutionary* psychological research. Your task is to take the evolutionary perspective on the topics that are being addressed in our department’s labs. Each class, one student will give a presentation that:

- Briefly reviews a major (current or past) topic of research of the guest faculty discussant,
- Point out the important evolutionary questions that the given topic raises,
- Critically review of any existing attempts to address these questions, and
- Provide detailed suggestions for new ways that these questions could be addressed, theoretically and/or empirically.

These presentations should be about 45 minutes long, after which we will take a 10 break before returning for feedback from the guest faculty discussant, and discussion with the class. **40% of final grade.**

Term Paper: The term paper offers an opportunity to produce a plan for incorporating ev psych into your own research. Essentially, the paper should involve the same four steps as the presentations, but with reference to your own research. This can be the topic that you and your advisor are already working on, or a new research direction for you, however this assignment will be most useful if it is for a research topic that you do actually plan to work on. Papers should contain a theoretical discussion of what evolutionary oriented predictions can be made regarding your area of research as well as one or (more likely) more studies that can address these questions. These experiments should be well designed and do-able. Papers should be 15-25 double spaced pages and are due on Mar 16th, which is the Friday following the last class. **40% of final grade.**

Discussion Participation: A key focus of the class will be active discussion of research ideas and challenges for empirically addressing evolutionary hypotheses. The class is small enough that we can have very engaging discussions with everyone participating. Please make sure you come to class prepared, having done all the readings. **20% of final grade.**

Accessibility 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.

Academic Misconduct: By this point, I shouldn't need to discuss this, and I'm not going to.

Class	Date	Presenter	Topic
1	Jan 10		Organizational Meeting
2	Jan 17	Azim	Whirlwind introduction to evolutionary psychology
3	Jan 24	Azim	The proper use of evolutionary psych: perils & pitfalls
4	TBD	Mary	Guest discussant 1: Jennifer Freyd
5	Feb 7	Colton	Guest discussant 2: Sara Hodges
6	Feb 14	Karyn	Guest discussant 3: Sanjay Srivastava
7	Feb 21	Devin	Guest discussant 4: Paul Slovic
8	Feb 28	Jessica	Guest discussant 5: Marjorie Taylor
9	Mar 6	Jordan	Guest discussant 6: Pranj Mehta
10	Mar 13	Erica	Guest discussant 7: Dare Baldwin
X	MAR 16		FINAL PAPERS DUE VIA EMAIL