



PSY 410: Evolutionary Psychology (Winter 2016)

Monday-Wednesday 4:00-5:20 pm
Pacific 16

Instructor: Ryan Giuliano (giuliano@uoregon.edu)

Office hours: LISB 118, Monday 12-2 pm

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

The only required material is an iClicker (any version will work). There is no textbook assigned for this course. Weekly readings, lecture slides, and in-class videos are all available on Canvas (select "Pages" from the lefthand menu, then "Course Material"). Students are highly encouraged to download all readings as soon as possible and begin to get acquainted with the material. Exams will feature essay questions focused on the content of each reading, so it is recommended that students not only read all material but read thoroughly enough to be able to reason critically about the content. A significant portion of the readings will include peer-reviewed journal articles with dense scientific language. Each student's ability to parse these articles for the information most relevant to what is emphasized during lectures will be crucial for performing well in this course. For example, students are not expected to be expert in neuroscience or genetics, but students are expected to be able to discuss how neuroscience or genetics findings relate to evolution and psychology.

Class Format

Most class meetings will be lecture-based, with presentation slides used during lecture available for download on Canvas. 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.

Assignments and Evaluation

Mini-quizzes	15%	<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>
Term Paper	30%	
Intro Exam	15%	
Midterm Exam	20%	
Final Exam	20%	

Mini-quizzes: In lieu of an attendance requirement, a mini-quiz consisting of 3 to 7 multiple choice questions will be interspersed within each lecture, worth **15% of your final grade**. There will be 16 mini-quizzes throughout the term, the best 12 of which will count toward your grade. Since four quizzes will be dropped when calculating your grade, there will be no make-up opportunities. If you know you will not be able to attend a given lecture due to a university-excused absence, it is your responsibility to contact me ahead of time and we will make alternative arrangements. **Students who complete all 16 mini-quizzes will receive a 1% bonus on their final course grade.**

Term Paper: You will write a concise but in-depth treatment of a problem within evolutionary psychology that bridges at least two of the topics covered in class. The best papers will involve a review and evaluation of the current empirical and theoretical literature on the relevant topics, plus an original contribution to the issue, either via a reframing of the theory, a unique marriage of disparate topics, or a proposal for a new empirical investigation of an unresolved issue. Recommended length is 10 pages (double-spaced).

Papers will be submitted through Canvas via “Assignments” on the lefthand menu. You will need to upload the final file twice: once through the “Verisite” link and once through the “Speedgrader” link. Grading of the term paper will be broken down as follows:

Breadth and understanding of existing research	12%
Insightfulness of original contribution	12%
Engagingness, style, and composition	6%
Total	30% of final grade

Exams: All exams will consist of 15-20 multiple-choice questions and 3-5 essay 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. A study guide will be posted for each of the exams at least a week before testing. Due to the grading demands on GTFs, exams will be returned to students within at least 2 weeks of completion. Your patience in awaiting these grades is much appreciated! **Intro exam: 15% of final grade. Exams 2 & 3: each 20% of final grade.**

Experimental Credits: You may earn up to **2% extra credit** 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*. Critiques must be written on an article pre-approved by the instructor.

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 the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall, at 541-346-1155, or uoaec@uoregon.edu; <http://aec.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://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>. 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)* & Due Dates</u>
1	M (1/4) W (1/6)	Syllabus & Intro to Evolution Core Concept of Evolutionary Psych	Cosmides & Tooby (1997) Buss et al. (1998)
2	M (1/11) W (1/13)	Sexual Selection Genes; Kin vs. Group Selection	Miller (1998) Nowak et al. (2010)
3	M (1/18) W (1/20)	*****NO CLASS: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. HOLIDAY***** Challenges & Controversies	deWaal (2002); Angier (1999); Chopra;
4	M (1/25) W (1/27)	Exam # 1 Stress & Status Hierarchies	Sapolsky (2004; 2005)
5	M (2/1) W (2/3)	Emotion Brain Evolution	Ekman (1999) Krubitzer (2009)
6	M (2/8) W (2/10)	Language & Cognition Social Intelligence & ToM	Ghazanar (2008) Rizzolatti et al. (2009)
7	M (2/15) W (2/17)	Development & Epigenetics EXAM #2	Weaver et al. (2004)
8	M (2/22) W (2/24)	Morality Cultural Evolution	Haidt (2008); Henrich (2006) Mesoudi et al. (2004)
9	M (2/29) W (3/2)	Religion Memetics	Norenzayan & Shariff (2008) Dawkins (1991) — Term Papers DUE
10	M (3/7) W (3/9)	Consciousness & the Self Course Wrap-up & Final Review	Dennett (1988)
Final	R (3/17)	FINAL EXAM @ 2:45 pm (Thursday)	

*all readings available on Canvas