



Psyc 377 Evolutionary Psychology

MWF 11-11:50
Spring 2017 syllabus

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How this class will meet the learning outcomes for an interdisciplinary studies course:

1. *Identify an issue or question related to the interdisciplinary course(s)*
We will discuss several human behaviors such as mate selection, parenting, cooperation, and cognition in the context of evolution and natural selection.
2. *Describe what each discipline contributes to an understanding of that issue.*
We will discuss the adaptive and non-adaptive (often social) explanations for these behaviors and the research which supports each theory.
3. *Explain the benefits of being able to combine these contributions.*
We will discuss the benefits of not just understanding the mechanisms of human behavior but the function and origin of these behaviors.

Teaching philosophy and classroom expectations:

- I do not make judgments about a student's character based on their grades/performance in my classes.
- I do care very much about my teaching, how I run a classroom, and will do anything I can to help you get the best possible grade in this course.
- My goal in life is NOT to give busy work, torture students, and make their lives miserable –really, I have better things to do with my time.
- I consider all students adults which means that I believe that students are able to make decisions for themselves, have a life outside the classroom, and if students need help, they will come to me (I do not chase students around and I don't monitor their attendance closely).
- I think students learn more and get more out of a class when they read the book and come to class and participate in class.
- I expect that students will ask questions in class if they need me to repeat something, clarify what I said, and/or are curious about something
- Learning should be fun and relaxing, but difficult. Very few of us have sponge-like brains, so if you want to learn something you have to work hard.
- Please do not take video or audio recordings of me without my permission. I consider this not only CREEPY but a violation of my privacy.

Class Materials

Text: Buss (2015) Evolutionary psychology: The new science of the mind, 5th edition

Articles: Hard copies of articles for discussions will be available in class. Electronic copies will be available through D2L.

Internet Sources: Course material will be provided through Desire to Learn (D2L). This will include the syllabus, lecture outlines, outside reading assignments, and anything else I come across that may be interesting and/or useful for class.

Course requirements

Exams: There will be three exams that will cover the textbook, lecture, articles, and any other materials provided in class. I will provide make-up exams with a legitimate, documented excuse and if you contact me within 24 hours of the scheduled exam.

Assignments:

Article discussions: In order to provide students exposure to research, they will be expected to read 3 articles relating to research in evolutionary psychology. Students will be expected to take a brief quiz to provide evidence that they read the article and then participate in a group discussion about each article. Two of these articles will be used for the final paper for the class.

Adaptive versus non-adaptive explanation paper: Students will write one paper which will relate to the major learning outcomes for the class. The paper will ask students to discuss a behavior, to explain the adaptive and non-adaptive explanations for that behavior, to discuss the research evidence for each explanation, to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each approach, and the benefits of combining the approaches.

Details of the writing assignments will be provided in separate handouts. Late assignments will lose 10% of the available points per day.

Grading: Your grade is based on the number of points earned in the class.

Point distribution:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Exams (80pts x 3) | 240pts | 69% |
| Article discussions (20pts x 3) | 60pts | 17% |
| Article quizzes (5pts x 3) | 15pts | 4% |
| <u>Adapt vs non-adapt paper</u> | <u>35pts</u> | <u>10%</u> |
| Total | 350pts | 100% |

Letter grade cutoffs:

| | |
|----|----------|
| A | 93%-100% |
| A- | 90%-92% |
| B+ | 87%-89% |
| B | 83%-86% |
| B- | 80%-82% |
| C+ | 77%-79% |
| C | 73%-76% |
| C- | 70%-72% |
| D+ | 67%-69% |
| D | 60%-66% |
| F | <60% |

Quiz rules for Evolutionary Psychology Articles

What material will I be quizzed on?

- Each quiz will cover the article assigned for discussion
- The main purpose of the quizzes is to prove that you have read the article
- The questions should be easy if you have read the article
- Before taking the quiz you should be able to answer the following questions:
 - What is the purpose of the study/article review?
 - For research articles: What are the variables and how were they manipulated/measured?
 - For article reviews: What are the main points that the author is making? Explain the evidence the author uses to back up those ideas.
 - What were the major findings of the study and/or the authors primary conclusions?

What will the quiz consist of? Is there a time limit?

- Each quiz will consist of 5 multiple choice questions (1 point each)
- Once you start the quiz, you will have 7 minutes to complete it
- Because you have a limited amount of time, you should read the article before you take the quiz and not skim the article for the first time during the quiz

When should I take a quiz?

- Each quiz will be available for 7 days
- You may take the quiz at the time that is most convenient for you during those 7 days
- Each online quiz will be available on D2L one week before a scheduled article discussion
- You must take the quiz by **10 am on the Friday** before the article discussion
- I recommend that you take the quiz early, rather than later (i.e. at the last minute) in case something goes wrong with your computer or something comes up in your life

What if something goes wrong with my quiz?

- Occasionally students will see an error message or be booted out of the quiz (especially when the quiz is taken in the middle of the night)
- If you have an error, try to go back into the quiz to answer the questions and submit the quiz before on time. You may have to try this several times
- You will not be penalized for computer malfunctions. If your quiz is late because of errors, send me an e-mail, tell me what happened and I can remove the late penalty.
- I will remove late penalties no more than once during the semester. If you receive errors repeatedly I suggest that you try another time or computer to finish your quizzes.

Can I use any materials when I take the quiz?

- You may use the article, textbook, and class notes
- You must complete the quiz individually. You may NOT work together, or get help from others inside or outside of class. GETTING HELP OR WORKING TOGETHER IS CHEATING

Additional course information

Attendance: Attendance is expected in this class. I do not keep a written record of attendance, however, my experience is that students do not perform well in a course if they miss a lot of classes. Please note that you will be responsible for any lecture material, announcements, or schedule changes given during class time.

Academic honesty: I do not tolerate violations of academic honesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and copying/buying papers off the internet. You are responsible for understanding and abiding by the university academic standards. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in the failure of the course. Please see Chapter 14, *Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures* of the *UWSP Community Rights and Responsibilities*. This can be found at <http://www.uwsp.edu/centers/rights/>

Disability accommodation: Please contact me and Disability Services during the first two weeks of the semester if you are in need of any additional accommodations (346-3365).

Religious accommodation: Religious beliefs will be accommodated according to UWS 22.03 as long as you notify me within the first three weeks of the beginning of class of the specific dates on which you will request relief.

Tutoring-Learning Center: The center provides assistance such as group and individual tutoring, help with computer skills, and help with writing papers. They are located in 018 LRC (346-3568). They can also be found at <http://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/>

Withdrawal policy: If you decide you no longer want to take the course you must follow the university procedures for officially dropping the course. If you stop attending and do not officially drop the course you will receive an F in the course. See the Registration and Records webpage for information about when the last day is to drop a course (click on Registration Dates and Information). <http://www.uwsp.edu/reg-rec/>

Tentative Schedule

| | DATES | TOPICS | READINGS | DUE DATES |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|---|
| Understanding evolution | | | | |
| week 1 | Jan 23-27 | Introductions and history | Ch. 1 pgs. 2-16 | |
| week 2 | Jan 30- Feb 3 | Basic Anthropology Natural and sexual selection | Ch. 1 pgs. 18-21 Chapter handout | |
| week 3 | Feb 6-10 | Products of evolution Misunderstandings of evolution | Ch. 2 pgs. 35-38 Ch. 1 pgs. 35-38 | Article discussion Feb 10 |
| week 4 | Feb 13-17 | Levels of analysis Methods for testing evol hyp | Ch. 2 pgs. 38-42 Ch. 2 pgs 42-44, 54-62 | |
| week 5 | Feb 20-24 | Catch up classes –paper help | | Exam 1 Feb 24 |
| Sex and Mating | | | | |
| week 6 | Feb 27- Mar 3 | Women’s mating strategies | Ch. 4 | |
| week 7 | March 6-10 | Men’s mating strategies | Ch. 5 | Article discussion March 10 |
| week 8 | March 13-17 | Homosexuality –evol explanation and mating strategies | | Article discussion March 17 |
| week 9 | March 20-24 | SPRING BREAK | | |
| week 10 | March 27-31 | Conflict between the sexes –rape and jealousy | Ch.11 | |
| week 11 | April 3-7 | Catch up classes –paper help | | Exam 2 April 7 |
| Parenting and living in groups | | | | |
| week 12 | April 10-14 | Parenting and child homicide | Ch. 7 | |
| week 13 | April 17-21 | Kinship and inclusive fitness | Ch. 8 | |
| week 14 | April 24-28 | Cooperation and Altruism | Ch.9 | Adapt vs. Non-adapt paper due April 28 |
| week 15 | May 1-5 | Evolution of human cognition | | |
| week 16 | May 8-12 | Catch up classes | | |
| Week 17 | May 17 | Finals week | | Exam 3 Wed 12:30-2:30 |