



52.1. Issues in Learning & Development: Evolutionary Psychology



When & Where: Days & Time: M, W, F; 10:00 am – 11:05 pm
X-Period: Thurs 12:00 pm – 12:50 pm
Location: Moore Hall, Room 202

Instructor: Prof. Jay Kralik

How to find me: E-mail: Jerald.Kralik@Dartmouth.edu
Office: Moore 259
Phone: 6-0610
Office Hour: Tuesday, 4-5 pm

Course Description: In this course we examine the human mind and behavior from a broad evolutionary perspective. We start by covering the main principles of evolution and Darwin's most extraordinary insight: the evolution of all species from a single, common ancestor. Then we make the important causal connection to our minds by building up from genes to mind. Next, we look at the influence of evolution on our cognitive, social and emotional processes via the problems faced by our ancestors. Limitations in our cognitive processing, and universals in social and emotional processing provide evidence for evolved adaptations. We next consider how sex and reproductive strategies influence male and female behavior in a variety of species, including humans. Throughout the course, we will consider how the most enigmatic and compelling of human qualities, such as love, aggression, morality and modern culture, are influenced by our evolutionary history.

Grading: 22% Three Quizzes (10%, 10%, 2%)
22% Midterm Exam
13% 'Blitz' Presentation (described below)
8% Group Presentation in 'Symposium'
5% Participation (especially questions/comments during Blitz & Symposium)
30% Take-Home Final Exam

Quizzes: See schedule on last page of syllabus. They will be held during the first 15 minutes of class. The first quiz will cover *all* lectures and assigned readings up to the quiz date; the second quiz will cover all new material after the midterm. The third quiz will be on a short, terrific passage I need you to read before the *Crash Course in Human History* lecture. Questions are typically short answer and longer essays.

Midterm Exam: See schedule on last page of syllabus. The midterm will cover *all* course material up to the midterm exam date. Questions are typically short answer and longer essays.

Student Presentation Blitz: Each student will give one Powerpoint presentation on any related topic. The length of the presentation will depend on course enrollment size. It will likely be 7-10 minutes with 2-3 minutes to answer questions. For example, it could be on social psychology, personality, sexual development, homosexuality, aggression & warfare, politics,

economics, law, religion, philosophy, science, art, music, humor, fashion, media, etc. I will say more about the presentations in class. Note that students taking the course as a Neuroscience major elective must choose a neuroscience-based topic.

Class Symposium: Over two days, student groups will make presentations on topics on societal problems and what light an evolutionary perspective might shed on the problem and its possible solutions. Societal problems include obesity and health issues, prejudice, racism, social and economic inequality, financial risk-taking, crime, climate change, political gridlock, and global conflicts. Later in the term I will end a lecture early to allow students to form approximately four-person groups. Each group will then email me three possible topics, one of which I will assign. Everyone should participate in the presentation. Presentation length will depend on course enrollment, but will likely be ~10 minutes. I will say more about this in class.

Take-Home Final Exam: The final exam will cover *all* course material, but will be heavily weighted toward later material. I will ask all students to submit two questions from their presentation topic, and some of these questions will appear on the exam. Questions will be short answer and longer essays. You can use any material—that is, it is open book—however, you cannot work together or discuss anything related to the exam with others once the questions are made available. I will say more about the final exam in class.

Readings:

1. *Evolutionary Psychology* (EP) by David Buss
2. *Blind Watchmaker* (BW) by Richard Dawkins
3. *Demonic Males* (DM) by Richard Wrangham & Dale Peterson
4. *Nisa* (N) by Marjorie Shostak
5. Course Readings (CR) on Blackboard

Electronic devices policy: It is in the students' best interest regarding the course to minimize outside distractions during class. Therefore, electronic devices can only be used for note taking. Thus, you will not be allowed to have any unrelated 'applications' open, such as email and Facebook.

X-Period: Be prepared to meet for X-Hour if we fall behind in the material.

Accommodations for Disabilities: Any student with a documented disability needing accommodations or academic adjustments is requested to speak to me and give me a copy of your accommodations form by the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Director of Student Disabilities may be consulted if necessary.

Religious Observances: Please let me know during the first week of the term if you will be unable to attend any class meetings as a consequence of religious observances.

Honor Principle: Although this should go without saying, activities in this class, as throughout Dartmouth (and life), are governed by the honor principle. No notes are allowed for quizzes and exams, and you cannot obtain help from or provide it to another student during the quizzes/exams. Answers should be in your own words.

See Below for Lecture Dates, Topics & Reading Assignments:

Dates	Topics	Readings
1. M—Jan 7	Introduction & Course Overview	
2. W—Jan 9	<i>I. Evolution & Ultimate Causation</i> Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution	EP 1; BW
3. F—Jan 11	Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution II	EP 2; BW
4. M—Jan 14	<i>II. Mind, Brain, Behavior & Proximate Causation</i> From Genes to Brain: Genetics & Development	CR 1; BW
5. W—Jan 16	Brain Evolution	BW; If Needed: CR 2
6. F—Jan 18	From Genes to Behavior: Instincts & Learning	CR 3: 1105-1129; BW
7. W—Jan 23	<i>III. Human Evolution</i> Quiz #1 Human Evolution Comes to Life I: Video	DM
8. *Th—Jan 24*	Human Evolution Comes to Life II: Video continued	DM
9. F—Jan 25	The Human Mind's Big Bang	CR 4; DM
10. M—Jan 28	<i>IV. Environmental Problems</i> Finding Food: The Biological World	EP 3; DM
11. W—Jan 30	Finding Shelter: The Physical World	EP 3; DM
12. F—Feb 1	Staying Alive	EP 3; DM
13. M—Feb 4	Why Be Social?	EP 9, 10, 12
14. W—Feb 6	Midterm Exam	
15. *Th—Feb 7*	<i>V. Sexual Mind</i> Why Sex, Why Sexes?	CR 6, 7; N
16. M—Feb 11	Lust: Mating Strategies I	CR 7; EP 6, 11; N
17. W—Feb 13	Love: Mating Strategies II	EP 4, 5; N
18. F—Feb 15	So, What About Us?	CR 8; N
19. M—Feb 18	<i>VI. Family Matters</i> Quiz #2 Parenting, Family, & Homosexuality	EP 7, 8; N
20. W—Feb 20	<i>VII. Crash Course in Human History</i> Quiz #3 The Bell Curve versus Guns, Germs, & Steel	CR 9
21. F—Feb 22	<i>VIII. Hot Topics: Student Presentations Blitz</i> Hot Topics: TBA	CR 5
22. M—Feb 25	Hot Topics: TBA	CR 5
23. W—Feb 27	Hot Topics: TBA	CR 10
24. F—Mar 1	Hot Topics: TBA	CR 10
25. M—Mar 4	Hot Topics: TBA	CR 11
26. W—Mar 6	<i>IX. Symposium: Can Evolution Shed Light on Societal Problems & Solutions?</i> Class Symposium I	CR 11
27. *Th—Mar 7*	Class Symposium II	CR 11
28. F—Mar 8	<i>X. The Bitter End</i> What It All Means	EP 13
29.	Final Exam: TBA	

X-Period