**PSY 3030-13416: Evolutionary Psychology**

**Winter 2024**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 pm – 2:47 pm**

**124 Mathematics and Science Center**

**Instructor**

Dr. Tara DeLecce

Office: 214A Pryale Hall

Office hours: 11 am – 12:30 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays or by appointment

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**Course Description**

This course provides a review of empirical and theoretical work in the broad field of evolutionary psychology, which addresses human and non-human nature, individual differences, and group differences, including sex differences and cultural differences from an evolutionary perspective.

**Course Prerequisites:** 2.0 (C) or better in PSY 2500

**Required Text:**

Buss, D. M. (2019). *Evolutionary psychology: The new science of the mind (6th edition)*. Routledge. ISBN-13: 978-1138088610

\*Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester; these will be posted on Moodle.

**Course Procedures:** *Lectures, discussions, videos, readings*

**Cross-Cutting Capacities**: Effective communication, critical thinking, application of evolutionary theory

**Course Objectives** (derived from American Psychological Association guidelines):

1. Respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.
2. Understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.
3. Value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinnings of psychology as a science.
4. Communicate effectively in a variety of formats.
5. Be able to describe how selection pressures have shaped modern humans over millennia, especially how modern human psychology is a product of evolutionary forces.

**Expectations**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner conducive to an environment of academic integrity and respect for the educational process and the safety and wellbeing of all members of the community. Adherence to the Student Code of Conduct will be expected; violations of this code will be reported to the Dean of Students. The Code of Academic and Student Conduct can be found at [http://www2.oakland.edu/deanofstudents/handbook/conduct.cfm](about:blank). In addition, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner conducive to an environment of academic integrity and respect for the educational process and the safety and wellbeing of all members of the community. The instructor reserves the right to limit this course’s survey of alternative perspectives to those that meet generally accepted standards of plausibility in the field of scholarship covered in this course, as judged by the instructor’s professional opinion. Students are expected to show mastery of these perspectives in their spoken and written contributions.

**Behavior and Courtesy**

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS IS STRONGLY DISCOURAGED.

Multi-tasking, such as taking notes and texting, decreases your performance on both tasks. Note taking using electronic devices such as laptops also introduces temptation and distractions. If you do decide to use electronic devices anyway, it is asked that you please be courteous of your fellow students and sit in the back of the classroom so as to minimize the distractions to those around you. Disruptive classroom behavior will be addressed by 1) a general announcement; 2) direct announcement; 3) a request to leave the classroom; 4) calling the Campus Police to have the student removed from the classroom.

**Add/Drops & Incompletes:** The University add/drop and incomplete grade policies will be explicitly followed. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the University deadline dates for dropping the course.

**Attendance and Participation:**

Although there is no formal attendance policy, your attendance and participation are expected for your benefit. This is a discussion-based course, and so your participation is vital to not only your success, but that of the entire class. You will not be formally penalized, but repeated absences will likely adversely impact your performance on exams. Students will still be responsible for all material covered, even if they are not present for a particular class period. Therefore, it is **highly recommended** that you take time to become acquainted with classmates so that you may have access to notes should you need to miss class. It is each student’s responsibility to find access to missed notes on their own. Finally, class begins promptly at the listed start time, and punctuality is important. If you must arrive late, please enter the class quietly. If you are disruptive, you will be asked to leave.

**Make-up Examinations:** If you miss an exam for whatever reason, **you may make up that exam within one week of the missed exam**. To be granted an opportunity to take a makeup exam, you **must provide documentation of an emergency that prevented you from taking it on time (e. g. doctor’s note) within 24 hours of the originally scheduled exam date.** Students arriving late to an exam will be permitted to sit for the exam until the first student has finished, after which point the exam will need to be made up.

**Special Considerations:** A student with a documented learning or physical disability must contact the **Office of Disability Support Services**, 103A North Foundation Hall, (248) 370-3266, and **inform the professor of special needs during the first week of classes**. **If students do not provide documentation from the Office of Disability Support Services, then they will not be granted special considerations (e. g. extended testing time).** For more information, visit [http://www.oakland.edu/dss](about:blank)

**Policy on Academic Misconduct:** The University’s regulations that relate to academic misconduct will be fully enforced. Any student suspected of cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students and, thereafter, to the Academic Conduct Committee for adjudication. Anyone found guilty of academic misconduct in this course may receive a course grade of 0.0, in addition to any penalty assigned by the Academic Conduct Committee. Students found guilty of academic misconduct by the Academic Conduct Committee may face suspension or permanent dismissal. The full policy on academic misconduct can be found in the General Information section of the Undergraduate Catalog.

**Excused Absence Policy:** University excused absences applies to participation as an athlete, manager or student trainer in NCAA intercollegiate competitions, or participation as a representative of Oakland University at academic events and artistic performances approved by the Provost or designee. For the OU excused absence policy, see [http://wwwp.oakland.edu/provost/policies-and-procedures/](about:blank)

**Audio Recording Policy:** Audio-recordings of lectures may be made only with permission from the instructor and only in extenuating circumstances. Requests must be accompanied with proper documentation (e.g., DSS note) of need for audio recordings. Recordings may only be used for the purpose of personal study. Students may not share these recordings with other individuals without the consent of the instructor. At the conclusion of the semester, students may request permission to keep these recordings if needed, otherwise it is expected that all audio-recordings will be deleted from all electronic recording and storage devices. Students who fail to delete recordings without proper permission to retain will be asked to delete them, after which proper channels (including legal) will be followed to ensure improperly handled audio-recordings are not disseminated.

**Veteran Support Services:** The office of Veteran Support Services (VSS) is responsible for giving support services to more than 300 veterans, service members, and dependents of veterans. VSS is staffed with personnel who are veterans and current or former students. Any student veteran or dependent of a veteran requiring assistance with navigating the Veterans Administration, understanding service-related benefits, or requires referrals to campus and community resources should contact one of the Veterans Liaisons by visiting 116 North Foundation Hall, or phoning 248-370-2010. [http://wwwp.oakland.edu/veterans/](about:blank)

**Departmental Policy for Resolution of Student Academic-Related Concerns:** The student has an obligation to attempt to resolve all academic-related concerns with the instructor. If a suitable solution cannot be reached, then the student should consult the Department of Psychology Procedure for the Resolution of Student Academic-Related Concerns at [https://www.oakland.edu/Assets/Oakland/psychology/files-and-documents/Undergrad-Advising/Resolution%20of%20Student%20Concerns-04-2017-approved%20full%20doc.pdf](about:blank)

**Grade Determination**

***Exams***

There will be four exams throughout the semester based on previously covered course material. The fourth exam will be administered on the scheduled final exam date. These exams will consist of multiple-choice questions and short essay questions. Grades will be assigned on the basis of the degree to which the answers reflect a complete and accurate response to the question. Each exam is worth 100 points, except for the final which will be cumulative and worth 140 points.

***Reflection papers***

This class is discussion based. Therefore, your participation will be important for your benefit. To that end, you will be required to submit a reflection paper for each chapter (and accompanying additional reading for that chapter if there is one). These papers must be typed, double spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font, and approximately two pages in length. All reflection papers should be in complete sentences and in paragraph form – no bullet-point lists! The content is more important than the length, and each paper **should include a discussion of at least two results or topics that you found interesting from the week (or one per assigned material such as one for the textbook, one for the additional reading for the week, etc.), along with an explanation of why**. Further, **you should include one additional question or direction for future research** that current research in the topic has not yet addressed and/or seems to have been neglected. Such additional questions will be discussed in class. It is expected that you have read the entire chapter before coming to class, so your reflection paper can cover any part of the chapter and/or any additional assigned readings. During weeks when additional readings are assigned, you will be expected to touch on those in your reflection paper as well as the regular textbook chapter. Each reflection paper will be worth 10 points for a total of 110 total points for the semester. Papers will be due at the start of class on the last day that we cover a given chapter (see schedule at the end of the syllabus for specific due dates). Late reflection papers will be accepted for half of the original point value for 3 days past the original due date. Reflection papers turned in after this 3-day period will get a zero.

***Application of Evolutionary Psychology paper***

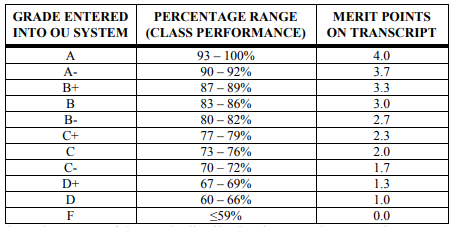
In addition to weekly reflection papers, at the end of the semester (see schedule at the end of this syllabus for due date) you will complete one last paper in which you will apply principles of evolutionary psychology to your own life. This paper will be worth a total of 150 points, and will need to address the following points for full credit: 1) it must be based on a theory discussed in class (e. g. parental investment theory, error management theory) and have a general description of the theory, including which researcher is credited with the theory, 2) a description of at least two research studies and its results discussed in class that supports the theory, 3) a description of the situation in your own life (or one you have personally observed), and 4) how this situation in your own life relates to your chosen theory.

Also, the application of theory paper must be 6 - 8 pages in length, be in APA format, double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12-inch font, and be grammatically correct as well as free of spelling errors. Points will be taken off if the paper does not meet all requirements mentioned in this section.

***Grade Calculation*:** Your final grade will be calculated as the number of points you achieved across the four exams, reflection papers, and application of evolutionary psychology paper out of the total available 700 points. The number of points achieved out of 700 will be converted to a percentage. Grades will then be assigned according to the following scale:

Exams (440) + Reflection papers (110) + Application of evolutionary theory paper (150) = 700 points total

***Grading Scale:***



Extra credit, specifically up to a 5% bonus, may be assigned to a student’s final grade based on participation in class discussion throughout the semester, at the instructor’s discretion. These points are not designed to be a significant portion of the grade, but may allow for a student to be moved up to the next higher grade/half grade (e.g., B- to B) in recognition for participation and engagement in the course material throughout the semester.

**Detailed Class Schedule and Topical Outline…tentatively**

All dates and topics are subject to change. Students will be informed of changes by the instructor at least a week in advance. Please also note that additional readings may be assigned beyond the textbook chapters, check Moodle regularly for these readings as they should also be incorporated into your reflection papers.

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| Date | Topic | Assignment Due Start of Class |
| Jan 4 | Overview of Course and Requirements |  |
| 9 | Scientific movements leading to evolutionary theory | Chapter 1 |
| 11 | Scientific movements leading to evolutionary theory | Reflection paper 1 |
| 16 | Fundamentals of evolved human psychology | Chapter 2 |
| 18 | Fundamentals of evolved human psychology | Reflection paper 2 |
| 23 | Human survival problems | Chapter 3 |
| 25 | Human survival problems | Reflection paper 3 |
| 30 | **EXAM 1: Chapters 1 - 3** |  |
| Feb 1 | Women’s long-term mating strategies | Chapter 4 |
| 6 | Women’s long-term mating strategies | Reflection paper 4 |
| 8 | Men’s long-term mating strategies | Chapter 5 |
| 13 | Men’s long-term mating strategies | Reflection paper 5 |
| 15 | Short-term mating strategies | Chapter 6 |
| 20 | Short-term mating strategies | Reflection paper 6 |
| 22 | **EXAM 2: Chapters 4 - 6** |  |
| 27 | **NO CLASS THIS WEEK – WINTER RECESS** |  |
| 29 |
| Mar 5 | Problems of parenting | Chapter 7 |
| 7 | Problems of kinship | Chapter 8 |
| 12 | Problems of kinship | Reflection paper 7 |
| 14 | Cooperative alliances | Chapter 9/Reflection Paper 8 |
| 19 | **EXAM 3: Chapters 7 - 9** |  |
| 21 | Aggression and warfare | Chapter 10 |
| 26 | Aggression and warfare | Reflection paper 9 |
| 28 | Conflict between the sexes | Chapter 11 |
| Apr 2 | Conflict between the sexes | Reflection paper 10 |
| 4 | Status & Prestige | Chapter 12 |
| 9 | Status & Prestige | Chapter 12 |
| 11 | Applying evolutionary psychology | Chapter 13 |
| 16 | Applying evolutionary psychology | Reflection paper 11/**Application of Evolutionary Psychology Paper due** |
| **APRIL 18th, THURSDAY** | **Final Exam: 12:00 – 3:00 pm (same room)** | **Chapters 10 – 13; previous chapters as well** |

Students are responsible for knowing all important dates throughout the semester, including the date and time of the final exam. Always check the registrar’s calendar for official dates:

https://oakland.edu/registrar/important-dates/