Psychology 3T3-Sociobiology

Time: Tuesday 19:00-22:00
September 14 – November 30, 2004
Location: Burke Science 137

Instructor: Dr. Sigal Balshine
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Office Hours - Wednesday 9:30-11:30 by appointment only
Web page: www.science.mcmaster.ca/Psychology/psych3T3

TAs: Julie Desjardins and Eric Bressler
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Office Hours: - Tuesday 17:30 – 18:30 and Fridays 10:00 – 11:00

Course description and objectives: In this 3rd year course is the study of social phenomena in the light of contemporary evolutionary knowledge and theories. It is NOT centrally concerned with Homo sapiens, and will take a comparative approach to the study of animal behaviour. Students seeking a course that focuses on human sociobiology are advised to consider taking Psychology 3F3.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met all prerequisites listed in the McMaster calendar for this course. If you lack any prerequisites for this course, the Department may cancel your registration at any time.


Evaluation will be based on:
1. Five short quizzes, held in class worth 4% each
2. A short critical review due 2nd November, worth 30%
   (See Review Description below)
3. A three hour, registrar-scheduled final examination, worth 50%

Breakdown of marks:
Quizes (4% each) x 5 = 20%
Critical Review = 30%
Final Exam = 50%
Total = 100%

Note. Extensions will NOT be offered. Late reviews will be devalued by 10% per day. For example if you hand in your review, one day late on November 3rd, you will receive 0.9 x the grade you would have received if the work was turned in on time, 0.8 times the grade if on November 4th and so on. If you miss a quiz for valid reasons then the missed quiz mark will be reassigned to the remainder of the quiz marks. A second missed quiz will receive a zero. If class assignments conflict with a personal religious observance, please notify the course instructor at least four weeks in advance.

Grades: These will be computed out of 100 points and converted to a letter grade as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
A+ &= 100-90, \quad A &= 90-85, \quad A- &= 84-80, \\
B+ &= 79-77, \quad B &= 76-73, \quad B- &= 72-70, \\
C+ &= 69-67, \quad C &= 66-63, \quad C- &= 62-60, \\
D+ &= 59-57, \quad D &= 56-53, \quad D- &= 52-50, \\
F &= 49-0
\end{align*}
\]

The instructor reserves the right to adjust final marks UP or DOWN, on an individual basis, in light of special circumstances and/or the student’s total performance in the course.

Lectures will not be a reprise of the textbook but will focus on a review of theory and supportive research since the book was published. Assigned readings must be done before the class for which are assigned.

Course Organization
The 5 quizzes will be multiple-choice questions. They will be based on the readings assigned for that class and will also include material from previous lectures.
The critical review will count for 30% of your grade. This will be based on a review and critique of a empirical report of sociobiological research with a publication date in 2004.

The final exam will consist of multiple choice questions and short answers (with ample choice). Good marks will require thorough familiarity with and comprehension of the content of both the textbook and the lectures.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Quiz #</th>
<th>Chapters to Read</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. September 14</td>
<td>(Introduction)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. September 21</td>
<td>(Optimality &amp; Social Behaviour)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. September 28</td>
<td>(Predator &amp; Prey, Life History Theory)</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. October 5</td>
<td>(Sexual Selection)</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. October 12</td>
<td>(Sperm Competition)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Extra assigned reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. October 19</td>
<td>(Mating Systems Evolution)</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. October 26</td>
<td>(Sexual Conflict)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. November 2</td>
<td>(Sex Ratio Allocation)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Extra assigned reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. November 9</td>
<td>(Parental Care)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. November 16</td>
<td>(Parent-Offspring Conflict)</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>11. November 23</td>
<td>(Cooperation &amp; Conflict In Social Groups)</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. November 30</td>
<td>(Guest Lecture &amp; Review)</td>
<td>5</td>
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Academic dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.
It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained. (Insert specific course information, e.g. style guide)

2. Improper collaboration in group work. (Insert specific course information)

3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty.”