Psychology 3F03  
*Evolution & Human Behaviour*  Fall 2012

**Where:** Health Sciences Centre (HSC) room 1A1  
**When:** Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays - 11:30-12:20 Sept 6 – Dec 5  
**Instructors:**  
Professor: David R. Feinberg (feinberg@mcmaster.ca)  
TA’s: Jillian O’Connor, Shane Golden, Aneesh Bose  
**Office Hours:** By appointment only

**Contact information**  
Address all communication about this course to this email address:  
*pnb.3f03@gmail.com*

We do not monitor Avenue to Learn email accounts. We may not receive emails sent to these accounts. Please do not send emails about the course to our personal email accounts either. All of the TA’s and the Professor have access to the course email account.

**Course Content Domain**  
This course concerns the relevance of contemporary evolutionary theories and knowledge for understanding human psychology and behaviour, especially social behaviour. The subject matter is interdisciplinary: required readings and lectures will include recent research by anthropologists, biologists, economists, health scientists, and psychologists.

While developing an appreciation of the ways in which evolutionary thinking can inform the study of human psychology and behaviour, you will also gain experience in understanding and evaluating primary research reports. Ideally, you will thereby acquire a more critical grasp of the relationships among research methods, data, and interpretations, and this critical capability will assist you in evaluating research-based claims that you encounter elsewhere.

**Required Readings**  
The required readings are articles and excerpts from both primary research literature and more elementary sources, listed below. Students are responsible for *all* of these readings, which, unless otherwise noted, can be accessed through the McMaster library.

**Assignments and Grading**  
Grades will be assigned on the basis of two 50 minute in-class tests, each worth 20% of your grade and one 2-class/1 hour and 40 minute test, worth 60% of the total grade. All tests will be given on scantron sheets, so expect a mix of multiple choice, true/false, matching, or any other type of question that can be implemented on scantron sheets. The 1 hour tests are not cumulative, but the final 2-class test is cumulative. Because you will not have been tested on the final 3rd of the material, that will be more highly represented in the third test, but you will be tested on material from every lecture in the final test.
Term tests will assess knowledge and comprehension of lectures prior to the test night and of assigned readings *up to and including* those scheduled for the test night. There will be no "make-up tests". If you file acceptable documentation online with the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) or with your Dean of Studies, your final grade will be based on the test(s) and exam that you completed, with appropriate re-weighting of the final test. For further information about missed work, medical exemptions, exam conflicts, and deferred exams, see [http://mcmaster.ca/msaf/](http://mcmaster.ca/msaf/). The MSAF is not a ticket to not take one of the exams. Suspected abuse of the MSAF system will be investigated by contacting your dean.

Term tests and the final test may include multiple choice and/or short answer and/or essay questions. A deferred final exam will not necessarily be of the same format as the original final exam.

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


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. Any student requesting a grade change must provide explicit evidence as to why the grade was calculated incorrectly.

**Schedule of Topics and Required Readings**

There is no textbook for this course. All readings are available either on the course website or on the University’s Library Website and were found by your professor using Web of Knowledge. We cannot guarantee you can find the papers using Google Scholar, or any other search engine. If you need help with Web of Knowledge, please go to the library and ask for help from a librarian. Failure to find the paper is not an excuse for not reading it. We will not give you the papers, nor should you share them with each other. Part of the assignment is learning how to find a paper on the library’s website. Any students caught sharing papers will be considered to be academically dishonest.

The schedule of topics and required readings are available on the course website. Please check often. Any changes to this document will be announced in class and noted on the internet.

**Readings and Videos**

Students are responsible for reading all assigned reading and watching all assigned videos. You will be tested on every reading assignment and every video. We do not have the luxury of discussing each reading and each video in class, but that does not make them any less important. Please be aware that there can be equal or unequal weighting of lecture material, reading material, and video material on the exams, even though we may not have enough time to spend on all of these in equal proportions in class. Although a popular question for students to ask, it is highly unlikely that we will inform you how much of any one medium will be represented on a test. All videos will be shown in class
and are also available for viewing on the internet, so you will be able to watch them in class and at your own convenience.

**Extra credit**
Students will be provided an opportunity to earn extra credit towards their grade(s) in the course. All students will receive only the same equal opportunity for this credit and no special circumstances will be considered. Details will be discussed in class when the time is appropriate.

**E-mail**
All students should have McMaster e-mail accounts. If you prefer to receive e-mail at another address, we will try to accommodate your request, but we cannot be responsible for the non-receipt of messages to students using non-McMaster e-mail addresses. Neither can the instructors be responsible for returning telephone calls from students. Any student wishing to contact an instructor should use e-mail. Please use formal English letter writing style when writing emails to the instructors. Emails starting with colloquial phrases like, “Yo prof” or “Hey”, or using some form of writing typically used in sms messages, 1337, etc. are not acceptable in an academic environment. We expect that at the 3rd year of university, all students will be able to communicate in a professional manner.

**Course Web Site**
All students registered in this course have access to the course website which you can access under the Psych 3F03 course listing on the departmental web site, or via avenue.mcmaster.ca. We will post lecture notes, term test feedback, and other course-related materials in this folder. Lecture slides are prepared with care and are often being improved upon until the minute class begins. We will do our best to get you the slides before class begins, but we cannot guarantee this will happen. We highly recommend that you do not use these slides during class, but rather that you take notes with pen and paper, and use the slides to augment your notes. We know that most of you will not do this, but it is the best way to get the most out of the lectures.

**Policy Reminder**
Your attention is drawn to the Statement on Academic Ethics and the Senate Resolutions on Academic Dishonesty, as found in the Senate Policy Statements distributed at registration and available in the Senate Office. Any student who infringes one of these resolutions will be treated according to the published policy. Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. a 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. If you have read this far in the syllabus, email the instructors at the course email with the heading “good student”. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, at [http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-](http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-)
AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf