Evolution & Human Behaviour

Course #: 3F03
Time: Mondays, 8:30-9:30am
Location: John Hodgins Engineering, Rm 376

Instructor: Paul Andrews
Email: pandrews@mcmaster.ca
Office Hour: Arranged on individual basis

Teaching Assistants:
Samantha Daniel, email: danies5@mcmaster.ca
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TA Office Hours: Arranged on individual basis

The course website is accessible via Avenue to Learn: http://avenue.mcmaster.ca

Course Description and Objectives
This course involves applying basic principles of evolutionary science to understand human behaviour and psychology. Registrants are expected to be familiar with the basic principles underlying evolutionary biology. The course will be a lecture format with readings. Grades will be determined by pop quizzes (totaling 15%), two midterms (25% each), and a final exam (35%).

Communication Policy
E-mail communications must originate from your designated McMaster e-mail account (i.e. mcmaster.ca account). Should we need to communicate with you about individual matters, the email will be sent to your mcmaster.ca account. You should monitor this account regularly. Email sent from third-party providers (yahoo, hotmail, cogeco, sympatico, etc.) will not be received. We have this policy for three reasons: 1. Reduce the amount of incoming spam to our accounts; 2. Ensure that we know with whom we are communicating; 3. Teach the professional use of e-mail. Please note that instructors cannot return long distance telephone calls. Please consider that email is a formal means of communication. You are expected to address your emails to the instructor formally, use coherent complete sentences, and should be signed with your name and student number. This is a 4th year course and we expect you to communicate with us at the university level.

The professor reserves the right to change any and all course requirements if the need should arise. Any change in the course requirements will be posted on Avenue and the details will be announced in class. Any concerns about announced changes should be addressed with the professor as soon as the changes are announced.

Courtesy
Students are expected to behave courteously to instructors and other students in the class, which includes refraining from activities that will disturb or distract others. For example, texting
or using the internet in class is prohibited because it distracts others. The instructors reserve the right to lower grades for violations of this policy.

**Grading Policy**

Grades will be based on pop quizzes (totaling 15%), two midterms (worth 25% each) and a final exam (worth 35%).

**Pop Quizzes**

One quiz will be administered every Tuesday that we have class. It will start promptly at 8:30am and end at 8:45am. It will cover all the reading materials for that week. The value of all the quizzes together will constitute 15% of the grade. The purpose of the quizzes is to give you an incentive to do the readings for the week.

The readings are from the primary literature. They are the best readings that I could find relevant to the topics for the course. However, some of them have a lot of technical detail. Given that the purpose of the quizzes is to give you an incentive to do the readings, the quizzes will tend to focus on the main themes of the readings, rather than on fine details.

**Midterms**

There will be two midterms, each of which will constitute 25% of the grade. The scope of each midterm is cumulative (i.e., all material covered in the class up until that time).

**Final exam**

There will be a final exam that will constitute 35% of the grade. It will be a cumulative exam, covering all material covered in the class.

**Final grade**

The instructors reserve the right to adjust final marks up or down, on an individual basis, in the light of special circumstances and/or the individual's total performance in the course. Apart from special circumstances, students will be assigned a grade from the McMaster University Grading Scale based on an overall assessment by the professor on the work submitted. To pass the course, the student will achieve a passing grade on all graded portions of the course (including attendance). Grades will be computed out of 100 points and converted to a letter grade as follows:

- 90-100 = A+
- 85-89 = A
- 80-84 = A-
- 77-79 = B+
- 73-76 = B
- 70-72 = B-
- 67-69 = C+
- 63-66 = C
- 60-62 = C-
- 57-59 = D+
- 53-56 = D
- 50-52 = D-
- < 50 = F
Missed Work Policy

If you are absent from the university for a temporary medical issue (e.g., the flu), lasting fewer than 5 days, you may report your absence using the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): https://pinjap01.mcmaster.ca/msaf/. Absences for a longer duration or for other reasons must be reported to your Faculty/Program office, with documentation. When using the MSAF, report your absence to pandrews@mcmaster.ca. You must be in contact with the instructor within 5 business days. Please note that the MSAF may not be used for the final paper.

For excused absences, no late assignments will be accepted and no makeups will be given. Instead, the value of the final paper will be increased by a corresponding amount.

Readings, Lecture Slides, and Audio Recordings of the Lecture

Readings will be posted on Avenue. Readings are designed to provide in-depth examples of topics presented in class. We will provide you with full references for papers available at the McMaster libraries. You will be expected to obtain these papers from Avenue and read them before the next class. These readings are materials that supplement what you learn in class, they are not a replacement for materials presented in class. As discussed above, you will be given quizzes on the reading materials.

After careful consideration, I have decided not to post the Lecture Slides on Avenue. The TAs and I will have copies of the slides, so if you have questions about the content of the slides, you may arrange a meeting with a TA to see them.

I will allow students to make audio recordings of the lecture. Video recordings are not allowed. These audio recordings are for your personal use as an aid to the class and may not be posted on the internet or otherwise shared or sold for profit.

Letters of Recommendation

If you think you might want a letter of recommendation from me after the course, then it will be helpful to plan for this. Since a weak letter can be harmful, I won’t agree to write a letter unless I can write a strong letter.

When I agree to write a letter, I have to think about the information that I’ve learned about the student to address these qualities. However, for most students, I only have a limited amount of information from the course that I can use to write a letter. So here is some advice about how to get a good letter from me.

1. Do well in the class.
2. Participate in class, ask good questions, and demonstrate that you understand the material. The more I learn about you, the easier it is for me to write a letter.
3. Be respectful and pleasant to me and to others. Disagreements go with the territory in science, but they should be carried out in a polite and professional manner.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to be familiar with McMaster’s policies on academic integrity as found in the Senate Policy Statements distributed at registration and available in the Senate Office (see http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf). Any student who infringes one of these resolutions will be treated according to the published policy.

Any instance of plagiarism will be dealt with in the most severe terms allowable by the Senate Policy on such matters.