

Instructor: Denise Mercado
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Evolution and Human Behavior (01:070:201)
Summer 2021
Remote Asynchronous 6/1/21 - 7/9/21

This course fulfills the Core Curriculum goal in the Natural Sciences Intro to human evolution (070:102) is recommended, but not required.

Learning Goals: The goal of this course is to explore human behavior through an evolutionary lens. Students will acquire an understanding of key concepts in evolutionary theory, sexual selection theory, parental investment theory, sociality, cooperation, and culture as key features of human evolution. We will incorporate material and frameworks from various disciplines including biology, evolutionary psychology, and human behavioral ecology. Lastly, we aim to complement strictly scientific approaches with more nuanced discussions of topics such as gender, beauty, love and monogamy, and the future of sex studies.

An important note: This is a 5-week intensive summer course. This means you will have to absorb the same amount of material as a typical semester, but in about one third of the time. A typical semester is 14 weeks, roughly 42 hours of class time. You can expect to spend 6-8 hours on this class per week to perform adequately. That being said, I have done my best to integrate flexibility into the grading structure and will always be on your side, assuming you have done your best as well.

Assignments and Grading (150 total points + 30 extra credit points)

1. Lectures, videos, short reading assignments

- You will not be graded for this, but you will need to learn the information and take notes from all of the lectures, videos, and reading to do well on the graded assignments.

2. Weekly Quizzes (75% of your grade, 120 points total):

- Every Monday: 6/7, 6/14, 6/21, 6/28, and 7/7 (24 points each).
 - All content from the previous week (lectures, videos, audio, and reading) may be on the quiz. The quizzes are not cumulative, meaning only the previous week's material will be on each quiz.
 - Questions will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer.
- Quizzes will be made available for 24 hours every week starting Sunday at 11:59pm until Monday at 11:59pm. You will have 3 hours to complete the quiz once you have opened it, but it should not take more than 30 minutes if you have already engaged thoughtfully with course content.
- Open note, open book, open internet, open everything except for asking other students.

3. Essay Assignment (25% of your grade, 30 points):

You will write a five-page essay (excluding cover page and any other supplementary material) related to the material from class that cites at least one article published in a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal. The easiest way to find a scholarly article is by logging into the RU library

website and searching with either Google Scholar or Web of Science. Essays should be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins and no larger than 12-point font. Points will be taken off for errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, word usage, and formatting. All pages should be numbered, and your name should appear as a running header on all pages. Be sure to include a list of references cited. The essay topic will be introduced during the second or third week of the course.

4. Extra Credit (30 points, these assignments are optional):

- Quiz on the syllabus on Monday 6/7 (5 points)
- Final cumulative quiz on the last day of class, Friday 7/9 (20 points)
- If, by the end of the semester, no one asks a question that can be answered by reading the syllabus or referring to information from lectures that cover the syllabus, then everyone will receive 5 points.

Schedule:

Week 1 6/1 – 6/6: Introduction and Evolutionary Theory pt. 1

Week 2 6/7 – 6/13: Evolutionary Theory pt. 2 and Mating/Parenting pt. 1

Week 3 6/14 – 6/20: Mating/Parenting pts. 2-3

Week 4 6/21 – 6/28: Mating/Parenting pts 4-6

Week 5 6/29 – 7/4: Sociality/Cooperation pt. 1-2

Week 6 7/5 – 7/9: Culture: Gender, Beauty, Love, Monogamy, etc.

Class Materials: This course incorporates multimedia material. There is no assigned textbook.

- All lectures and PowerPoints will be on VoiceThread in Canvas.
- All assigned reading will either be made available on Canvas or accessibly via URL.
- Links to videos will be posted in VoiceThread lectures and also in the course YouTube playlist- the link for which will be provided in lecture during the first week of class.
- Occasionally, you will be instructed to visit a website or access a podcast on a website.
- If you anticipate having technical issues accessing either Canvas, YouTube, or the internet generally, please email me during the first week of class.

Some class content will be available ahead of time, so it is possible to read ahead of the class schedule if you want to/are able to. Keep in mind, quizzes are only made available the week they are assigned.

Class Policies

1. Academic Integrity: Do not cheat. Do not plagiarize. No form of cheating, including plagiarism, will be tolerated, and any instances of cheating will be reported to the Rutgers Office of Academic Integrity without warning. Please visit <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu> for a fuller explanation of Rutgers' plagiarism policy.

2. Classroom Community: Students are encouraged to participate and be forthcoming with questions, thoughts, and opinions with the condition that they are respectful of their fellow students, the instructors, the people who conducted the research discussed, the people who were the subjects of the research discussed, and so on. Please consider the Canvas classroom a professional environment. Use technical terms during all discussions to avoid embarrassing or offensive language. Because this class is remote asynchronous, please address questions or comments in the VoiceThread on the lectures.

We will be covering a mere fraction of the research on sexual behavior and evolution. This field is continuously growing and changing. I will do my best to be comprehensive and inclusive of new research and am open to discussions of the limits of science in this arena of study.

For more information, please see the Rutgers Student Code of Conduct:

<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/student-conduct-processes/university-code-of-student-conduct/>

3. Inclusivity and Accommodations: We aim to be an inclusive and supportive class. Please visit <https://ods.rutgers.edu/> for more information on Rutgers Disability Services. Please visit <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/> for more information on Rutgers counseling and mental health services.

4. Missed Quizzes: Make-up quizzes will be administered by appointment. It is the student's responsibility to initiate communication regarding make-up quizzes within a week of the missed quiz.

5. Communication: Please email the instructor via your Rutgers email. We encourage that you seek clarification outside of class time if you need it. When you have a question, please consult this document first then email if you still don't have the answers you're looking for. Refer to the Rutgers Communication policy for more info: <https://policies.rutgers.edu/10311-currentpdf>