PSYC358
Evolutionary Psychology

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<tr><td>Wednesdays 3:30-4:30 in CIRS 4344A</td><td>Mondays 12-1 in Kenny 3605</td></tr>
<tr><td>Thursdays 11 to 12 over zoom:</td><td>Fridays 12-1 over zoom:</td></tr>
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Class Time: Wednesdays 5-8
PHRM 1201

1.0 *The Class:*

It has been just eight generations since our species understood how it got here and how we were made. In that time, the theory of evolution has been denied, reviled, and misused, just as it has been celebrated, refined, and expanded. What it hasn't been is fully societally digested. We have not come to terms with the implications that we—including our hearts and minds—are the products of the blind process of natural selection. Instead of attempting a comprehensive overview of the large field of evolutionary psychology, this course is going to focus on this attempt to digest its biggest implications. As a result, the course will involve extensive group discussion that attempts to wrestle with the most challenging and meaningful questions that emerge from the course material.

1.1 *Class Format:*

The class will have three components:
1. Pre-recorded lectures (I will email out youtube links) and texts (available on canvas under "readings") that you will watch and read at home, in advance of our discussion classes.
2. The first half (probably a little less) of our synchronous discussion class, which will involve small group (see section 1.2) discussions of a set of Discussion Questions for that week. During this small group discussion time, I may pop in and out to join the conversation for a few minutes at a time—though I won't be able to drop into each group every class.
3. The second half (probably a little more) of our synchronous discussion class, which will involve a section-wide discussion of the same set of questions from the small group

discussion. (Note that I may try cold-calling students for their thoughts. The goal here is to make sure a broader distribution of the class actively participates in these discussions than what we typically see when relying on people to volunteer to contribute. Though cold-calling can be a bit nerve-wracking for students, it's widely used in business and law schools (and high schools, for that matter), will be made easier by the fact that you had just worked out your thinking about these questions with your small group, and will develop an important skill)

The weekly set of Discussion Questions will be pulled from the Discussion Question/Analysis Papers that students submit for that week (see 2.1). Each student will submit one of these at some point during term. It will be based on that week's lectures and readings, and will be submitted the night before our Discussion Class. I will then go through that week's submissions and prepare the 4-5 questions that we will discuss. It's not necessary, but in case you want to collect your thoughts about the questions before class time, I will post them on Canvas at 1pm the day of our class.

This is, then, what the timeline will look like:

Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
Lecture video(s) posted by midnight						Discussion paper due by midnight (see section 2.1)	Discussion Questions posted by 1pm Discussion Class at 5pm or 6:30pm (depending on your section!)

Students preparing the Discussion Paper for that week can start the readings and watching the recorded lectures as soon as they are available, but will only have six days from when the lectures are posted to when their papers are due. Luckily the papers are short (3 pages double-spaced)!

1.2 *Your Discussion Group and Section*:

Good discussions can be hampered in large classes. As a result, we'll be splitting you up in two ways.

First, the 150-ish of you will be split into two sections: an early section that will meet 5pm to 6:25, and a late section that will meet from 6:35 to 8pm. For all discussion classes, you only need to come for your half section. **For the midterms, though, everyone will start at 5pm.** You have already been randomly assigned to an early and late section, however there can be a little trading during the first week for those who have strong preferences for an early or late section. I'll explain in class.

Second, you have also been randomly assigned to a small discussion group of four people. You will be with these same people all term, which will allow you to get more comfortable with each other, facilitating more open and better discussions. You will spend half of each discussion class with this group

1.3 *Class Expectations*:

In order to get the most out of this class, you will be required to not just be intellectually present and attentive during the class discussions, but also open and charitable. What do I mean by that? Given the nature of the class's aims, we will be diving right into deep and sometimes controversial topics. These topics can sometimes challenge preconceptions and received wisdom. I want you to try your best to judge those ideas from a place of openness.

Moreover, since we will be discussing these fraught topics together, we need to feel comfortable experimenting with ideas together. It's important that we respect each other, even if we don't agree with (or even respect) each other's ideas. In our discussions, judge people's ideas but resist the urge to judge them. The more we can create this kind of environment, the more open we can be to the most challenging ideas, and the more rewarding the intellectual journey will be.

2.0 *Grading*:

Discussion Question/Analysis Paper	24 points
Class Attendance	9 points
Discussion Board Participation	3 points
Midterm 1	20 points
Midterm 2	20 points
Final Exam	24 points

2.1 *Discussion Question/Analysis Paper* **(24% of grade)**:

Each student will sign up to prepare ONE three-page (double-spaced) paper that poses a discussion question of their choosing relating to any topic from the chapter's lecture/reading topic, and then provides an answer to that question.

2.1.1 Importantly, you don't want the discussion question to be a simple factual question that can be quickly answered, e.g.:

- ✘ When did humans and chimpanzees share a common ancestor? Was this later or earlier than our divergence from gorillas?
- ✘ What are three constraints on optimal design?

Instead you want it to be a question that can generate an interesting class-wide discussion, e.g.:

- ✓ In most other species, the males are the decorative sex and the females are visually drab and unremarkable. How come human females tend to invest so heavily in self-decoration?
- ✓ Should we base our institutions on the assumption of evolutionary psychology or is it better to operate under the assumption of social constructivism?
- ✓ Should we research and teach about biological group differences in ability?

I've put several example papers—of varying quality—in a folder in the Files section of Canvas. Do check these out before you write yours!
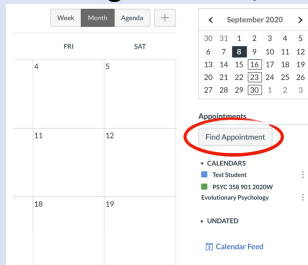
2.1.2 The grading rubric is as follows:

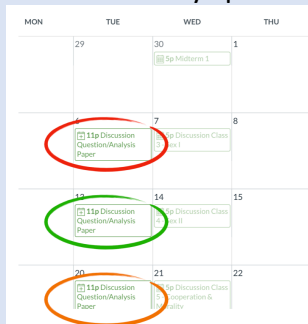|	
Suitability of Question for Discussion (is your question conducive to provoking interesting class discussion?)	5 points
Knowledge of Material (have you demonstrated an understanding of the material we've covered in lectures and readings?)	7 points
Sophistication of Analysis (have you demonstrated deep thinking about the contours and implications of the question you've asked?)	7 points
Writing Quality (is the presentation of your ideas clear?)	5 points
Total:	**24 points**

2.1.3 <u>Due Dates and Signing Up</u>: The questions that students come up with for these papers will form the basis of what we talk about in the following class. As a result, it's critical that you get the paper in ON TIME. **Your paper will be due by 11:59pm on the Tuesday immediately preceding that topic's Discussion Class**. For example, if you signed up to do a paper on October 26th's Cooperation and Morality class, your paper would be due 11:59pm on Tuesday, October 25th.

> **To sign up for your Discussion Paper topic and date on Canvas do this:**
> 1. On Canvas, choose Calendar on the left sidebar
> 2. When you get to the calendar, make sure our class is selected on the right sidebar
> 3. In the right sidebar, click "Find Appointment"
>
>
>
> 4. Select our class from the pop-up window. This will reveal all the options on the Tuesdays preceding our Discussion Classes
>
>
>
> 5. Choose the specific date you want (you will be writing on the topic for that Wednesday's Discussion class), and click "reserve" in the popup window

<u>Important</u>: Since we need students evenly distributed between the various classes, only 18 students can sign up for each day (150 students divided by 9 discussion classes = ~17 students each). And since this will be on a first-come-first-served basis, *and* since the first set of 18 students will have their papers due *next Tuesday,* **please sign up for your slot today!**

2.2 *Class Attendance* (**9% of grade**):

After the initial intro class, we'll have 9 Discussion Classes. For each class you attend, you'll get 1%. Attendance will be primarily recorded via TopHat, which I give you the code for towards the end of class. To sign up for TopHat

1. Go to https://tophat.com/
2. Click on <u>Login</u> if you have an existing account or <u>Sign-up</u> > <u>Student sign-up</u>
3. **When you are met with the join code field, enter 843258** (which should correspond to "Psychology 358 2022")

Make your account, <u>MAKING SURE THAT YOUR NAME AND STUDENT NUMBER MATCHES WHAT YOU HAVE ON CANVAS</u>

What if you miss a class, though?? Well…

2.2.1 <u>Alternative Assignment</u>: The discussion classes are our time to wrestle through the issues and implication that come up from the lectures and readings, and thus serve an important function. However, I recognize that there are many reasons why you might need to miss a class or two. In order to try to replace what you'd get in the discussion class, students can submit a shorter, 2-page (double-spaced) version of the Discussion Paper from Section 2.1 for each missed class, on the topic of the class you missed (if you somehow miss the class for which you're scheduled to do your normal Discussion Paper, then you would do both the 3- and 2-page paper). These missed class papers will be scored pass/fail, and passing papers will score you the class attendance point you would otherwise miss. You can upload the papers in the Missed Class Discussion Paper assignment on Canvas.

2.3 *Discussion Board Participation* (**3% of grade):**

I'm hoping we can have an active community on the discussion boards. The boards can be a venue for students to ask and answer clarification questions on the content we cover. They can also be a place to continue some of the conversations that are generated in class. Often, we won't manage to get to everything and everyone in the 75 minutes a week we get together, so people can post their thoughts and reflections on the boards. In order to incentivize this activity a little bit, you can earn a small part of your term grade by

1. Starting one thread in <u>each</u> of the halves of the term (Sept 7th to Nov 9th, and Nov 10th to <u>Dec 7th</u>). These may be your further reflections on a topic that came up in a preceding discussion class or lecture, or a study that you came across that is relevant to some of the topics discussed in class. Note – you are welcome and encouraged to ask for clarification questions about material you are unsure about on the discussion boards (see 4.1.2), but this <u>won't</u> count as one of these threads. Too easy to game.
2. Giving two replies on someone else's thread, again in <u>each</u> of the halves of the term (Sept 7th to Nov 9th, and Nov 10th to <u>Dec 10th</u>). You'll need to actually engage with what the thread has been about (that is, these have to be a little more than "Interesting point, Dave!"), but wagering an answer to someone who has asked for some help with the material <u>does</u> count.

So that's a minimum of six contributions total (1 thread and two replies in each half term) to earn the 3%. But you are of course welcome to post as much as you'd like. In past years there have been some very good and very helpful discussions on the boards.

2.4 *Midterms and Final Exam* (**64% of grade):**

We will have two midterms and a final exam spread throughout the course. Each student's test will comprise of <u>both</u> <u>multiple choice</u> and <u>short answer questions</u>. The midterms will likely be around 60 minutes, and the final a little more than that. I will give you more details closer to the relevant dates.

3.0 *Some Other Stuff*

3.1 *Cheating*

Don't do it. Here's why:

3.1.1. It's dishonest, and dishonesty accumulates and weakens you as a person. Every time you do something dishonest like this, it creates a deeper hole that you'll ultimately want to dig yourself out of.

3.1.2. It's cheating your fellow classmates. Since the class grades gets scaled to a set average, any unfair *unearned* advantage you claim comes at the expense of someone else's fairly earned accomplishment.

3.1.3 You're missing the point of a college education—which is much more about genuine learning, self-mastery, and building your character, than it is about your grade on a midterm.

3.1.4 I'll catch you.

So, for your own workload, for your classmates, and for your own character, make the one choice, one time, not to engage in misconduct, and then stick to it. You'll be better off for it. Familiarize yourself with UBC's policies on academic dishonesty: http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959

3.2 *Students with Special Needs*

Our university is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students. If you have a documented disability that affects your learning in the classroom or your performance on tests or exams, please contact

> Access & Diversity
> Brock Hall 1203, 1874 East Mall
> 604.822.5844
> www.students.ubc.ca/access

Students who need extra time for their midterms should contact both Access & Diversity and me by the last class of the month (so by Sept 28th as we have our first midterm on Oct 5th!)

If you are an athlete and will be competing during one of the midterms, please let me know well in advance and provide me the contact information for your team's academic advisor.

4.0 *How to Get Help*

4.1 *Help with the Course Material or Local Administrative Issues*

Students often ask how to improve their test scores. One simple answer is that you want to make sure you <u>fully</u> understand the concepts we've discussed in class and readings—making sure that nothing is still fuzzy. So here are four ways you can get clarity on something you're not fully understand:

4.1.1: **Ask in class.** You could do this in your small discussion group, as it's likely that one of your partners knows the answer (and would themselves benefit from having to explain it clearly). You can also do it in our class-wide discussion. If you're unclear about something, I can assure you that at least five other students are unclear about it as well. You'll be doing them a favour by bringing it up in class.

4.1.2: **Bring it up in a Canvas discussion:** If you don't feel comfortable bringing it up in our weird video-conferenced classes, or don't want to wait until the next class, there are discussion threads on Canvas specifically devoted to asking and answering questions (one for course content, and one for administrative questions). So don't hesitate to post your questions there. It also gives students

who know the answer an opportunity to explain it themselves—which can help their own understanding (so you're actually doing them a favour by asking!)

4.1.3: **Come to office hours**: Ian and I will each be holding office hours outside of class time. These are specifically devoted to answer student questions.

4.1.4: **Email Ian or me**: I've left this one last because it is actually <u>the least useful for the class as a whole</u>, since other students typically don't get to see any response. As a result, we may ask if we can move the question and our answer over to one of the discussion boards, where other students can also read them!

4.2

Help with High-Level Administrative Issues

For issues such as late withdrawal from classes, applying for academic concession, etc. please **contact Arts Advising:** Information on doing so is here: https://students.arts.ubc.ca/advising/contact-us/

4.3

Help with mental health and wellness issues:

Navigating your coursework is hard enough in the best of states. Doing so when dealing with mental or physical health issues, or other adverse circumstances like being the victim of sexual violence, is extremely challenging. Doing so in the shadow of an interminable pandemic makes things harder still. Though they do tend to sometimes get pushed to their limits, UBC does have several resources to help you with such struggles. You can read about the university resources available, as well as those available from the larger community here: https://students.ubc.ca/health

Also check out Campus Lightbox, built by your fellow students, that brings together multiple UBC- and community-related wellness resources: https://campuslightbox.com

Take care of yourselves.

5.0 *Schedule:*

	Date	Topic	Watch by next class	Read by next class
0	Sep 7	Intro	Lecture 1.1: Human History: The First Four Billion Years Lecture 1.2: Darwin's Big Idea	1.1 Stewart-Willliams (2020). Darwin Comes to Mind. *The Ape That Understood the Universe.* 1.2 Buss et al. (1998). Adaptations, Exaptations & Spandrels. *American Psychologist*
1	Sep 14	Origins	Lecture 2.1: Simple Mechanics and Complex Dynamics	2.1 Stewart-Willliams (2020). Excerpt from Appendix A. *The Ape That Understood the Universe.*
X	Sep 21	*Professor Away – No Class*	Lecture 2.2: Challenges and Controversy	2.2 Harden (2021). The Science of Terrible Men. *Aeon.*
2	Sep 28	Mechanics, Dynamics, Challenges, and Controversies		
M1	Oct 5	MIDTERM 1	Lecture 3.1: Sex 1 Lecture 3.2: Sex 2: Sexual Conflict	3.1 Bjorklund & Shackleford (1999). Differences in Parental Investment Contribute to Important Differences Between Men and Women. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*
3	Oct 12	Sex I	Lecture 4.1: Sex Diffs and Mate Preferences 1 Lecture 4.2: Sex Diffs and Mate Preferences 2 Lecture 4.3: Homosexuality 1 Lecture 4.4: Homosexuality 2	Optional: 4.1o Hodes (2018). Evolutionary Origins of Homosexuality. *The Gay & Lesbian Review*
4	Oct 19	Sex II	Lecture 5.1: Morality and Cooperation	5.1 Christakis (2019). Human Cooperation. *Blueprint.* 5.2 **TBA**
5	Oct 26	Cooperation and Morality	Lecture 6.1: The Social Brain Hypothesis I Lecture 6.2: The Social Brain Hypothesis II	6.1 Pinker (2011). The Cognitive Niche: Coevolution of intelligence, sociality, and language. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.*
6	Nov 2	Intelligence		
X	Nov 9	*Midterm Break – No Class*		
M2	Nov 16	MIDTERM 2	Lecture 7.1: Culture 1: Cultural Evolution Lecture 7.2: Culture 2: The Human Project	7.1 Boyd, Richerson & Henrich (2011). The Cultural Niche: Why social learning is essential for human adaptation. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.*
7	Nov 23	Culture: The Human Project I	Lecture 8.1: Culture 3: Religion and Cultural Group Selection Lecture 8.2: Culture 3: Religion and Cultural Group Selection 2	8.1 PODCAST: Creating God. *Hidden Brain (NPR)*: https://www.npr.org/2018/07/16/628792048/creating-god
8	Nov 30	Culture: The Human Project II	Lecture 9.1: Civilizations 1 Lecture 9.2: Civilizations 2	9.1 VIDEO: Ferguson (2011). The 6 killer apps of prosperity. *Ted Talks*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpnFeyMGUs8
9	Dec 7	How and Why Civilization Happened		
	TBD	FINAL EXAM		