

COURSE INFORMATION & SYLLABUS
PSYC 4223 – Evolutionary Psychology
Spring 2020

M/W/F 12:00 – 12:50p.m. Room: PY 101 Office: OD 117 M/W 2:20 – 3:00

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Don Knox

Email: don.knox@mwsu.edu

TEXTBOOKS: Buss, D.M. (2019). Evolutionary psychology: The new science of the mind, Sixth Edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Meston, C. “Why Women have Sex”

Wrangham, R. and Peterson, D. “The Demonic Male”

Diamond, J “Third Chimpanzee”

PSYC 4223 – Evolutionary Psychology

Course Description: Background: Origin of Species

“In the distant future I see open fields for more important researches. Psychology will be based on a new foundation that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation” (Darwin, 1859).

It is now some 150 years later and although science looks at Evolutionary Psychology as a rather new branch of psychology in reality it has been here for quite a long time waiting to answer the questions of the origins and nature of the human mind. No longer will the human mind consist in psychological terms as a blank slate that parents, caregivers, teachers, and one’s cultural context all contribute. The biological components of ecological systems evolved together forming the human brain. Behaviors are thus adaptations to environmental circumstances that existed in the past as well as in the present.

Designed from millions of years of adaptations, the human mind developed from circumstances our ancestors confronted. Evolutionary Psychology demands that we examine these adaptations and attempt to understand their evolved functions. What did natural selection want to accomplish with behaviors? Why are there universal patterns in behavior? Why do we fall in love? Is it possible that infanticide served a purpose at some particular time? Why do we get jealous, aggressive, fight wars, and engage in altruistic behaviors?

Prerequisites for this course - PSYC-1103 and PSYC-2203

Course Outline: This course will examine the mechanisms of the human mind through the understanding of evolutionary psychology. We will evaluate the origins of many models of behavior (many still expressed by cultures still relatively untouched by “civilization”) that

attempt to explain our current lives. Topics such as Sex and mating, how we parent, global kinship patterns, war and aggression, jealousy, and dominance hierarchies will be discussed as incorporated from outside readings along with the required texts. Finally, this course will attempt to use evolutionary psychology as a unifying theme for the many related field of science.

Course Outcome Competencies: By the conclusion of the course, the student will understand and will be able to:

- Define Evolved Psychological Mechanisms
- Be able to evaluate topics such as Sex and mating, how we parent, global kinship patterns, war and aggression, jealousy, and dominance hierarchies in terms of evolutionary psychology.
- Understand that Evolutionary Psychology is another theory in psychology that helps us to explain human behavior as an adaptation.

Course requirements: (Note – the journal assignments have to be turned in using D2L).

- 1) **Exams:** Four Exams (total of 70%)
- 2) **Journal reviews:** Three Journal reviews (total of 15%) Due 2/24, 3/30, 4/20
- 3) **Group Presentation/Personal Paper:** Group poster presentation and individual paper (total of 15% of grade) due 5/4

GRADING SCALE:

4 Exams – 700 points (Exams 1 -3 200 points each; Exam 4 100 points)
3 Journal Reviews – 150
Presentation/paper project - 150

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE _____ 1000 pts

The University has a standard grade scale:

A = 90-100, B = 80-89.9, C = 70-79.9, D = 60-69.9, F= below 60, W = Withdrawal, WP = withdrew passing, WF = withdrew failing, I = incomplete.

Instructor’s policy on Academic Dishonesty:

Academic Integrity: - Students are expected to abide by the rules for academic integrity. Any violations of these rules will be reported to the proper authorities for disciplinary action (please consult your student catalog – page 71). Students caught cheating in the class will be given a grade of “F” for the course. Cheating includes plagiarism—taking credit for someone else’s work (e.g., cutting and pasting text from someone else’s work from the internet or some other electronic form or directly quoting or paraphrasing someone’s work and not properly referencing the source).

Service for the Disabled: It is University policy that no otherwise qualified disabled person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the University. Students should inform the instructor of existing disabilities at the first class meeting.

Attendance Policy: After the 6th class absence (excused or unexcused) the instructor reserves the right to drop the student for excessive absenteeism. Coming to class late counts as an absence. All medical excuses must be cleared through the Dean of Students. This is to protect the privacy of the student.

THIS IS JUST A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Readings
Week 1	Introduction	Ch.1,
Week 2	Psychological Foundations	Ch.2,
Week 3	The Hostile Forces of Nature “Why Women have Sex”	Ch.3, Ch 1 - 6
Week 4	Women’s LT Mating Strategies “Why Women have Sex”	Ch.4, Ch 7-11
Week 5	Men’s LT Mating Strategies “The Demonic Male	Ch.5, Ch 1 - 6
Week 6	Short-Term Sexual Strategies “The Demonic Male”	Ch.6, Ch 7 - 13
Week 7	Problems of Parenting	Ch.7,
Week 8	Catch up 3 rd Chimpanzee”	Ch 1-10
Week 9	Catch up “3 rd Chimpanzee”	Ch 11 - 19
Week 10	Problems of Kinship	Ch.8,
Week 11	Cooperation:	Ch.9,
Week 12	Aggression and Warfare	Ch.10,
Week 13	Conflict Between the Sexes	Ch.11,
Week 14	Status, Prestige, and Dominance	Ch.12,
Week 15	Unified Psychology	Ch.13,
Week 16	Final Exam:	No Readings