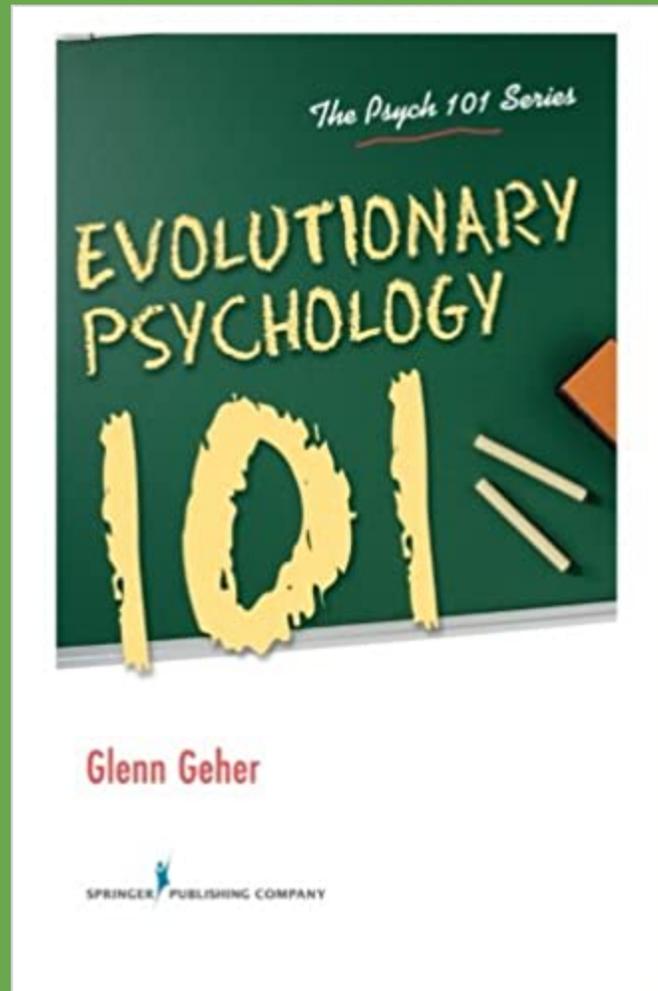


Syllabus
FALL 2024
PSY 363: Evolutionary Psychology (3 credits)



Professor: Glenn Geher (he/him)

Class Time: M/TH (Section 1: 2:00; Section 2: 3:30)

Office hours at: glenngeher.com (office is WH 347)

Email: geherg@newpaltz.edu

Phone: 845.257.3091

Course Summary:

Darwin wasn't a genius. The reason that his ideas have become so influential is because he had a strong understanding of the concept of natural selection. Granted, he is the first person to ever articulate this process and provide a broad range of examples across various physical and behavioral attributes across a dizzying array of species, so maybe he was close to being a genius.

But what made him so smart wasn't a special sort of intelligence that he possessed that others don't. Understanding evolution makes you smart. Understanding evolution helps you understand the entirety of life in

a fully integrative and powerful way. Once you get a solid education in (a) what evolution is and (b) how it applies to all facets of the living experience, you start putting things together that you would not put together otherwise. You start to see how the shape of a maple seed pod is, in many ways, parallel to the tendency for humans to look after their young. You start to see how the coloration of a blue jay in your backyard relates to behaviors that you see at P&G's on a Thursday night. In short, the evolutionary perspective allows you to see the entirety of life as fully inter-connected.

Evolutionary psychology is an approach to behavior that underscores a Darwinian perspective in asking any and all questions related to behavior. This approach has shed extraordinary light on such phenomena as (a) love, (b) familial relations, (c) sex, (d) education, (e) warfare, (f) politics, and more. This class is essentially a dive into the deep end in this field.

In addition to reading the textbook and some subsidiary readings, you will have an opportunity to, in a group or as an individual, develop and present a creative product related to evolutionary psychology. This assignment is designed to be fun, educational, and exciting.

Ultimately, this class is designed to provide you with the insights about life that Charles Darwin himself had - in an effort to help you best understand and appreciate the human condition.

Shoot big. Always. Life is short. And reincarnation is unlikely. Welcome to class.

Readings:

[Geher, G. \(2014\). Evolutionary Psychology 101. New York: Springer.](#) (available at campus bookstore, amazon, and other online retailers)

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate a strong understanding of the basic principles of evolutionary psychology
- Demonstrate a strong understanding of evolutionary concepts applied to behavior
- Demonstrate a strong understanding of the research findings and methods that surround this field
- Be able to articulate important criticisms of the evolutionary approach to behavior
- Be able to develop and present a creative product related to some important ideas in the field

Assignments/Exams:

1. **Exam #1 (25% of grade).** The exam will include a combination of multiple-choice and one essay. The exam will be based on the essays (from the book) as well as all the content from the assigned readings and lectures. Students are encouraged to meet with me during office hours ahead of time with questions. Note that many of the multiple-choice items will be based on the essays, so studying the essays and being able to nail them is a great way to study.

NOTE: For the essays, I recommend that your main goal is to address effectively each part of the essay prompt. You should use full sentences and paragraphs and write in a way that is understandable to a lay audience (like my mom in Florida). You are DISCOURAGED from providing more information than is requested (e.g., if you are asked for two examples of some concept, you should not provide four examples of that concept). Typically, these essays should be 2-4 paragraphs. But, again, the main thing is this: Address effectively each part of the essay prompt.

[STUDY GUIDE IS HERE](#)

2. **Exam #2 (25% of grade).** The exam will include a combination of multiple-choice and one essay. The exam will be based on the essays (from the book) as well as all the content from the assigned readings and lectures. Students are encouraged to meet with me during office hours ahead of time with questions. Note that many of the multiple-choice items will be based on the essays, so studying the essays and being able to nail them is a great way to study.

NOTE: For the essays, I recommend that your main goal is to address effectively each part of the essay prompt. You should use full sentences and paragraphs and write in a way that is understandable to a lay audience (like my mom in Florida). You are DISCOURAGED from providing more information than is requested (e.g., if you are asked for two examples of some concept, you should not provide four examples of that concept). Typically, these essays should be 2-4 paragraphs. But, again, the main thing is this: Address effectively each part of the essay prompt.

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3. **Exam #3 (25% of grade).** The exam will include a combination of multiple-choice and one essay. The exam will be based on the essays (from the book) as well as all the content from the assigned readings and lectures. Students are encouraged to meet with me during office hours ahead of time with questions. Note that many of the multiple-choice items will be based on the essays, so studying the essays and being able to nail them is a great way to study. **(Chaps. 7-10)**

NOTE: For the essays, I recommend that your main goal is to address effectively each part of the essay prompt. You should use full sentences and paragraphs and write in a way that is understandable to a lay audience (like my mom in Florida). You are DISCOURAGED from providing more information than is requested (e.g., if you are asked for two examples of some concept, you should not provide four examples of that concept). Typically, these essays should be 2-4 paragraphs. But, again, the main thing is this: Address effectively each part of the essay prompt.

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4. Creative Product (25% of grade; Pass/Fail)

Early in the semester, students will be put in groups of 2-3. These teams will each be responsible for coming up with a creative product related to the material from the class. Note that these creative products, which might take a variety of forms, will be presented (in about ten-minute spits) during the final class periods. Possible products could include:

- A video
- The reading of a short story
- The singing of set of songs
- A play

If there are any problems with the group interactions, please see me individually to discuss. Also, if you would rather do this as an individual, I'd be fine with that, but you would need to let me know prior to November 1.

AI NOTE: Please note that the AI-related policies for this class (see in below Policies section) are very specific and clear. In short, AI is fully disallowed regarding all assignments for this class—especially this particular assignment.

(OPTIONAL: Feel free to do a product that integrates 10 specific concepts from Darwin's Definitions: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/darwins-subterranean-world/201804/darwins-definitions>)

EXAMPLES:

[Chaska's Story \(short story\)](#)

[Differences between Cats and Dogs \(a play\);](#)

[Chinese students' video](#)

Project teams	
2pm class	330 class
Sidney, Jaidyn	Mickey, Arielle
Anthony, Ceren	Racquel, Sam
Nevis, Jamie	Isa, Kayla
Adrianna, Marren	Julia, Marlo
Chris, Cat	Katherine, Arianna
Susie, Sydney K.	Dakota, Emma J.
Kiera, Jonathan	Kailyn, Rory
Madison, Emily M.	Maggie Nadia

Olivia,Emily O.	Emma R., Emily R.
Letisha, Zach	Ava, Sonia
Dylan, Alyssa	Dylan, Maggie
Sabrina, Aman	Shayla, Mackenzie
Cindy, Sam	Aylah, Ally

GRADING: Each of the exams and assignments will be graded on a scale of 0-100. The formula for determining your final numerical grade will be as follows:

Exam1* .25+

Exam2* .25+

Exam3* .25+

CreativeProduct* .25

Your final grade will be on a scale from 0 to 100. Final grades will be converted to letter grades using the following criteria:

94 – 100 = A

90 – 93 = A-

87 – 89 = B+

84 – 86 = B

80 – 83 = B-

77 – 79 = C+

74 – 76 = C

70 – 73 = C-

67 – 69 = D+

64 – 66 = D

60 – 63 = D-

Below 60 = F

Calendar

Week of:	Topic / Reading
8/26	Introductions / Syllabus / Plan for course
9/2	Geher (2014), Chapter 1 (9/2 itself is Labor Day; no class)
9/9	Geher (2014), Chapter 1
9/16	Geher (2014), Chapter 2
9/23	Geher (2014), Chapter 3
9/30	MONDAY, 9/30; EXAM 1; CONTENT: Chapters 1-3 AND THE SYLLABUS! Thursday, we will start Chapter 4
10/7	Geher (2014), Chapters 4-5
10/14	Chapter 5 (10/14 itself is Fall Break; no class)
10/18 (F)	OPTIONAL! Questionable Authorities at Bacchus; 8pm Sunday, 10/20; 10am–hike–optional
10/21	Geher (2014), Chapters 5-6
10/28	Geher (2014), Chapter 6 (HALLOWEEN COSTUMES STRONGLY RECOMMENDED on 10/31!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)
11/4	Geher (2014), Chapter 6 Thursday, 11/7 (TH), EXAM 2; Chs. 4-6
11/11	Geher (2014), Chapters 7-8
11/18	Geher (2014), Chapter 9
11/25	Geher (2014), Chapter 10 (No class on 11/28; Thanksgiving!)
12/2	Student Presentations to take place on both 12/2 AND 12/5 (order will be determined by a haphazard process–ALL students are expected to attend both sessions); all students should be ready to present at the start of Monday’s class; there WILL be at least one exam item based on the content
12/6 (F)	OPTIONAL: Questionable Authorities at Snugs in honor of December grads!
12/9	Monday only (last day of class): New Paltz Evolutionary Psychology Lab Symposium

	200: Emma, Maya, Sonakshi 330: Emma, Maya, Aileen
Final Exam (i.e., Exam 3)	2pm class: 12/19(H) 1230-230pm (Chaps. 7-10) 330pm class: 12/16 (M), 245-445pm (Chaps. 7-10)

Course Policies

1. **Cheating**. DO NOT CHEAT. Any student caught cheating on an exam will automatically fail that exam and, perhaps, the course. In addition, his or her name will be reported to the administration. [Expanded Cheating Policy is here](#).

2. **Plagiarism**. Plagiarism occurs when material is taken from a source without proper citation. If you quote something directly (i.e., if you use another author's EXACT WORDS), you **must** use quotation marks. If you borrow an idea and reword it, you **must** report your source. Any student caught plagiarizing will automatically fail the assignment and, perhaps, the course. In addition, his or her name will be reported to the administration. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.

[My EXPANDED plagiarism policy is here](#) - you are RESPONSIBLE for all of the nuances found in this document.

2B. Also, note the below statement on AI-assisted writing:

The use of chatGPT and other AI-based sources are FULLY disallowed. It is a new world each and every day. ChatGPT and related AI-based technologies have arrived. While these technologies may well have potential benefits, they have the capacity, also, to adversely affect learning in many ways.

A primary point of college is to have students cultivate their writing, speaking, and thinking skills. To my mind, the use of software such as chatGPT to “write” papers works fully and unequivocally against these goals. There is no doubt that there are software engineers working on anti-chatGPT software for the benefit of educational purposes. That said, I have come up with my own system for addressing this issue. Note that the following policies are all FULLY REQUIRED OF ALL STUDENTS in regard to ALL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS for this class.

1. At the end of **each and every piece of written work for this course** (including Discussion posts), each student MUST add an additional paragraph related to AI-based writing software.
2. This paragraph, written at the end of your written statement (again, as a stand-alone paragraph), must fit the below criteria:
 - a. It must be FULLY original and written BY YOU.
 - b. Therein, you need to, in writing, promise that the written work you’ve provided was fully and originally written by yourself.
 - c. You must also indicate that you did NOT copy and paste any section or sub-section of said work in the posting.
 - d. You must also indicate, citing chatGPT specifically, that you did NOT use chatGPT or any other writing-related software in the production of your written piece.

- e. Note that after you have developed your own original statement that fits these criteria, you may use that same statement throughout your work in this course (in this particular case, copying and pasting will be allowed).
- f. Further, you must put your entire writing sample into [ZeroGPT](#) and confirm, after, in writing (in your AI statement) that your work is showing up as less than 2% likely written by AI. Note that I reserve the right to similarly put all student into this AI detector (or others).
- g. **Any written work that does NOT include this statement may receive a penalty, possibly resulting in a grade of 0.**

EXAMPLE AI STATEMENT:

Please note that the writing found herein was written completely by myself. I did not copy and paste any of it from the internet or from any other source. Further, I did not use ChatGPT or any other AI-writing software. I have put all the content into ZeroGPT and the score was 0% likely to have been written by AI.

3. **Missing exams.** A Make-up exam may be given **if** there are extenuating circumstances AND it (the make-up exam) is officially **scheduled before** the scheduled examination. If such circumstances are shown to exist, you may be able to take a make-up exam. Special arrangements will be made as to the time and place of any make-up exams. If a student requests a make-up exam after the scheduled examination, and especially extenuating circumstances (e.g., a serious illness) are demonstrated to exist, scheduling of a make-up exam might be considered.

4. **Late Assignments.**

If you can get through your college career without ever handing in a late paper, you're on the fast-track to success and I want to strongly encourage you to get there. As such, note the following:

- A. ABSOLUTELY NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE LAST DAY OF CLASS (NOT THE FINAL EXAM).
- B. If you miss giving your oral presentation (part of your creative project), you will receive a grade of 0 (unless, perhaps, evidence of some dramatic and conspicuous extenuating circumstances is provided).
- C. All assignments that are not accepted will be assigned grades of 0.

5. **Attendance.** All students are strongly encouraged to attend all class meetings. You are a grownup. Interpret this as you will.

6. **SUNY New Paltz's ADA Policy Statement:**

Students with documented physical, learning, psychological and other disabilities are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations. If you need classroom or testing accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (Student Union Building, Room 205, 257-3020). The DRC will provide forms verifying the need for accommodation. As soon as the instructor receives the form, you will be provided with the appropriate accommodations. Students are encouraged to request accommodations as close to the beginning of the semester as possible.

7. **SUNY New Paltz's Academic Integrity Statement:**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are serious offenses, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. For definitions of these offenses, as well as the process that a faculty member will follow

if a student is found to be engaging in any form of academic dishonesty, see the section on Academic Integrity at the academic advising page: www.newpaltz.edu/acadadv.

8. **Course conflicts.** If you have a regular scheduling conflict with this course (e.g., you will have to leave every class before the end of class because of work, you have another course scheduled that overlaps with this course, or you will be going to Rome for 2 weeks during the term) you should **not** take this course.

9. **Your work for this class may NOT be identical to work that you have submitted for another class.**

10. **NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES and TEXTING DURING CLASS IS POTENTIALLY A CAPITAL OFFENSE** ;-)- ... (e.g., cellphones, XBoxes, etc.) may not be utilized **during class**. Extenuating circumstances will be considered. To discuss such a circumstance, please come to my office hours. If you need to text during class, I ask (require) that you step out in the hallway to do so (to avoid distractions). Note that if you want to use a laptop to take notes, doing so **must be approved by me ahead of time (via meeting during my office hours)**—and such devices **MUST** be in airplane (or similar) mode.

11. Pandemic and Unanticipated-Situations Clause:

As we all well know, the world includes lots of unexpected events and situations. Note that some policies in this syllabus may change in light of issues related to the pandemic, climate change, asteroids, and/or other unexpected situations/events. Every effort to make as few changes as possible in light of any and all situations will be made on the part of the instructor. All university policies and protocols can be expected to be followed in the procedures for this class.

As a teacher I feel that my role is to help you learn, not to grade you, so please feel free to come see me or call me throughout the term if you have any concerns or questions. I mean it. Have a great semester.

Note that University Policies are included here:

<https://www.newpaltz.edu/acadaff/academic-policies-including-academic-integrity/>

[Writing tips are linked here.](#)

You are REQUIRED to check all of your written work against this document.