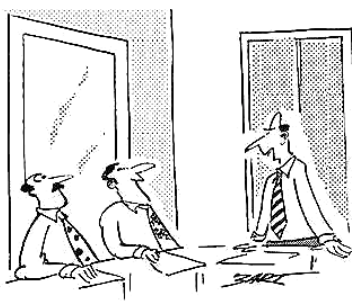


HUMAN BEHAVIOURAL ECOLOGY

Fall 2015

Our objective in this course is to consider the implications of evolution and natural selection for the study of human behaviour and cognition. If human action was easy to understand, there would be no need for the discipline of psychology. Given that our reasons for doing the things that we do are often opaque, we need to find ways of looking at



*"As regards the size of our annual bonus,
let's bear in mind, gentlemen, that we
are hunters AND gatherers !"*

ourselves from a number of overlapping vantage points, while never forgetting that a proper understanding requires an integration of these various perspectives. Perhaps the primary difficulty is caused by the fact that we are both biological creatures and cultural creations at one and the same time. The entanglements of our biology and cultures are so deep and fundamental that it is difficult to know how to begin to tease apart their influences, or even whether it is even sensible to do so. Regardless of whether it is or not, we have to start somewhere and so we are going to address *this* question as a way of doing so:

What do we gain in understanding by considering ourselves as animals with a particular evolutionary history?

Instructor:

Peter **Henzi**; Room C878 (Phone: 403-317-2839); peter.henzi@uleth.ca. Consultations either after class or by appointment.

Teaching Assistant:

Deanna **Forrester** (deanna.forrester@uleth.ca)

Lectures:

Tuesday & Thursday: 0925-1040 in Turcotte Hall, room 204

Textbook:

There is NO textbook for this course. I will provide readings for each topic as well as PDFs of the lectures themselves.

****Please note that ALL materials and examination results will be posted on Moodle.**

Assessment:

Two midterm tests (33.3% each) - *multiple choice questions based on material from both lectures and readings* -

and one practical exercise (33.3%). We will decide on the date of the first midterm in class. The second midterm will take place **at the end** of the course. You will submit your final write-up of the practical exercise during the **last week** of classes.

Practical Exercise

Our understanding and appreciation of the material with which we are confronted is significantly enhanced once we move from being passive recipients to become active participants in the process of knowledge creation. As there are generally too few opportunities for this at the university, you will conduct - under close supervision - a data collection and analysis exercise that addresses and contextualises an appropriate scientific question. Your performance will be monitored and will inform your final mark, which will primarily be based on a submitted report.

Grading:

Final letter grades for the course will be determined using the following scheme:

A+	90-100	C+	68-69
A	83-89	C	63-67
A-	80-82	C-	60-62
B+	78-79	D+	57-59
B	73-77	D	50-56
B-	70-72	F	< 50

Required disciplinary note

All students in the course are subject to the student discipline policy for academic and non-academic offenses in accordance with the University Calendar.

Course Topic Areas

1. An evolutionary approach to human behaviour
 2. Human origins: A primate past
 3. Human life histories
 4. Human origins: Behavioural modernity, modes of production and colonisation
 5. A family affair 1: Parents, sexual selection and direct fitness
 6. A family affair 2: Grandparents, reproductive success and trade-offs
 7. A family affair 3: The rest of the gang and the idea of inclusive fitness
 8. It takes a village: Cooperation and competition within societies
 9. The social ratchet: Evolution of societies
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