

PSY 3040, Animal Behavior (CRN 13608)

Formerly PSY 304

4 Credits, Winter 2018

Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00 – 9:47 AM, 204 Elliott Hall

THIS COURSE WAS PREVIOUSLY OFFERED AS PSY 319. STUDENTS WHO TOOK PSY 319 PREVIOUSLY MAY NOT REPEAT THIS COURSE, EXCEPT FOR GRADE IMPROVEMENT.

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Office hours: 10:15 – 11:15 AM on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Basic Course Information:

Course Description: In this course, we will discuss the mechanisms of animal behavior in the natural environment. The major emphasis will be on how the evolutionary history of organisms and the organisms' ecological niche affect their patterns of behavior, and the behavior commonalities observed between different organisms that share an ecological niche or similar environmental demands. Different behavioral systems will be analyzed in nonhuman organism and the discussion will focus both on how evolution has shaped particular behaviors in those organisms and how culture has modified this behavior in human society.

Course Prerequisites/corequisites: PSY 2500 (formerly 250) with a grade of 2.0 or higher. Completion of the university writing foundation requirement.

Required Text(s): Dugatkin, L. A. (2014). Principles of animal behavior (3rd Ed.). Norton (ISBN-13: 9780393920451).

Additional readings will be provided by the instructor through Moodle.

Course Procedures: Lectures and discussion.

Learning Outcomes:

This class satisfies the University general education requirement for a writing intensive course in general education or the major, not both.

Upon completion of this course the student will demonstrate

1. Understanding of how proximate and ultimate goals shape behavior
2. The capacity to compare and contrast different observable behaviors based on the ecological niche pressures experienced by the species under analysis
3. The capacity to critically evaluate ideas of how evolution and culture have shaped behavior

Grades:

Weekly questions: Each week, 1-3 questions will be posted in Moodle for students to answer. These questions will refer to the topic of the week, including textbook and paper reading assignments. All answers will be due by midnight on Wednesday (must be uploaded to Moodle), and discussed in class Thursday.

Term paper: A research term paper will be based on one topic in the course, see the last page of this syllabus for a list of possible topics. Your choice of topic will be due on **January 16th**. There are three stages to this paper. The outline for your presentation will be considered the first step in developing your paper, and the feedback you receive will include information on what sections you need to further develop in your paper. You will get your critiqued outline back no later than the next class after submission or **February 8th**. A first draft of your paper will be due on **March 1st** and will be returned to you no later than **March 15th** for you to use the feedback to complete your final paper.

Please, note that a first draft is a full paper, including all sections and references; it is a *draft* because it is not the final version. The final version will then be due on **April 17th**. All deadlines are clearly noted in the class schedule (next to last page of the syllabus).

To receive full credit, papers must include:

1. Required sections: a review of the topic (definition of the topic, why it is studied, which species have been preferred subjects and why, a brief review of what has been done on it; 5-7 pages), and a discussion of things that are left to study and why they should be studied (this should be your contribution and ideas, 2-3 pages). The maximum extension of the paper is 10 pages.
2. Five or more original references (actual research papers)
3. Proper grammar, punctuation, and APA format (deductions will be taken for papers that do not use proper expression).

The grade for the term paper will be derived from the first draft (40%) and final paper (60%).

Final Exam: The final examination will consist of a set of questions extracted from the weekly questions completed through the semester. The format will be short answers, and it will contain 10 questions graded each in a scale of 1-10 for a total possible 100 points in the exam.

Grade Calculation: All activities will be graded as presented in the table below.

Activity	Activity grading scale	Contribution to course grade
Weekly questions	0-5	150 points
Term paper First draft Final paper	0-200 (0-100) (0-150)	250 points
Final exam	0-100	100 points
		500 total points

Requirements and format for the assignments will be discussed in class. Students are strongly encouraged to ask questions and seek advice on how to properly complete assignments to obtain maximum credit.

The % grade will then be transformed to the official OU grading scale (0.0-4.0). Percentage conversions to OU grades are presented in the table below:

% grade	OU grade	% grade	OU grade	% grade	OU grade
100	4	86	3.3	72	2.2
99	4	85	3.3	71	2.1
98	3.9	84	3.2	70	2.0
97	3.9	83	3.2	69	1.9
96	3.8	82	3.1	68	1.8
95	3.8	81	3.1	67	1.7
94	3.8	80	3.0	66	1.6
93	3.7	79	2.9	65	1.5
92	3.7	78	2.8	64	1.4
91	3.6	77	2.7	63	1.3
90	3.6	76	2.6	62	1.2
89	3.5	75	2.5	61	1.1
88	3.4	74	2.4	60	1.0
87	3.4	73	2.3	≤59	0

Class Policies:

Academic Conduct: Oakland University students are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with the University's standards of academic integrity and honesty. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the Dean of Students for appropriate action (Academic Conduct Regulations can be found in the Student Handbook, <http://www.oakland.edu/?id=1610&sid=75>). Some examples of misconduct relevant to this class include **cheating on examinations and quizzes**, and **unauthorized collaboration during online quizzes**. **Add or Drop the Class:** The University add/drop dates can be found on the website for the Office of the Registrar (<http://www.oakland.edu/registrar>). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of course drop deadlines. There will be no adds after the first week of class, during which you can add the class without instructor's signature.

Class Attendance: Class attendance is required. You must sign in each day to verify you were in class. Students missing 40% or more of the class lectures will receive a grade of zero (0.0) due to excessive class absences.

Classroom Courtesy and Behavior: TEXTING IN CLASS IS NOT ALLOWED. While I understand the need to feel connected to every person you know, your capacity to find instruction time is useful only if you attend to lecture. As you will learn this semester, multi-tasking (e.g., texting, updating social media, etc.) results in poor performance in both tasks, so we end up only performing one. If employment or family responsibilities require that you have your telephone on, please silence it and leave the classroom to return calls (these should be exceptional circumstances). Class will begin at 8:00 and will end at 9:47; you should arrive to class on time and leave after class ends. Packing to leave the classroom should start at 9:47, after lecture ends. Disruptive classroom behavior will be addressed by (1) a general announcement, (2) a direct announcement, (3) a request to leave the classroom, and (4) calling Campus Police to have the student removed from the classroom.

Make-up Policy: Students who anticipate missing class on a particular date must notify the instructor at least 1 week before the absence date. Assignments are due on the scheduled date; expected issues with meeting these deadlines must be discussed with the instructor. Unexpected absences due to major life events require immediate notification to the instructor and proof of reason for the absence (e.g., Dr.'s note, police report, etc.). Students who must be absent from class due to University representation events (e.g., athletics, performances) are also subject to these policies (see the OU Excused Absence Policy; <http://www.oakland.edu/?id=6850&sid=175>). The class schedule is listed at the end of this syllabus and it is based on the OU academic calendar. Schedule your vacation accordingly; early vacationing will not count as an approved rationale for class absence.

Late assignments: Late assignments will be penalized with a 10% grade deduction for each day the assignment is late. If a major life event precludes you from completing an assignment by the specified deadline, you need to contact the instructor prior to the due date of the assignment. Proof of reason will be required.

Moodle: Class materials and online quizzes will be distributed through Moodle. Please, take the time to become familiar and learn how to use Moodle. You can access Moodle from the OU main site by clicking "Moodle" on the top banner. If you do not know how to use Moodle, from the Moodle login page you can click "Help" and use the tutorials presented by the IT department (Mozilla Firefox is the recommended browser for Moodle).

Disability Support Services: Students with disabilities who may require certain accommodations should register with Disability Support Services (<http://www.oakland.edu/dss>) and bring their needs to the attention of the instructor by providing their Accommodation Memo as soon as it is available. Accommodations can only be provided **after** receipt of the memo.

Veteran Support Services: The office of Veteran Support Services (VSS) is responsible for giving support services to more than 300 veterans, service members, and dependents of veterans. VSS is staffed with personnel who are veterans and current or former students. Any student veteran or dependent of a veteran requiring assistance with navigating the Veterans Administration, understanding service-related benefits, or requires referrals to campus and community resources should contact one of the Veterans Liaisons by visiting 116 North Foundation Hall, or phoning 248-370-2010.
<http://www.oakland.edu/veterans/>

Audio Recording Policy: Students who wish to audio-record lectures may request permission to do so. These recordings may only be used for the purpose of personal study. Students may not share these recordings with other individuals without the consent of the professor. At the conclusion of the semester, students may request permission to keep these recordings if needed, otherwise it is expected that all audio-recordings will be deleted from all electronic recording and storage devices.

Departmental Policy for Resolution of Student Academic-Related Concerns:

The student has an obligation to attempt to resolve all academic-related concerns with the instructor. If a suitable solution cannot be reached, then the student should consult the Department of Psychology Procedure for the Resolution of Student Academic-Related Concerns at <https://www.oakland.edu/Assets/Oakland/psychology/files-and-documents/Undergrad-Advising/Resolution%20of%20Student%20Concerns-04-2017-approved%20full%20doc.pdf>.

Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Dugatkin book assignment	Important deadlines
Jan 4	Introduction		
9	Principles of animal behavior	Ch. 1	
11		Additional readings	
16	The evolution of behavior Natural selection	Ch. 2	Term paper topic due
18		Additional readings	
23	Proximate factors, molecular genetics, and development	Ch. 3	
25		Ch. 4	
30	Learning and cultural transmission	Ch. 5	
Feb 1		Ch. 6	Paper outline due
6	Sexual selection	Ch. 7	
8		Additional readings	Outlines returned
13	Mating systems	Ch. 8	
15		Additional readings	
20	WINTER RECESS NO CLASS		
22			
27	Parental Investment	Additional readings	
Mar 1			First draft due
6	Kinship	Ch. 9	
8		Additional readings	
13	Cooperation	Ch. 10	
15		Additional readings	First draft returned
20	Communication	Ch. 13	
22		Additional readings	
27	Foraging	Ch. 11	
29			
Apr 3	Predatory/Antipredatory Behavior	Ch. 12	
5	Aggression	Ch. 15	
10	Habitat selection, territoriality, and migration	Ch. 14	
12			
17	NO CLASS THIS DAY		Final paper due
24	Final examination (8:00 – 11:00 AM)		

Please, note that this class will observe all deadlines posted in the Oakland University Academic Calendar, including add and drop dates. Please, see <http://wwwp.oakland.edu/registrar/importantdates/> for more information.

Suggested topics for term papers

Artificial selection of behavioral traits
Artificial selection and behavioral evolution
Selective breeding and inbreeding depression
Creationism vs. natural selection
Evolution of human traits (e.g. body hair patterns, bipedalism) Hormones
as determinant of sex ratios, group bonding, etc.
Proximate vs. ultimate factors in monogamy, bird song, etc.
Testosterone and leadership
Unusual examples of biological constraints on learning
Comparisons across phyla in learning
Examples of culturally-determined behaviors in primate troops
Use of medicines in great apes
Social learning of bird song
Learning as a component of parenting behavior
Parental investment and sexual selection
Competition between sexes in sexual selection
Sex change as reproductive strategy
Monogamy vs. polygyny vs. polyandry vs. promiscuity
Incest taboos in nonhuman animals
Sperm competition in humans
Cheating as reproductive strategy
Sibling rivalry
“Cinderella syndrome” as evolutionary adaptation
Infanticide
Kin recognition
Eusocial societies and kin selection
Machiavellianism and altruism
Coalitions in primates as determination of political hierarchies
Optimal foraging and obesity
Group hunting
Techniques for acquiring food (e.g., building traps)