

**PSY 5302: Evolutionary Psychology and Animal Behavior
Winter 2018**

Instructor

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Course Meeting Time and Location

Monday, 1-4:20pm, Pryale 130

Course Description

The key concepts, questions, and research issues related to the evolution of the mechanisms of mind and behavior in humans and non-humans. Topics investigated include mating, parenting, social exchange, and violence.

Required Texts

1. *The reluctant Mr. Darwin: An intimate portrait of Charles Darwin and the making of his theory of evolution*, by David Quammen. Published in paperback in 2009 by Atlas, ISBN 978-0393329957.
2. *On the origin of species [A facsimile of the first edition, published 1859]*, by Charles Darwin. Published in 2001 paperback by Harvard University Press, ISBN-13: 978-0674637528.
3. *The greatest show on Earth: The evidence for evolution*, by Richard Dawkins. Published in 2010 paperback by Free Press, ISBN-13: 978-1416594796.
4. *The better angels of our nature: Why violence has declined*, by Steven Pinker. Published in 2012 paperback by Penguin, ISBN-13: 978-0143122012.
5. *The human predicament: A candid guide to life's biggest questions*, by David Benatar. Published in 2017 hardcover by Oxford University Press, ISBN-13: 978-0190633813.

Expectations

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner conducive to an environment of academic integrity and respect for the educational process and the safety and wellbeing of all members of the community. Adherence to the Student Code of Conduct will be expected; violations of this code will be reported to the Dean of Students. The Code of Academic and Student Conduct can be found at <http://www2.oakland.edu/deanofstudents/handbook/conduct.cfm>. In addition, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner conducive to an environment of academic integrity and respect for the educational process and the safety and wellbeing of all members of the community. I reserve the right to limit this course's survey of alternative perspectives to those that, in my professional judgment, meet generally accepted standards of plausibility in the field of scholarship covered in this course. Students are expected to show mastery of these perspectives in their spoken and written contributions.

Add/Drops & Incompletes: The University add/drop and incomplete grade policies will be explicitly followed. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the University deadline dates for dropping the course.

Make-up Examinations: No make-up coursework is permitted.

Special Considerations: A student with a documented learning or physical disability must contact the **Office of Disability Support Services**, 103A North Foundation Hall, (248) 370-3266, and inform the professor of special needs during first week of classes. For more information, visit <http://www.oakland.edu/dss>

Policy on Academic Misconduct: The University's regulations that relate to academic misconduct will be fully enforced. Any student suspected of cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students and, thereafter, to the Academic Conduct Committee for adjudication. Anyone found guilty of academic misconduct in this course may receive a course grade of 0.0, in addition to any penalty assigned by the Academic Conduct Committee. Students found guilty of academic misconduct by the Academic Conduct Committee may face suspension or permanent dismissal. The full policy on academic misconduct can be found in the General Information section of the Undergraduate Catalog.

Excused Absence Policy: University excused absences applies to participation as an athlete, manager or student trainer in NCAA intercollegiate competitions, or participation as a representative of Oakland University at academic events and artistic performances approved by the Provost or designee. For the OU excused absence policy, see <http://wwwp.oakland.edu/provost/policies-and-procedures/>

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.

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://wwwp.oakland.edu/veterans/>

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>.

Course Requirements

Class discussion will focus on readings assigned for each class meeting. Students are expected to have read the material prior to the class meeting and to be prepared to discuss and critically evaluate the material.

First, *in consultation with the instructor*, students will prepare a paper addressing the application of Darwinian principles to a research area of interest to the student. Second, students will guide discussion for TWO class sessions. Third, students will turn a one-page, typed reaction paper at the beginning of each class session. These brief reactions should address the reading assigned for that class session. Finally, students will complete a take-home final exam covering the material presented in readings and in class discussion.

Grades will be assigned according to the following weighted criteria:

Application paper	25%
Guide discussions	25%
Reaction papers	25%
Take-home final exam	25%

Class Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Jan 8	Introduction to course; discussion sign-up	None
Jan 15	No class (MLK)	None
Jan 22	<i>The reluctant Mr. Darwin</i>	Quammen: All
Jan 29	<i>On the origin of species</i> , part I	Darwin: Intro., Ch. I-V
Feb 5	<i>On the origin of species</i> , part II	Darwin: Ch. VI-X
Feb 12	<i>On the origin of species</i> , part III	Darwin: Ch. XI-XIV
Feb 19	No class (Winter recess)	None

Feb 26	<i>Greatest show on Earth</i> , part I	Dawkins: Preface, Ch. 1-5
March 5	<i>Greatest show on Earth</i> , part II	Dawkins: Ch. 6-9
March 12	<i>Greatest show on Earth</i> , part III	Dawkins: Ch. 10-13
March 19	<i>Better angels of our nature</i> , part I	Pinker: Preface, Ch. 1-4
March 26	<i>Better angels of our nature</i> , part II	Pinker: Ch. 5-6
April 2	<i>Better angels of our nature</i> , part III	Pinker: Ch. 7-8
April 9	<i>Better angels of our nature</i> , part IV	Pinker: Ch. 9-10
April 16	<i>The human predicament</i>	Benatar: All

****Darwinian applications paper due**
****Take-home exam distributed, due via email by 5pm April 23**