**UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Department of Psychology**

**COURSE OUTLINE – EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY**

Course Instructor: Credit Hours: 3 Code : Psy-316

Course Description

Evolutionary psychology strives to understand how human thinking, motivation, behavior, and social relationships evolved over evolutionary time. Evolutionary psychology relates to all aspects of psychology. This course provides an introduction to evolutionary psychology--an integrative approach to thinking about human nature and how it interacts with environments to produce patterns of cognition, emotion, behavior and culture. Topics covered include principles of natural selection, human evolutionary environments, Darwinian Theory, family and kinship, jealousy, fear, aggression and intergroup conflict.

**Course Objectives**

At the end of the course, students would be able to:

1. Understand how human evolved overtime
2. Understand how natural selection designed adaptive mechanisms that ultimately affect survival and reproductive success.
3. Describe the adaptive mechanisms identified so far by evolutionary psychologists in perception, consciousness, emotion, cognition, learning, mating, parenting, and social behavior.
4. Explain individual differences, including differences in physical and psychological health.

**Course Contents**

**Week 1-2: Introduction to Evolutionary Psychology**

 Landmarks in the history of evolutionary thinking

 Common misunderstanding about evolutionary theory

 Milestones in the origins of modern humans

**Week 2-3: Overview of Darwinian Theory**

Theory of evolution by natural selection

 Darwin voyage and inception of the theory

 Principles and application of theory in psychology

 Proximate and ultimate levels of causation

 Exclusion of ultimate causation and rationales for proximate approach

**Quiz 1**

**Week 4: Video “Collapse of Darwinism” would be shown in the class**

**Assignment 1:** Students would rule out the major factors of Darwinism and the emerging criticism/evidences against those factors. (10 marks) **due date: 2nd class of week 5**

**Week 4-5: Natural Selection and Genetics**

 How evolution and natural selection does works?

 Mechanisms of natural selection

 Sources of genetic variation

 Directional vs. stabilizing selection

 Punctuated equilibrium

 Affect of natural selection on humans

**Week 6: Heredity and Environment**

 The myths of nature-nurture dichoitomy

 An interactionist view (examples in animal and human behavior)

 Contrasting the interactionist and behavioristic models

 Social imprinting (Lorenz and Tinbergen’s research)

 Theories of the process underlying imprinting

**Quiz 2**

**Week 7-8: Human Survival**

 Environment of Evolutionary Adaptiveness (EEA)

Food acquisition and selection

 Finding a place to live: Shelter and landscape preferences

 Combating predators and other environmental dangers

 Why do people die?

**Week 8: MID-TERM EXAM**

**Week 9: Kin selection and parental investment theory**

 Kin selection

 Infanticide explanation by evolutionary theory

 Comparison between investment of maternal and paternal grandparents on grandchildren

 Real mother vs. step mother

 Cultural beliefs about parental investment on children

**Week 10-11: Acting for the good of others: Reciprocity with some new twists**

 Mechanisms based on by-product mutualism and reciprocity

 The “new” group-selection models of the evolution of cooperation

 Altruism as the major exception to individual selection

 Recent developments in the theory of cooperation

**Quiz 3**

**Week 12: Mate Selection**

 History of sexual-selection theory

 Mate choice criteria

 Evolution of homosexuality

 Sexual selection and human mental evolution

 Sexual selection and human culture

**Assignment 2:** Write a critical review of two pages on any one reading (1, 2, 3, 4). (5 marks)

 **Week 13: Evolutionary psychology and mental health**

 Jealousy, Fear, Aggression and Warfare, Status, Prestige and Social Dominance

Conflict (Marital, Parent-offspring, cross-sex) Cooperation alliances

**Presentation:** Select any two research articles of your choice showing the relationship between evolutionary psychology and mental health and make a 10 minutes presentation. (10 marks)

**Week 14: Presentations**

**Week 15: Final Exam**

**Assessment Strategy of the Course Work**

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| --- | --- |
| **Student Evaluation** | **Percentage** |
| **Quizzes** | **5 + 5 + 5 %** |
| **Assignments** | **10 + 5 %** |
| **Presentations** | **10 %** |
| **Mid Term** | **25 %** |
| **Final Term** | **35%** |

**Recommended Book –**

Buss, D. M. (2012). Evolutionary psychology: The new science of the mind (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

**Readings-**

1. Taylor, L. D. (2013). [Male partner selectivity, romantic confidence, and media depictions of partner scarcity](http://www.epjournal.net/articles/male-partner-selectivity-romantic-confidence-and-media-depictions-of-partner-scarcity). *Evolutionary Psychology,* 11(1), 36-49.
2. Bale, C., & Archer, J. (2013). [Self-perceived attractiveness, romantic desirability and self-esteem: A mating sociometer perspective](http://www.epjournal.net/articles/self-perceived-attractiveness-romantic-desirability-and-self-esteem-a-mating-sociometer-perspective). *Evolutionary Psychology,* 11(1), 68-84.
3. Geary, D. C., Vigil, J., & Byrd-Craven, J. (2004). Evolution of human mate choice. Journal of Sex Research, 41, 27-42.
4. Barclay, P., & Willer, R. (2007). Partner choice creates competitive altruism in humans. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London B, 274*, 749-753.