

EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY

Course Syllabus
Winter, 2015

Course: Psych 239
Code: 68340

Lecture: TuTh 2:00-3:20
Room: SSL 206

TEXT: Workman & Reader: *Evolutionary Psychology*
TEXT: Trivers: *The Folly of Fools*
TEXT: Pinker: *The Sense of Style*

PROFESSOR: Don Hoffman
Office: SBSG 2566
Phone: 824-6795
Office Hrs: Tu 3:30 – 4:20

SECRETARY: Justine Sarashid
Office: SSPA 2135
Phone: 824-6336

GENERAL INFORMATION

Evolutionary psychology has emerged as a major approach to understanding human perception, cognition, emotion, social development, mate choice, altruism, language, psychopathology and culture. For the first two weeks I will discuss evolutionary psychology research in visual perception and attraction. For the next seven classes we will discuss two chapters of Workman & Reader *Evolutionary Psychology (EP)* at each meeting, with the discussion led by a different student each time. For the next seven classes we will discuss two chapters of Trivers *Folly of Fools (FF)* at each meeting, with the discussion led by a different student each time. Our goal is to know the state of the art of this field by the end of the quarter, and to propose new theories and experiments that will advance the state of the art. To learn about your professor's research in this area, you can see his [webpage](#), his [publications](#), his paper on [consciousness](#), his [PBS videos](#), his [SAND video](#), his [Sages & Scientists video](#).

Your grade will be based on the seminars you lead and on a paper due at the end of the quarter. Your grade for the seminar presentation will be based on how well you master the material you present, how clearly you present its essence, and how penetratingly you critique its strengths and weaknesses. You are, of course, expected to have read whatever material is the subject for discussion in each session, whether or not you are the primary presenter. Come prepared with questions for the discussion leader, critiques of the material, and general comments. To make sure that we all read the material, at the beginning of each class we will put all of our names in a hat and draw one out at random. The person whose name is drawn will open the class with a five-minute summary of the material for that day.

The paper should be ten-paged, double-spaced, typewritten, and should present either a new theory of some aspect of evolutionary psychology, or a new experiment with a detailed design. The paper should present your theory or experiment in the context of the current research literature. Of course I expect the paper to be flawless in style, grammar, and punctuation.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS

<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>
1	Tu 1/6	Overview	Perceptual evolution
2	Th 1/8	Overview	Perceptual evolution
3	Tu 1/13	Overview	Attractiveness
4	Th 1/15	Overview	Attractiveness
5	Tu 1/20	EP	1,2
6	Th 1/22	EP	3,4
7	Tu 1/27	EP	5,6
8	Th 1/29	EP	7,8
9	Tu 2/3	EP	9,10
10	Th 2/5	EP	11,12
11	Tu 2/10	EP	13,14
12	Th 2/12	FF	1,2
13	Tu 2/17	FF	3,4
14	Th 2/19	FF	5,6
15	Tu 2/24	FF	7,8
16	Th 2/26	FF	9,10
17	Tu 3/3	FF	11,12
18	Tu 3/5	FF	13,14
19	Th 3/10	Hoffman	PBR Paper on Interface
20	Tu 3/12	Hoffman	PBR Commentaries & Replies
—	Th 3/19	FINAL — 1:30 – 3:30pm	