

Instructor Dr. Nanda Grow
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Course Description

This course employs an evolutionary ecology perspective to explore the family-formation patterns, sexuality, reproduction, parenting, and health of humans throughout the life course. With respect to other primates, humans tend to reproduce and rear their children in a unique pattern. We reside in large multi-male multi-female groups, and within these groups, couples pair off to raise families. Within these families, children are born long before previous children are independent, and mothers receive help from fathers, grandparents, aunts and sisters. All of these aspects of human families are distinct from the reproductive patterns of other primates. Despite these unifying elements found in populations around the globe, marital patterns, family formations and parenting practices also widely vary cross-culturally.

Course Objectives This course will introduce students to the field of evolutionary ecology and will employ the logic of this paradigm to explore the sexual patterns, marriage, reproduction, and parenting of humans throughout the life course and across different contexts and cultures.

Prerequisites: Although there are no prerequisites for this course, it is highly recommended that students have background in anthropology and/or biology prior to registering for this class.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will...

1. understand the basic mechanisms and forces of evolution.
2. be familiar with the theoretical framework and methodological approaches of evolutionary ecology (behavioral ecological approaches) within the broader context of anthropology.
3. know the ways in which human sexual, marital, reproductive and parental patterns differ from typical mammalian and primate patterns and the ways in which they are similar.
4. understand how sexual, marital, reproductive and parental practices vary across cultures and causal hypotheses concerning such variation.
5. develop a greater understanding of the role of evolutionary and biological processes in shaping human life histories, reproductive patterns and behavioral profiles.
6. be able to identify the links between biology, ecology, and behavior in human and nonhuman primate species.
7. be able to use critical reading and writing skills to assess ideas in anthropology.

Required Texts

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. <i>Evolution & Human Behavior, 2nd Ed</i> | 2008 |
| John Cartwright | ISBN: 9780262533041 |
| 2. <i>Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa</i> | 2013 |
| Katherine Dettwyler | ISBN: 9781478607588 |
| 3. <i>Mother Nature: Maternal Instincts & How They Shape the Human Species</i> | 2000 |
| Sarah Blaffer Hrdy | ISBN: 9780345408938 |

Please come prepared to all lectures (i.e. do the assigned reading before coming to class).

- **Canvas Course Website:** <https://usu.instructure.com/courses/351695>
Login with your USU ID to access course materials. *Check the website regularly* for updates, course announcements, schedule changes, and newly uploaded materials.

Grading and Course Requirements

Each grade will be rounded up to the nearest whole number. Final grades may be curved at my discretion.

- **Exams:** There will be three equally weighted exams, each of which is worth 20% of your final grade (60% total). Exams are not cumulative and will include information from lectures, readings, and films covered since the previous exam.

However, *understanding some concepts may depend on those learned earlier in the semester.*

A study guide *may* be provided prior to each exam. The absence of a term/concept from the study guide does not preclude it from being included in the exam, nor does presence in the list guarantee it will be on the exam.

| | Points | % of Final Grade |
|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| Exam 1 | 100 | 20 |
| Exam 2 | 100 | 20 |
| Exam 3 (final) | 100 | 20 |
| Homework | 75 | 15 |
| Writing assignment | 125 | 25 |
| Total | 500 | 100% |

A: 90-100% B: 80-89% C: 70-79% D: 60-69% F: 0-59%

- **Homework:** Five homework assignments are worth 15% of your final grade (75 points; 15 points each) and are due in class (no emailed copies will be accepted).
- **Writing Assignment:** One 5-page essay worth 25% of your final grade (125 points) is due at the end of the semester. Please see the assignment sheet for a detailed description.
- **Extra Credit:** Opportunities for extra credit *may* be provided throughout the semester, not to exceed a maximum of 10 extra points possible. These may include bonus assignments or exam questions. You should focus your attention on learning the coursework rather than seeking extra credit opportunities.

Attendance and Class Participation

Regular attendance is crucial to success in this course. The only acceptable excuses for missing class are medical or family reasons, and those listed in the USU Code of Policies and Procedures for students. *Students are responsible for notifying Dr. Grow of absences and for keeping up with missed material.*

- **Assignment Late Policy:** *No late work will be accepted* without proof of an excused absence on the due date. Students who fail to turn in an assignment without a legitimate excuse will receive zero credit for that assignment. Students should report in advance all planned excused absences. Under certain rare extenuating circumstances where students do not give advance notice, late assignments may be accepted for a 10% grade reduction.

- **Make-up Exam Policy:** Make-up exams will not be offered unless you have a valid excuse. Students who miss a scheduled exam due to a university excusable absence must provide documentation within one week of the absence and schedule a makeup exam. Students who miss an exam *without* a legitimate excuse will receive zero credit for that exam. It is your responsibility to contact Dr. Grow as soon as possible to schedule a time to take the exam.

Academic Integrity Statement

• **Plagiarism Statement:** Plagiarism consists of passing off someone else's ideas, words, or writing as your own. You are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of that person and even if the copying is inadvertent. For more information about plagiarism and USU policies, please consult the USU Code of Policies and Procedures for Students, Article VI.

• **Copyright Statement:** All materials and handouts used in this course are copyrighted. These materials include, but are not limited to: syllabi, lecture slides, in-class handouts, exams, lab problems, review sheets, and problem sets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy or distribute the handouts without expressly granted permission.

• **Academic Dishonesty Policy:** Academic dishonesty comprises the unauthorized distribution of information, cheating, and/or plagiarism. The USU Honor Pledge states: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." Evidence of cheating or plagiarism on any exam, assignment, or paper may result in a failing grade. Academic dishonesty is never tolerated, and offending students will be reported to the university for further possible disciplinary proceedings at the discretion of department, college, and Dean including probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, and denial or revocation of degrees.

• **Privacy Statement:** In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), it is the policy of the Department of Sociology, Social Work, & Anthropology at Utah State University to maintain the confidentiality of students' records.

• **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact the university. Alternate format materials are available with advanced notice. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC), University Inn Room 101 (797-2444 voice, 797-0740 TTY). Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible.

• **USU Classroom Civility Policy:** Utah State University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action.

How to Succeed in this Course

- Be on time. Do not disrupt the class with your tardiness.
- Take notes!
- Come to class prepared. Read and think about the topic beforehand, and be ready to discuss the readings/ask questions.
- Focus. Turn off your phone. If you use your laptop to take notes, do not surf the web, check social media, do homework for other courses, etc. during this class.

Questions?

I am here to help you understand the course material. ☺ Questions can be answered in-class, during office hours, or via email. Please identify yourself in all emails; put the **course name or number in the subject line**, sign with your full name, and use complete sentences.

Schedule of Lectures and Reading Assignments

All readings should be completed *before* the class for which each is assigned. Readings marked with an asterisk (*) are available through the course website. Bolded readings correspond to that week's homework/discussion. *Schedule is subject to modification.*

| Week | Date | Topic | Event | Reading |
|--|-----------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Th 1/8 | Course Introduction; Scientific Method | | |
| 2 Evolution of behavior | Tues 1/13 | Evolution by Natural Selection and human culture | | Cartwright Ch 2 Hrdy Ch 1,2 |
| | Th 1/15 | Evolutionary approaches to the study of human behavior | HW 1 Due | Cartwright Ch 1 Hrdy Ch 5 |
| 3 Sex | Tues 1/20 | Video: Evolution: Why Sex? | | Dettwyler Ch 1-4 |
| | Th 1/22 | Mating Systems | | Cartwright Ch 11, Hrdy Ch 12 |
| 4 Sexual Selection | Tues 1/27 | Sexual Selection I: Overview | | Cartwright Ch. 3 pp. 51-69 *Young 2009 |
| | Th 1/29 | Sexual Selection II Discussion: Mating and mate choice | HW 2 Due (Reading Response) | Cartwright Ch 12 Hrdy Ch 2 * Buss 1989 * Garver-Appgar et al. 2006 |
| 5 Reproduction & mate choice | Tues 2/3 | Reproduction: Cross-cultural experiences; attractiveness | | Hrdy Ch 3-4 *Hill & Hurtado 1996 |
| | Th 2/5 | * EXAM 1 * | | |
| 6 Human life course | Tues 2/10 | Life History Theory; nutrition & health | | Dettwyler Ch 5-6 Cartwright Ch 3 pp. 69-79 *Borgerhoff Mulder 1992 p.339-351 |
| | Th 2/12 | The human life course: How is it different? | | Cartwright Ch. 5 *Bogin & Smith 1996 *Kirkwood 2010 |
| 7 Human life course | Tues 2/17 | NO CLASS (attend Monday class schedule) | | |
| | Th 2/19 | The human life course: Ultimate theories - learning vs. grandmothers | | *Hawkes et al. 1998 |
| 8 Families | Tues 2/24 | Reproductive tradeoffs; allocare | | Hrdy Ch 9, 14, 22 *Shipman 2012 |
| | Th 2/26 | Family size; population growth | | Hrdy Ch 8 *Robey et al. 1993 *Fitzpatrick 2009 *Cohen 2005 |
| 9 Parental Investment | Tues 3/3 | Parental Investment Theory: Overview; parent-offspring conflict | | *Clutton-Brock 1991, Chapter 1 |
| | Th 3/5 | Sex allocation and sex biased parental care | | Hrdy Ch 11, 13 |
| 10 | Tues 3/10 | NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK ☺ | | |
| | Th 3/12 | | | |
| 11 Parenting | Tues 3/17 | Female strategies; mother-infant relationships Discussion: Breastfeeding | HW 3 Due (Reading Response) | Hrdy Ch 4, 6, 7 Dettwyler Ch 7-10 *Allport 1998 *Lehrer 2009 |
| | Th 3/19 | * EXAM 2 * | | |

| Week | Date | Topic | Event | Reading |
|--|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| 12 | Tues 3/24 | NO CLASS – Dr. Grow at conference | | |
| | Th 3/26 | | | |
| 13 Parenting II | Tues 3/31 | Male strategies (fathering; infanticide) | | *Winking 2006, *Gettler 2011 |
| | Th 4/2 | Step-parenting Discussion: Step parents | HW 4 Due (Reading Response) | Hrdy Ch 9, 10 *Lancaster & Kaplan 2000 *Daly & Wilson 1996 |
| 14 Love & Marriage | Tues 4/7 | Romantic Love; The function of marriage | | *Carter 2006 *Fisher 2004 |
| | Th 4/9 | Video: The Biology of Love; Helen Fisher TED Talk | Term Paper DUE | |
| 15 Sexual conflict | Tues 4/14 | Divorce; infidelity Helen Fisher TED Talk | | *Winking et al. 2007 |
| | Th 4/16 | Sexual conflict and rape | | Cartwright Ch 10 pp. 222-225 |
| 16 Health | Tues 4/21 | Sexual orientation | | *Blanchard and Bogaert 1996 |
| | Th 4/23 | Health, disease, and aging; adaptive tradeoffs Discussion: <i>Dancing Skeletons</i> | HW 5 Due (Reading Response) | Dettwyler Ch 11-14 |
| * EXAM 3 * Date/Time TBA: _____ | | | | |