NOTE to prospective students: This syllabus is intended to provide students who are considering taking this course an idea of what they will be learning. A more detailed syllabus will be available on the course site for enrolled students and may be more current than this sample syllabus. Summer term courses may be accelerated – please check the Ecampus Schedule of Classes for more information.

PSY 497 – Evolutionary Psychology
Winter 2018 (4 credits)

Instructor Information
Sam O’Hanlon, Ph.D.
ohanlons@oregonstate.edu

Course Information

Catalog Course Description
Evolutionary approach to the study of psychology. Focus on psychological mechanisms as evolved traits. PREREQS: PSY 201 [D-] and PSY 202 [D-]

Instructor Course Description
This course introduces students to using evolution to understand psychology. Because this approach will be novel to most students, this course focuses on explaining the benefits of an evolutionary approach to psychology while simultaneously addressing many common concerns regarding Evolutionary Psychology.

The content of this course is novel, difficult, and dense, and has far-reaching implications. Therefore, to allow you to spend more time on understanding and reflecting on the material rather than memorizing it, there are no exams in this class. Instead, you will be asked to demonstrate your grasp of the material in writing (see Evaluation of Student Performance, below, for details).

Course Credits
This course combines approximately 120 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 4 credits. While there is great flexibility in online courses, this is not a self-paced course. There will be multiple assignments due every week and you will need to participate in our discussions on at least two different days each week.

Learning Resources
The Blank Slate (Pinker, 2002). Please check with the OSU Bookstore for up-to-date information for the term you enroll (OSU Bookstore Website or 800-595-0357). If you purchase course materials from other sources, be very careful to obtain the correct ISBN.

This course will be delivered via Canvas, where you will interact with your classmates and with your instructor. Within the course Canvas site, you will access the learning materials, such as the syllabus, class discussions, and assignments. To preview how an online course works, visit the Ecampus Course Demo. For technical assistance, please visit Ecampus Technical Help.
Measurable Student Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain the philosophical, moral, and political arguments against Evolutionary Psychology, and identify major faults in these arguments.
2. Differentiate between proximate and ultimate explanations.
3. Describe the evidence that there is a universal human nature.
4. Describe some of the major findings within the field of Evolutionary Psychology.
5. Justify an evolutionary approach to the study of psychological phenomena.
6. Apply an evolutionary perspective to a variety of psychological topics (e.g., cognition, perception, emotion, social psychology).

Course Policies

Technical Assistance
If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, assistance logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact the OSU Help Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-3474, email osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu or visit the OSU Computer Helpdesk online.

Communication
Post all course-related questions in the Q&A Discussion Forum so the whole class may benefit from our conversation. For matters of a personal nature, please contact me privately via email. I will reply to course-related questions and private messages within 24 hours. Assignments and grades for course activities will be posted within 3 days of the due date. All communications must be in accordance with the SPS Student Etiquette Guide.

Expectations for Student Conduct
Student conduct is governed by the university’s policies, as explained in the Student Conduct Code. Pursuant to OSU code 576-015-0020, no form of academic dishonesty or misconduct will be tolerated. Cheating, plagiarism, and other acts of academic dishonesty will result in a zero on the relevant assignment with the possibility of an “F” grade for the course, suspension, and/or expulsion from OSU. For further information, visit Student Conduct and Community Standards, or contact the Student Conduct and Community Standards Office at 541-737-3656.

Guidelines for a Productive and Effective Online Classroom
Students are expected to conduct themselves in compliance with the university’s regulations regarding civility. In all you say and do for this course, be professional. All communications should be conducted constructively, civilly, and respectfully. Please bring any communications you believe to be in violation of this class policy to my attention.

Active interaction with peers and your instructor is essential to success in this online course, paying particular attention to the following:

- Write in full, coherent sentences and proof-read your posts carefully before submitting them.
- Be respectful of others and their opinions and diversity in backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.
- Word your responses carefully and recognize that others are expected to challenge your ideas. A positive atmosphere of healthy debate is encouraged.
Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities
Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at http://ds.oregonstate.edu. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Accessibility of Course Materials
All materials used in this course are accessible with the possible exception of additional supplemental materials that are posted in response to student questions. If you require accommodations, please contact Disability Access Services (DAS). Additionally, Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a vendor statement certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

Electronic Student Evaluation of Teaching (eSET)
Course evaluation results are extremely important and are used to help me improve this course and the learning experience of future students. The eSET forms are available toward the end of each term; you will be sent instructions via ONID by the Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.

Evaluation of Student Performance (500 pts. total)
All assignments are due by midnight, Pacific Time. Late work will be accepted up to 24 hours after the deadline for 50% credit; submissions more than 24 hours late will not be accepted.

Writing Assignments (4 at 50 pts. each = 200 pts.)
Four times during the term, you will be asked to write a 3- to 5-page paper in which you critically evaluate and discuss an assigned article. In your discussion, you should relate the contents of the article to other assigned readings and to our class discussions as well as evaluate the validity of the researchers’ claims.

Reflections (2 at 25 pts. each = 50 pts.)
Twice during the quarter, you will write an informal 2-page reflection on the course material. Reflections are an opportunity for you to think about this material and apply to your life, current events, philosophical questions, etc.

Online Discussions (10 at 10 pts. each = 100 pts.)
There are many interesting, discussion-worthy topics within the field of Evolutionary Psychology. Additionally, talking about the material is a great way to deepen your understanding of it. Therefore, we will be using the Discussions tool on Canvas to discuss course content and related topics. There will be one discussion topic per week. For each discussion, you are required to write one original post (≥ 300 words; due Wed. by 11:59pm) and one or two peer responses (≥ 100 words; due Sun. by 11:59pm). Replying to other students shows you are reading and thinking about the discussions and helps you to further engage with the material and with others in class.
You are expected to participate by providing well thought-out responses and are encouraged to ask questions. All posts should be substantive in nature and free of spelling/grammatical errors. Responses to
other student posts should be reflective of meaningful thought (not just simply ‘I agree’ or similar). Please write in full, coherent sentences; this is not a text you are sending to a friend, but a graded assignment. Also, be respectful of your classmates. Any hate speech, abuse, etc. will result in a ban from the Discussion board, thereby forfeiting all points associated with that and future discussions.

**Weekly Homework (10 at 15 pts. each = 150 pts.)**

Every week, there will be an assignment on the assigned reading from *The Blank Slate*. These assignments will include 5 to 10 short-answer questions. The purpose of these assignments is to guide your reading and to keep me informed of your understanding of the material.

**Grading Scale**

Your final score will be rounded to two decimal places and your letter grade for this course will be assigned according to the scale below. The values in the table are the minimum percentage required to earn the letter grade indicated by the corresponding row and column headers. (E.g., you must earn a minimum of 87.00% to receive a B+ as your final grade.) Anything below 60.00% is an F.

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Incomplete (I) grades will only be granted to students who have missed a small but important part of the course (e.g., the final exam) due to a documented, unforeseeable emergency (e.g., severe injury requiring hospitalization). If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please do not wait until the end of the term; let me know right away.

**Course Content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>The Blank Slate</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Welcome Philosophical foundations</td>
<td>Preface – Ch. 2</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>Start Here Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Argument for evolutionary psychology</td>
<td>Ch. 3 – 5</td>
<td>Reduced violence</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Anxiety about human nature</td>
<td>Ch. 6 – 7</td>
<td>Naturalistic fallacy</td>
<td>Writing 1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Inequality and Imperfectability</td>
<td>Ch. 8 – 9</td>
<td>Justifiable discrimination</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Determinism and Nihilism</td>
<td>Ch. 10 – 11</td>
<td>Purpose of punishment</td>
<td>Writing 2</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Assumptions about cognition</td>
<td>Ch. 12 – 13</td>
<td>Accuracy of stereotypes</td>
<td>Reflection 1</td>
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<td>Benefits of evolutionary psychology</td>
<td>Ch. 14 – 15</td>
<td>Mating strategies</td>
<td>Writing 3</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Politics and Violence</td>
<td>Ch. 16 – 17</td>
<td>Moral disgust</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Gender and Children</td>
<td>Ch. 18 – 19</td>
<td>Women in STEM</td>
<td>Writing 4</td>
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<td>The Arts and Conclusion</td>
<td>Ch. 20 – end</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>Reflection 2</td>
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<td>Nothing!</td>
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