

# Evolution of Human Behavior

Fall 2019

<b>Meeting Time and Place</b>	Mon/Wed/Fri 2:30-3:23pm Javitz 101
<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Dr. Catherine Markham</b> <i>Email:</i> <a href="mailto:catherine.markham@stonybrook.edu">catherine.markham@stonybrook.edu</a> <i>Phone:</i> (631) 632-5755 <i>Office:</i> Social and Behavioral Sciences Building, Room North-533 <i>Office hours:</i> Tues 1:00-2:30pm or by appointment
<b>Undergraduate TA</b>	<b>Justine Marcinek</b> <i>Email:</i> <a href="mailto:justine.marcinek@stonybrook.edu">justine.marcinek@stonybrook.edu</a> <i>Office:</i> Social and Behavioral Sciences Building, Room South-524 <i>Office hours:</i> Thurs 1:00-2:00pm or by appointment
<b>Course Attributes</b>	SBS+; DEC F
<b>Prerequisites</b>	ANP 120 or BIO 201 or BIO 202 or instructor permission

## Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of human behavior from an evolutionary perspective. We will focus on surveying behavioral diversity and consistency across human societies. Moreover, we will gain insights into the evolution of human behavior by exploring the social dynamics of non-human primates. Major topics of lecture and discussion will include: mating and pair-bonds; parenting; cooperation and reciprocal altruism; aggression and warfare; dominance and hierarchy; social learning; and norms and institutions.

## Course Learning Objectives

1. **Understand** behaviors as adaptations that maximize the probability that an individual will survive and reproduce.
2. **Investigate** hypothesis testing and experimental design in human behavioral ecology.
3. **Make predictions** about human behavior based on information about an individual's environment.
4. **Evaluate** how human behavior is both similar to and different from the behavior of other social mammals (notably other primates).

## Course Delivery Mode and Structure

This course includes three lecture sessions each week. PowerPoint slides will be posted on Blackboard *after* each lecture. **Note that many lecture slides, however, are simply pictures – students are often not able to understand the material that was discussed unless they are present for lecture!**

## How We Will Communicate

I cannot always recognize the confused, frustrated, or unhappy expressions on your face if you encounter problems, so you must communicate with me so that I can help! To make the experience go smoothly, remember that you're responsible for initiating contact and being direct, persistent, and vocal when you don't understand something. My preferred method of contact is via email at

[catherine.markham@stonybrook.edu](mailto:catherine.markham@stonybrook.edu). If you would like to talk on the phone or meet in person outside of office hours, email me so that we can set up a mutually agreeable time. I will reply to your emails as soon as possible, but please allow between 24-48 hours for a response. Also, please use your Stony Brook University email when getting in touch with me as that is the preferred method of contact from the institution.

### **Blackboard and Technical Assistance**

This course uses Blackboard to facilitate communication between the instructor and students, taking quizzes, assignment submission, and grade posting. The Blackboard course site can be accessed at <https://blackboard.stonybrook.edu>. If you are unsure of your NetID, visit <https://it.stonybrook.edu/help/kb/finding-your-netid-and-password> for more information.

It is your responsibility to secure use of a reliable computer and internet connection throughout the term. Note that you will be at a disadvantage if you attempt to complete all coursework on a smart phone or tablet and it may in fact be impossible to submit the files required for your assignments. The following list details a minimum recommended computer set-up and the software packages you will need: PC with Windows 8 or Macintosh with OS 10.11; Intel Core i5; 250 GB hard drive; 8 GB RAM; high speed internet connection; word processing software; speakers (either internal or external) or headphones; and Adobe Flash player with the latest update.

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Blackboard you can call Stony Brook University Client Support at (631) 632-9800. You can also submit a help request ticket online at <https://it.stonybrook.edu/services/itsm> and/or visit Stony Brook University's Walk-Up Tech Support Station in the Educational Communications Center Building.

### **Required Readings and Podcasts**

There is no required text book for this course, however *there are required readings and podcasts*. A pdf of all readings and transcripts of podcasts (with audio links) is posted under the "Readings and podcasts" menu item on Blackboard.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

*Attendance:* In lectures, we will present and discuss new material. *You will need to attend lecture in order to do well in the course!*

*Exams:* You will take 4 in-class exams. Each exam will consist of 24 multiple choice questions (3 points each), 5 definitions (4 points each), and 1 essay (8 points). **Dates for these exams are Sep 18, Oct 11, Nov 6, and Dec 9.** Any questions concerning your exam grade must be brought to the instructor's attention within *one week* of the graded exam's return. After one week, we can discuss your exam but re-grades will not be considered.

*On exam days,* students are not permitted to wear hats or use electronic devices. Any use of a cell phone or other unauthorized electronic device during an examination will lead to an accusation of scholastic dishonesty. Also note that all backpacks, book bags, purses, etc. must be left at the front of the classroom during exams. You need only a pen or pencil to take an exam. If you're worried that someone might take your bag by mistake, don't bring it to class on an exam day.

*Students seeking exam accommodations through the Student Accessibility Support Center (SASC)* are responsible for coordinating taking the exam at SASC at least one full week prior to the exam date. To avoid confusion, students should email me to confirm that I am aware of this testing location. For more information on SASC, visit them online at <https://www.stonybrook.edu/dss/>

*Make-up Exams:* Make-up exams will be given only under exceptional circumstances and only if the student can provide written evidence for the cause of their absence. For planned absences, you must

provide this documentation in advance of the exam date and time. For unplanned absences, students must contact me (either by email or voicemail) no later than the 5:30pm on the date of the exam. Make-up exams will be given for students missing the exam for official University functions. *The make-up exam will be different from the regular exam with increased emphasis on short answer and essay questions.*

*Book club (extra credit):* You are strongly encouraged to read the book below and discuss your thoughts in an informal gathering near the end of the semester. **Date for this discussion will be announced in lecture and posted on Blackboard.** If you read the book and attend the discussion – *and you contribute a thoughtful critique that reflects your read of the text and your ability to relate the text to our course* – you will receive 5 extra credit points on Exam 4. Note, however, that you are not required to read the book and/or attend the discussion – this is entirely optional for those interested in earning extra credit and/or an additional learning opportunity!

Hrdy SB. 2009. Mothers and Others: The Evolutionary Origins of Mutual Understanding. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA.

*Grading:* This course is a 3-credit course. Students will receive a grade between A and F based on the four exams according to the following calculations:

<i>Exam 1</i>	25%
<i>Exam 2</i>	25%
<i>Exam 3</i>	25%
<i>Exam 4</i>	25%

Your final letter grade for the semester will be assigned based on the following ranges. Note that grades are not curved.

A	93 to 100	B+	87 to <90	C+	77 to <80	D+	67 to <70
A-	90 to <93	B	83 to <87	C	73 to <77	D	63 to <67
		B-	80 to <83	C-	70 to <73	F	0 to <63

*Struggling students:* Do not wait until the end of the semester to ask for help! Be sure to contact me as soon as issues start to arise so that we can work together to resolve them. If your performance during the semester is adversely affected by personal problems (death of a family member, mental health issues, etc.), contact your dean's office as soon as possible to discuss your options. Other available resources for academic help include Student Success Resources (<http://www.stonybrook.edu/for-students/> and <http://www.stonybrook.edu/due>) as well as the Academic Success and Tutoring Center ([http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic\\_success/](http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_success/)).

### Use of Electronics

Ringling phones, texting, etc. are disruptive so remember to turn off your phone before you come to class. You can use your computers in class for note-taking and other purposes related to this class. However, you will lose that privilege if you use your computer for other purposes during class.

### **Our Online Community**

This course uses *optional* Discussion Boards on Blackboard to promote an exchange of ideas among peers. Our online classroom – just like our physical classroom – is a professional environment where academic debate and learning take place. I will make every effort to make this environment safe for you to share your opinions, ideas, and beliefs. In return, you are expected to respect the opinions, ideas, and beliefs of other students and adhere to the standards set in the Student Code of Conduct. Students who violate these standards are subject to disciplinary action. If your behavior does not follow the course etiquette standards stated below, I reserve the right to remove any discussion messages that display inappropriate language or content.

I expect all students to respect the following guidelines for postings:

- Offensive language or rudeness will not be tolerated. Discuss ideas, not the person.
- Avoid cluttering your messages with excessive emphasis (stars, arrows, exclamations).
- Be specific and clear, especially when asking questions.
- Be forgiving of other people's mistakes.
- Use standard punctuation and capitalization. Using all uppercase characters can give the appearance of shouting and makes the message less legible.
- Remember that not all readers are native English speakers, so make allowances for possible misunderstandings and unintended discourtesies.

Within our online community, I will serve as a "guide" to our online discussions. While I will not respond to every post, I will read what is posted and reply when necessary. Expect instructor posts in the following situations:

- To assist each of you when it comes to making connections between discussion, lectures, and textbook material.
- To fill in important things that may have been missed.
- To re-direct discussion if discussions get "out of hand".
- To identify key points or especially valuable posts.

### **Student Accessibility Support Center Statement**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Student Accessibility Support Center, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, Room 128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty is required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty please refer to the academic judiciary website at

[http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic\\_integrity/index.html](http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/index.html)

### **Critical Incident Management**

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of University Community Standards any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow

their school-specific procedures. Further information about most academic matters can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin, the Undergraduate Class Schedule, and the Faculty-Employee Handbook.

### Course Evaluations

Each semester, Stony Brook University asks students to provide feedback on their courses and instructors through an online course evaluation system. The course evaluation results are used by the individual faculty, department chairs and deans to help the faculty enhance their teaching skills and are used as part of the personnel decision for faculty promotion and tenure.

Stony Brook contracts with an outside vendor to administer the surveys and all results are completely anonymous. No individually identifiable data are ever reported back to the university or instructor. Students who have completed previous evaluations can view all faculty ratings at <https://www.stonybrook.edu/celt/services/assessment/course/course-evaluations>

### Copyright Notice

Unless otherwise noted, all materials in this course are the intellectual property of the professor and you may not reuse and/or duplicate the material in printed or electronic form without prior written permission from the owner. The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. YOU ARE INDIVIDUALLY AND SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLATIONS OF COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE LAWS. THE UNIVERSITY WILL NEITHER PROTECT NOR DEFEND YOU NOR ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEE OR STUDENT VIOLATIONS OF COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE LAWS. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

### Course Schedule

See below for key dates. Note that dates are subject to change!

#### AUGUST

- Aug 26 **Introduction**  
*No reading*
- Aug 28 **Living with others**  
*Podcast: What chimps can teach us about politics*
- Aug 30 **Why sex?**  
*Article: The marvel of the human dad*

#### SEPTEMBER

- Sep 2 No class – Labor Day
- Sep 4 **Mating systems**  
*Article: Men want beauty, women want wealth, and other unscientific tosh*
- Sep 6 **Marriage**  
*Podcast: Polygamy*
- Sep 9 **Choosing a mate**  
*Article: Why women stray*

Sep 11 **Grandmothers**  
*Podcast:* The Grandmother Hypothesis

Sep 13 **Fathers**  
*Article:* Latte pappas

Sep 16 *TBD*

Sep 18 **Exam 1**

Sep 20 **Who receives care?**  
*Article:* Infanticide

Sep 23 **Clever babies**  
*Article:* Five-month-old babies know what's funny

Sep 25 **Life history**  
*Article:* Families made us human

Sep 27 **Reconstructing our past**  
*Article:* Think everyone died young in ancient societies? Think again

Sep 30 **Play**  
*Article:* The play deficit

## OCTOBER

Oct 2 **Cooperation among kin**  
*TBD*

Oct 4 **Cooperation among non-kin**  
*Podcast:* The good show: An equation for good

Oct 7 **Friendships**  
*Article:* Kindred spirits

Oct 9 *TBD*

Oct 11 **Exam 2**

Oct 14 **Fall break**

Oct 16 **Dominance and prestige**  
*Article:* The mask falls

Oct 18 **Socioeconomic status and health**  
*Podcast:* Robert Sapolsky on the toxic intersection of poverty and stress

Oct 21 **Aggression**  
*Article:* The hunt for human nature

Oct 23 **Warfare**  
*Article:* Is there are a war instinct?

Oct 25 **Reconciliation**  
*Article:* Are they forgivable?

- Oct 28 **What is culture?**  
*No reading*
- Oct 30 **Cumulative cultural evolution**  
*No reading*

## NOVEMBER

- Nov 1 **Gene-culture co-evolution**  
*No reading*
- Nov 4 *TBD*
- Nov 6 **Exam 3**
- Nov 8 **The uniqueness of humans**  
*TBD*
- Nov 11 **Rationality and decision making**  
*Podcast: Choosing wrong: Act 1*
- Nov 13 **Crazed crowds?**  
*Article: The intimacy of crowds*
- Nov 15 **Empathy**  
*Article: The case for empathy*
- Nov 18 **Morality**  
*Podcast: Driverless dilemma*
- Nov 20 **Fairness and egalitarianism**  
*Article: Envy's hidden hand*
- Nov 22 **Emotions**  
*Article: The first smile*
- Nov 25 **Maladaptive behaviors**  
*Podcast: Fear: Episode 1*

Nov 27 Thanksgiving break

Nov 29 Thanksgiving break

## DECEMBER

- Dec 2 **Demographic transition**  
*No reading*
- Dec 4 **What does the future hold?**  
*No reading*
- Dec 6 *TBD*
- Dec 9 **Exam 4**