

**Spring 2012 • Hofstra University • Department of Psychology
Fundamental Perspectives in Psychology (Psy 7) – Dr. Oskar Pineño**

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Time and place of lectures: **Psy 7-01:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 11:10 am to 12:35 pm, in Breslin Hall 014.
Psy 7-A: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 6:30 pm to 7:55 pm, in Breslin Hall 217.
Office: Hauser Hall (Department of Psychology), Room 116.
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 3 pm to 6 pm, or by appointment.

I will be available to speak with individual students immediately after class, during the office hours, and by appointment (scheduled by e-mail).

Course description

Psy 7: "Detailed examination of selected major areas of research in psychology, such as natural and artificial intelligence, and physiological and psychological aspects of emotionality."


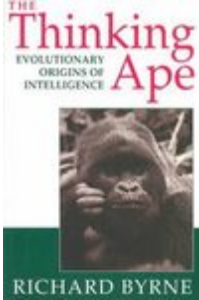
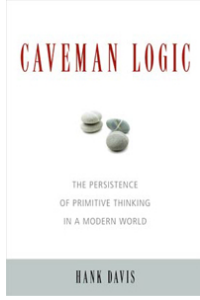
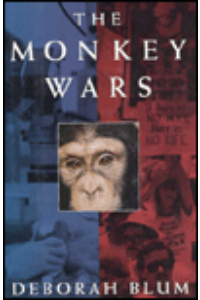
Is human intelligence a divine gift... or is it merely the product of natural selection? How can we envision our own minds in light of evolutionary theory? Does research on the cognitive abilities of non-human animals provide us with any insight about ourselves? Is the use of animals in psychological research necessary? If so, do experimental animals have rights?

This course will try to answer the previous questions, among others. To achieve this goal, we will start our trip by revisiting old issues on human nature (i.e., love, war, altruism, gender differences in sexual relations...) in light of Darwin's theory of evolution. Next, we will discuss different studies on animal cognition, which will allow us to better understand human psychological processes, while encouraging us to consider evidence of sophisticated intelligence in non-human beings. Once we accept that we, humans, are not *that* special, ethical questions arise. This course will accordingly end with a review and debate of current issues on the rights of experimental animals.

This course is organized in the following three sections:

- Section 1: Understanding evolutionary theory.
- Section 2: A glimpse at the animal mind.
- Section 3: Animal research and animal rights.

Required readings

Lecture materials		Independent readings	
			
<p>Pinker, S. (1997). <i>How the mind works</i>. New York: W. Norton & Company.</p>	<p>Byrne, R. (1995). <i>The thinking ape: Evolutionary origins of intelligence</i>. New York: Oxford University Press.</p>	<p>Davis, H. (2009). <i>Caveman logic: The persistence of primitive thinking in a modern world</i>. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.</p>	<p>Blum, D. (1994). <i>The monkey wars</i>. New York: Oxford University Press.</p>
<p>ISBN-10: 0393318486 ISBN-13: 978-0393318487</p>	<p>ISBN-10: 0198522657 ISBN-13: 978-0198522652</p>	<p>ISBN-10: 1591027217 ISBN-13: 978-1591027218</p>	<p>ISBN-10: 019510109X ISBN-13: 978-0195101096</p>

Organization of materials through the course

Section 1: Understanding evolutionary theory.

Readings:

- Steven Pinker – *How the mind works*.
 - Chapter 1 – Standard equipment (55 pages).
 - Chapter 3 – Revenge of the nerds (62 pages).
 - Chapter 6 – Hotheads (62 pages).
 - Chapter 7 – Family values (95 pages).
- Hank Davis – *Caveman logic: The persistence of primitive thinking in a modern world* (298 pages).

Documentary:

- March of the penguins (*La marche de l'empereur*, 2005). (Runtime: 85 min).

Section 2: A glimpse at the animal mind.

Readings:

- Richard Byrne – *The thinking ape: Evolutionary origins of intelligence* (280 pages).

Documentary:

- Koko, a talking gorilla (*Koko, le gorille qui parle*, 1978). (Runtime: 85 min).

Section 3: Animal research and animal rights.

Readings:

- Deborah Blum – *The monkey wars* (334 pages).

Documentary:

- The cove. (Runtime: 91 min)*.

* If necessary, contingent upon class performance, a lecture on *The thinking ape* will be traded for this movie.

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Grade calculation

Your grade is calculated as follows:

A midterm exam:	30%
A final exam:	30%
Two papers (20% each):	40%

You can see the above percentages of credit as *points*. During the course, you will accrue points as a function of your performance in the exams and the quality of your papers. At the end of the course, your points will be converted into your final grade, according to the following table:

Grade	Points (%)
A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	85-89
B	80-84
B-	75-79
C+	70-74
C	65-69
C-	60-64
D+	55-59
D	50-54
F	0-49

Exams

The midterm and final exams will consist of 2 essay questions each. A few days before the exam, a list of 6-8 candidate questions will be given to the students, being 2 of those questions then selected for the exam.

Assignments

Two essays are required. Each essay must be 1000 words in length (approx.). Essays of less than 900 words will be deducted 10 points (out of 20). The essay topics will be distributed in advance. The submission deadlines are indicated in the assignment schedule. No late essays will be accepted (unless excused by official documentation, e.g., your doctor). Finally, in an effort to reduce our paper waste, the assignments will be accepted *only* in an electronic format: drafts will be provided by email and the final essays will be uploaded to Turnitin (on Blackboard).

Academic honesty

Plagiarism is a serious ethical and professional infraction. Hofstra’s policy on academic honesty reads: “The academic community assumes that work of any kind [...] is done, entirely, and without assistance, by and only for the individual(s) whose name(s) it bears.” Please refer to the “Procedure for Handling Violations of Academic Honesty by Undergraduate Students at Hofstra University” to be found at http://www.hofstra.edu/PDF/Senate_FPS_11.pdf, for details about what constitutes plagiarism, and Hofstra’s procedures for handling violations.

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Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional presentation of other people's work as your own. Papers containing material from any sources (including but not limited to textbooks, dictionaries, encyclopedias, newspapers, televised programs, class handouts and blackboard postings), without explicitly referencing those sources will receive a grade of zero. This applies to direct quotations and paraphrases equally. If your paper is found to be plagiarized, it will receive a grade of zero, and, in compliance with official Hofstra policy, notice of this will be sent to the Dean's office.

Sources

When writing papers for this class, you are required to include a last section containing a list of all sources that you have either referred to in your paper, or consulted in researching your paper. Papers are not considered submitted until the list of sources is included. If your paper is found to contain material from sources that are not listed on this document, it is plagiarized, and will be punished as described above.

Special needs

If you have any concerns regarding a physical, psychological and/or learning disability that may have an impact upon your performance in this course, appropriate accommodations can be made on an individualized, as-needed basis after the needs, circumstances and documentation have been evaluated by the appropriate office on campus.

The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in 212 Memorial Hall. Telephone: 516-463-7074. Please see the Hofstra Guide to Pride, or see their site: <http://www.hofstra.edu/StudentAffairs/stddis/index.html>. All disability-related information will be kept confidential.

A few rules

The following "common-sense" rules will be effective in this course:

- You are expected to *arrive on time*.
- Any kind of voluntary *disruptive behavior* will negatively affect your grade. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to:
 - "Parallel chatting", or talking to somebody while the professor and/or another student is speaking, or when you are supposed to remain quiet.
 - Talking/texting on the cell phone. Please, turn your cell phone off before entering the class. Receiving a phone call or texting while you are in the class could lower your grade.
- No kind of *electronic device* (e.g., cell phones, beepers, MP3 players, PDAs...) will be allowed during the exams. Failing to follow this rule will result in your losing credit for the corresponding exam.
- Your interaction with the professor and your peers should *always* be *respectful*. Offenses and insults of any kind, either overt or insinuated, have no room in our course. Failure to follow this rule will lower your grade.

Departmental goals and objectives for Psy 7

- *Learning goal: Base of knowledge*
 - (a) Students will learn and retain a broad base of knowledge in the various domains of Psychology in order to prepare for graduate schools in various disciplines of psychology or education and for a wide variety of postgraduate career opportunities, including but not limited to jobs in education, industry, human health services, and professional schools.
- *Learning objectives*
 - (a) Students will demonstrate through papers, reports, examinations, theses and other written means, systematic knowledge in foundational areas such as History of Psychology, Biological Bases of Behavior, Human Development, Social Psychology, Learning, and Cognitive Psychology.
 - (b) Students will demonstrate through papers, reports, examinations, theses and other written means, systematic knowledge in the applied areas, such as Clinical Psychology, Industrial-Organizational Psychology, and Psychology as it relates to Legal Settings.

General education goals and learning objectives for Psy 7

- *Goal 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively.*
 - (a) Clearly and accurately summarize and evaluate the facts, presumptions, viewpoints, values, and arguments presented in a text or creative work.
 - (b) Conceive and defend alternative hypotheses and viewpoints; offer and explain reasons for provisionally rejecting or accepting them.
- *Goal 2: Students will apply analytical reasoning across academic disciplines.*
 - (a) Read with comprehension, and critically interpret written work in discipline-specific contexts.
 - (b) Apply the methods of social science to ethically investigate and analyze human social behavior.
- *Goal 3: Students will demonstrate proficiency in written communication.*
 - (a) Compose grammatical sentences.
 - (b) Compose a sequence of paragraphs that develop a point.
 - (c) Summarize, quote, and respond to reliable texts to support and develop claims; apply relevant standards for citation.
 - (d) Respond to writing assignments using appropriate style, structure, and voice.
- *Goal 4: Students will demonstrate information literacy.*
 - (a) Conduct research using the variety of information sources available to them.
 - (b) Demonstrate the ability to evaluate the relevance and utility of different sources.
 - (c) Integrate sources effectively and ethically through proper citation.

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Tentative assignment schedule:

Date	Day	Topics to be discussed	Required readings
Jan. 26	R	Presentation and intro to the course	
Section 1 Understanding evolution theory			
Jan. 31	T	Intro to evolutionary theory	
Feb. 02	R	Documentary: <i>March of the penguins</i>	
Feb. 07	T	Cognitive and evolutionary psychology	Pinker: Chapter 1 <i>First assignment is announced</i>
Feb. 09	R	Human evolution	Pinker: Chapter 3
Feb. 14	T	Human evolution	Pinker: Chapter 3
Feb. 16	R	Reverse-engineering of emotions	Pinker: Chapter 6
Feb. 23	R	Reverse-engineering of emotions	Pinker: Chapter 6
Feb. 28	T	Reverse-engineering of social relations	Pinker: Chapter 7
Mar. 01	R	Reverse-engineering of social relations	Pinker: Chapter 7 <i>First assignment due</i>
Mar. 06	T	Reverse-engineering of social relations	Pinker: Chapter 7
Mar. 08	R	Reverse-engineering of social relations	Pinker: Chapter 7
Mar. 13	T	Reverse-engineering of social relations	Pinker: Chapter 7
Mar. 15	R	Debate: <i>News from evolutionary psych.</i>	Davis' <i>Caveman logic</i>
Mar. 20	T	Midterm exam	(class time)
Section 2 A glimpse at the animal mind			
Mar. 22	R	The intelligence of apes	Byrne's <i>The thinking ape</i> – Part 1 <i>Second assignment is announced</i>
Mar. 27	T	The intelligence of apes	Byrne's <i>The thinking ape</i> – Part 1
Mar. 29	R	The intelligence of apes	Byrne's <i>The thinking ape</i> – Part 2
Apr. 03	T	The intelligence of apes	Byrne's <i>The thinking ape</i> – Part 3
Apr. 05	R	The intelligence of apes	Byrne's <i>The thinking ape</i> – Part 3
Apr. 17	T	The intelligence of apes	Byrne's <i>The thinking ape</i> – Part 4
Apr. 19	R	The intelligence of apes	Byrne's <i>The thinking ape</i> – Part 4 <i>Second assignment due</i>
Apr. 24	T	Documentary: <i>Koko, a talking gorilla</i>	
Section 3 Animal research and animal rights			
Apr. 26	R	Documentary: <i>The cove</i>	
May 01	T	Debate: <i>The use of animals in research</i>	Blum's <i>The monkey wars</i>
May 03	R	Extra debate – Part 1	
May 08	T	Extra debate – Part 2	
May 17	R	Final exam Psy 7-01	(10:30 am – 12:30 pm)
May 17	R	Final exam Psy 7-A	(6:15 pm – 8:15 pm)