



PSYM7739

Evolution of Social, Sexual and Emotional Behaviour

Session 2, Weekday attendance, North Ryde 2021

Archive (Pre-2022) - Department of Psychology

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Disclaimer

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Session 2 Learning and Teaching Update

The decision has been made to conduct study online for the remainder of Session 2 for all units WITHOUT mandatory on-campus learning activities. Exams for Session 2 will also be online where possible to do so.

This is due to the extension of the lockdown orders and to provide certainty around arrangements for the remainder of Session 2. We hope to return to campus beyond Session 2 as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Some classes/teaching activities cannot be moved online and must be taught on campus. You should already know if you are in one of these classes/teaching activities and your unit convenor will provide you with more information via iLearn. If you want to confirm, see the list of [units with mandatory on-campus classes/teaching activities](#).



Visit the [MQ COVID-19 information page](#) for more detail.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit convenor

A/Prof Ian Stephen

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Contact via Email

By appointment

Lecturer

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Lecturer

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

PSYH4439

Unit description

This unit will provide a framework for in-depth study of evolutionary explanations of human and animal behaviour. While evolution is overwhelmingly accepted by biologists as the best explanation for the development of life on Earth, and for the behaviour of non-human animals, the new science of evolution of human behaviour is considered controversial by many. This module will introduce the different evolutionary approaches to human behaviour: evolutionary psychology and human behavioural ecology. We will cover evolutionary explanations of behaviours such as cooperation, altruism, violence, murder, gossip, sexual attraction, relationships, culture and religion.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- ULO1:** Explain evolutionary theory and describe how it can be applied to human behaviour.
- ULO2:** Critically discuss the different methodological frameworks in evolutionary studies of human behaviour and their relationship with other branches of the social sciences.
- ULO3:** Articulate the criticisms that have been levelled at evolutionary psychology, and their basis in fact or misconception.
- ULO4:** Describe current research questions in evolution of brain and behaviour.
- ULO5:** Make oral and written presentations of critiques and syntheses of published work, and engage with feedback from peers.

General Assessment Information

All the relevant Macquarie University policies will apply, including the following.

The essay must be submitted to Turnitin (via iLearn)

- **TURNITIN ELECTRONIC COPY:** You will be required to submit your assignment to Turnitin plagiarism detection software via the Internet. Your assignment will be automatically compared to work of other students in this unit, previous students in this unit and at other universities, and material available on the Internet in subscription-based journal format or otherwise freely accessible information. The results of the analysis will be sent only to the unit chair of PSYH4439, who will analyse the results in reference to the [University's standard policy on plagiarism](#).

- Marked essays will be returned to students within three weeks of submission.

This unit does not require coversheets with your essays.

A copy of the assignment must be kept as proof that the assignment was completed and submitted.

AFTER AN ASSIGNMENT IS SUBMITTED:

Penalties will be levied for late submission of assignment and for exceeding the word limit:

- Written work that exceeds the word count will be penalised 5% for every 100 words over. For example, the essay is worth 30% of the overall assessment for the Unit and if the word length is exceeded by 100 words, then $5\% \times 30 = 1.5\%$ of the final unit grade.
- Work that is submitted late (and without extension) will receive a 5% penalty for every day late. For example, the essay is worth 30% of the overall assessment for the Unit and if one day late, then $5\% \times 30 = 1.5\%$ of the final unit grade.

Ordinarily, no extensions of time for submission of written work will be granted since ample time for preparation will have been given. If an extension is required for medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may request this in writing through ask.mq.edu.au with supporting documentary evidence (such as medical certificate, counsellor note, or similar). The staff in the Student Centre will make all decisions regarding extensions.

All requests for extensions must be made prior to the due date for the assignment.

If an extension is granted, the approval email must be included as the first page of the submitted assignment to avoid any late penalty.

PRESENTATION AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

The classes for PSYH4439 will include lecture and discussion components. Students will take turns to introduce a new or classic research paper for discussion in the class. You will be graded on your presentation and contributions to the discussions during the classes. Grades will be determined by the unit convenor, who will take into account feedback from other lecturers and anonymous feedback from peers on your presentation. Notes will be kept to support the grading.

The dates for individual students' presentations will be determined at the beginning of the session. You will be required to submit a special consideration request via ask.mq.edu.au with supporting documentation of your unavoidable and serious circumstances if you are going to miss your presentation date. These requests must be made in advance of the presentation date, and you must email the unit chair as soon as possible to ensure that an alternative activity can be prepared.

FINAL EXAMS

The examination will take place in class time in Week 13.

The only exception to sitting an examination at the designated time is because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available at <http://www.psy.mq.edu.au/speccond/scrules.htm>

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Special Consideration process, the examination will be scheduled after the original exam date.

Supplementary Exams are only offered to students who have satisfactorily completed all other assessments for the unit and were unable to sit the final exam because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption.

Instructions on applying for sitting of a supplementary exam are [available from the website](#). It is the student's responsibility to follow the steps outlined in this website. An email will be sent to the student advising them of the outcome of their request for a supplementary exam. Students who are granted to sit for a supplementary exam must make themselves available to sit for the supplementary exam on the specified date. There will only be one time. It is the student's responsibility to email Student Centre to confirm attendance at the supplementary exam.

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching session, which is the final day of the official examination period.

Academic honesty

Academic honesty is an integral part of the core values and principles contained in the Macquarie University Ethics Statement. [The Policy covering Academic Honesty is available on the web.](#)

Plagiarism is an example of dishonest academic behaviour and is defined by the Policy on Academic honesty as: "Using the work or ideas of another person and presenting this as your own without clear acknowledgement of the source of the work or ideas". Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties.

This procedure notes the following responsibilities for students:

- Act in accordance with the principles of the Academic Honesty Policy.
- Become familiar with what academic dishonesty is, what are appropriate referencing techniques and the consequences of poor practice.
- Seek assistance from the unit convenor (or their nominee) to remedy any deficits or if you are unsure of discipline specific practice.
- Submit only work of which you are the author or that properly acknowledges others.
- Do not lend your original work to any other person for any reason.
- Keep drafts of your own authored work and notes showing the authorship or source of ideas that are not your own.

The penalties which can be applied for academic dishonesty are outlined in the Academic

Dishonesty – Schedule of Penalties.

The penalties range from applying a fail grade for the assessment task or requiring the student to re-submit the assessment task for a mark no greater than 50 to applying a fail grade to the unit of study and referral to the University Discipline committee.

You must read the University's Policy and Procedure on Academic Honesty.

University Policy on Grading

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines for the achievement of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Your final result will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG).

On occasion your raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive.

For more information please refer to the Macquarie University Handbook.

Student Support Services

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at <http://www.student.mq.edu.au>.

On matters pertaining to the regulations, the Registrar's Office should be consulted or, within the Department of Psychology, **Prof Kerry Sherman**, Deputy Head of Department for Teaching and Learning, or **Dr Trevor Case**, Director of the Honours Programme. Students with disabilities or mental health issues should consult **Campus Wellbeing**. If your difficulties cannot be resolved by these members of staff, you should consult the **Head of Department**.

APPEALS AGAINST GRADES

Please refer to the [Grade Appeal Policy](#)

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Individual Class presentation	20%	No	Weekly. Sign up via iLearn
Final Examination	50%	No	Week 13 during class time
Essay	30%	No	5pm Friday 8th October

Individual Class presentation

Assessment Type ¹: Presentation

Indicative Time on Task ²: 10 hours

Due: **Weekly. Sign up via iLearn**

Weighting: **20%**

Students present and critique a new or classic research paper for discussion in the class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain evolutionary theory and describe how it can be applied to human behaviour.
- Critically discuss the different methodological frameworks in evolutionary studies of human behaviour and their relationship with other branches of the social sciences.
- Describe current research questions in evolution of brain and behaviour.
- Make oral and written presentations of critiques and syntheses of published work, and engage with feedback from peers.

Final Examination

Assessment Type ¹: Examination

Indicative Time on Task ²: 50 hours

Due: **Week 13 during class time**

Weighting: **50%**

Final examination held in scheduled class time, in accordance with relevant requirements.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain evolutionary theory and describe how it can be applied to human behaviour.
- Critically discuss the different methodological frameworks in evolutionary studies of human behaviour and their relationship with other branches of the social sciences.
- Articulate the criticisms that have been levelled at evolutionary psychology, and their basis in fact or misconception.
- Describe current research questions in evolution of brain and behaviour.
- Make oral and written presentations of critiques and syntheses of published work, and engage with feedback from peers.

Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **5pm Friday 8th October**

Weighting: **30%**

Students will be required to submit an essay that critically discusses a current question in

evolutionary approaches to behaviour.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Articulate the criticisms that have been levelled at evolutionary psychology, and their basis in fact or misconception.
- Describe current research questions in evolution of brain and behaviour.
- Make oral and written presentations of critiques and syntheses of published work, and engage with feedback from peers.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Lectures/seminars are held weekly online via Zoom.

The core textbook for this unit is:

Buss, D.M. (2017) Evolutionary Psychology: The New Science of the Mind (5th edition). Boston: Pearson.

This is available as an ebook through the library, or you may purchase it online or via the Coop (dependent on stock).

A weekly reading list is available via Leganto (linked on iLearn).

Unit Schedule

Week	Length of Lecture	Lecture Topic	Lecturer	Date
1	2	Introduction to Evolutionary Theory	A/Prof Ian Stephen	24 Feb
2	2	Encephalisation and the evolution of the brain	A/Prof Ian Stephen	2 Mar
3	2	The Evolution of Cooperation	A/Prof Ian Stephen	9 Mar

4	2	Special Topic 1: The Evolution of Morality	Dr Tim Marsh	16 Mar
5	2	Violence and Aggression	A/Prof Ian Stephen	23 Mar
6	2	The Evolution of Culture	A/Prof Ian Stephen	30 Mar
7	2	Special Topic 2: Personality in Evolutionary Context	Dr Mem Mahmut	6 Apr
8	2	Special Topic 3: Disgust and Disease Avoidance	Prof Dick Stevenson	27 Apr
9	2	Sex, Sexual Selection and Sexual Strategies	A/Prof Ian Stephen	4 May
10	2	Special Topic 4: Faces, Bodies and Attraction	A/Prof Ian Stephen	11 May
11	2	Special Topic 5: The Family in Evolutionary Context	Prof Julie Fitness	18 May
12	2	History, Controversy and Criticisms	A/Prof Ian Stephen	25 May
13	2	Exam		1 June

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about

throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Grading

Macquarie University, and Psychology undergraduate courses, follow standards-based assessment of student performance. All individual assessment tasks are subject to moderation, consistent with the Assessment Policy and Procedure. A student's final mark for this unit, and associated grade, must reflect their attainment of the unit learning outcomes, and isn't necessarily a simple summation of their individual assessment items.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Getting help with your assignment](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.