**Human Biology (HBIO) 308: Origins and Evolution of Human Behavior**

**Details:** VHE (Vivian Hall) 206 Tuesday, Thursdays 11:00 – 12:20

**Professor:** Dr. Stephanie Bogart

Office: AHF (Hancock), Jane Goodall Center, B10-B

Email: TBA

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-2pm, Wednesdays 1-2pm, or by appointment

**Course Content:** This course explores the evolution of human behavior from a biological perspective. We will examine the issues and competing hypotheses for a range of behaviors, such as sex differences, reproductive strategies, and cooperation, based on evolutionary principles. You will come away from this course with an understanding of ecological and evolutionary processes including the role of genetic variation and natural selection, as well as the implications these have for the origins of humans. The goal of this course is for you to obtain and expand your ability to articulate a clear understanding of human behavioral evolution and think critically about scientific information. A discussion of evolutionary theory, including natural and sexual selection in animal populations will start the course off. Next, we will critically assess theories on human origins with regards to primate models. Finally, this course will examine the biological basis for specific human behaviors. A major component of this course will be class discussion and participation, as well as writing critiques for specific topics and articles.

**Required Textbooks:**

Evolution of Human Behavior by Augustine Fuentes 2008

The Red Queen: Sex and the Evolution of Human Nature by Matt Ridley

2003 reprint edition

Additional readings will be posted online or handed out (PVL in schedule)

**Grading:** Two papers/critiques: 50 %

Discussion leadership and participation: 25 % (10% participation)

Take-home final exam: 25 %

\*\**Subject to revision*\*\*

**Academic Integrity:** Students will be expected to follow University standards of academic integrity (guidelines at SCampus) or face disciplinary penalties, including course failure and suspension. You should conduct your own work without plagiarism and impeding the work of other students. I will trust you to conduct yourselves accordingly and respectfully during discussions, completing assignments, and taking exams. Excused absences are granted only for severe contagious illness or death in one's immediate family.

\*\*Cell phone use will not be permitted during class.

**Academic Accommodations:** Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Deliver this letter to me (the instructor) as early in the semester as possible.

DSP: Student Union (STU) 301 - 8:30-5:00pm Monday – Friday, (213) 740-0776

**Schedule** (*Subject to revision*) **Readings**

Week 1

T Aug 26: Introductions and syllabus None

R Aug 28: Evolution: Processes Fuentes 1

Week 2

T Sept 2: Adaptation & Sexual Selection Ridley 1 & 5

R Sept 4: Behavior and Sociobiology Fuentes 2

Week 3

T Sept 9: Why be social? Human Behavioral Ecology Fuentes 3

R Sept 11: **Discussion:** Sociality PVL

Week 4

T Sept 16: Human ancestors & origins Fuentes 4

R Sept 18: **Discussion:** Genetics and Parasites Ridley 3 & 4

Week 5

T Sept 23: Primates as models PVL

R Sept 25: **Discussion:** Primatology, social structure PVL

**PAPER 1 DUE**

Week 6

T Sept 30: Competition and conflict Fuentes 5 & 6

R Oct 2: **Discussion:** Competition and conflict PVL

Week 7

T Oct 7: Reproductive decisions, mating, population dynamics Fuentes 5 & 6

R Oct 9: **Discussion:** Mating strategies Ridley 6 & 7

Week 8

T Oct 14: Evolutionary ecology and food acquisition Fuentes 5 & 6

R Oct 16: **Discussion:** Foraging, tool use, meat-eating, cooking PVL

Week 9

T Oct 21: Prosociality Fuentes 5 & 6

R Oct 23: **Discussion:** Altruism, cooperation, reciprocity PVL

Week 10

T Oct 28: Cognition PVL

R Oct 30: **Discussion:** IQ and Cognition PVL

Week 11

T Nov 4: Communication and language PVL

R Nov 6: **Discussion:** Language PVL

**PAPER 2 DUE**

Week 12

T Nov 11: Practices and perspectives Fuentes 7

R Nov 13: **Discussion:** Infanticide, alloparenting, menopause PVL

Week 13

T Nov 18 Synthesis Fuentes 8

R Nov 20: **Discussion:** Hunter-Gather studies PVL

Week 14

T Nov 25: Problems and integration Fuentes 9 & Epilogue

R Nov 27: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break

Week 15

T Dec 2: **Discussion:** Cultural evolution, memetics PVL

R Dec 4: Conclusions and Review

Final Due: **Tuesday, Dec 16 by 1pm**

*\*PVL = Provided Literature*

**Assignments:**

**Paper 1:** Article critique Due September 25th - Assignment handout

Students will write a critique of a primary literature article related to topics covered in class on the origins and evolution of human behavior

**Paper 2:** Topic paper Due November 6th – Assignment handout

Students will be required to choose a topic in human behavioral evolution and prepare an original 5 page review paper addressing historical, theoretical, and/or methodological approaches as applied to a specific research question.

**Discussion Leader:** (Thursdays, weeks 3-15) - Assignment handout at later date

You and one to two other students will lead discussion of assigned readings chosen by the instructor to complement lectures/topics. Presenters **lead discussion** of the material in the paper and teach material only when students are not able to describe the results or need background information. All students must read the assigned papers before each discussion (See participation below). Leaders are ***strongly encouraged*** to meet with Dr. Bogart prior to discussion to make sure you understand the content of the readings and your role as leaders. Discussions can be creatively designed and can include assigned small group work.

**Participation** during discussions promoting critical thinking: (Thursdays, weeks 3-15)

All students will earn points by participating in Thursday discussions. Each student should come to class prepared and able to contribute. (See discussion leader handout)