

**HBIO 308: Origins and Evolution of Human Behavior**

**Details:** THH 108 - MWF 1-1:50pm

**Professor:** Dr. Stephanie Bogart  
Office: AHF (Hancock), Jane Goodall Center, B10-B  
Email: [sbogart@usc.edu](mailto:sbogart@usc.edu)  
Office Hours: TBD 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 will start the course off. Next, we will critically assess theories on human origins. 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 and Human Behavior: Darwinian Perspectives on Human Nature by John Cartwright 2008

The Red Queen: Sex and the Evolution of Human Nature, by Matt Ridley 2003 reprint ed.

*Recommended:* Lone Survivors: How We Came to be the Only Humans on Earth, Stringer 2013

**Grading:**

15%	Paper 1
30%	Paper 2
	• 10% Topic approval and Intro/Outline/Bibliography
	• 20% Final Paper
10%	Discussion Participation
20%	Discussion leadership
25%	Take-home final exam

**Assignments: (further instructions will be handed out separately)**

**Paper 1:** Article critique - 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 - Students will be required to choose a topic in human origins and behavioral evolution to prepare an original 5-7 page review paper addressing historical, theoretical, and/or methodological approaches as applies to a specific research question.

**Discussion Leader:** Students will lead one discussion session of assigned readings chosen by the instructor to complement lectures/topics.

**Participation:** To promote critical thinking. All students will earn points by participating in discussions. Each student should come to class prepared and able to contribute.

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

**Readings for lecture**

<u>Week 1</u>	Introductions and syllabus, Evolution: Processes Adaptation & Sexual Selection	Cartwright 1 & 2 Ridley 1, Cartwright 3
<u>Week 2</u>	Sexual Selection Behavior and Sociobiology Evolutionary Psychology	Ridley 5 Cartwright 4
<u>Week 3</u>	MONDAY: LABOR DAY (no class) Writing and presenting – expectations What is a Primate; Fossilization, Early Hominins <b>FRIDAY: PAPER 1 DUE</b>	Cartwright 5
<u>Week 4</u>	Later Hominins and Sociality <b>Discussion (Wed):</b> Human ancestors - Professor demonstrates leading discussion	Cartwright 5
<u>Week 5</u>	Hunter-Gatherer societies and evolution of human behavior <b>Discussion (Wed and Fri):</b> Hunter-Gather Societies	
<u>Week 6</u>	<b>MONDAY: Paper 2 topic approval due</b> Primates as models <b>Discussion (Wed and Fri):</b> Primates and the evolution of human behavior	
<u>Week 7</u>	Genetics <b>Discussion (Wed and Fri):</b> Genetics and Parasites	Ridley 4
<u>Week 8</u>	Reproductive decisions, mating, parenting <b>Discussion (Wed and Fri):</b> Mating strategies	Cartwright 11 & 12 Ridley 6 & 7
<u>Week 9</u>	Rearing and its effects <b>Discussion (Wed and Fri):</b> Rearing	Cartwright 10 & 12
<u>Week 10</u>	<b>MONDAY: Paper 2 Intro/Outline/Bibliography due</b> Competition and conflict <b>Discussion (Wed and Fri):</b> Competition and conflict	Cartwright 10
<u>Week 11</u>	Prosociality (altruism, cooperation, reciprocity) <b>Discussion (Wed and Fri):</b> Prosociality	Cartwright 9
<u>Week 12</u>	Cognition, Communication and language <b>Discussion (Wed and Fri):</b> Communication & Language	Cartwright 5, Ridley 10
<u>Week 13</u>	Culture <b>WED:</b> No class – prep final paper <b>FRIDAY: PAPER 2 DUE</b>	Cartwright 16
<u>Week 14</u>	Thanksgiving Break – No Class	
<u>Week 15</u>	Synthesis, Conclusions, and Review <b>FRIDAY: FINAL EXAM (Take-home) DUE (No Class)</b>	Cartwright 18, Ridley Epi

## USC's Statements on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

### Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.