

HBIO 306: Primate Social Behavior and Ecology
Fall 2019
Human and Evolutionary Biology
University of Southern California

Class Time: T/Th 11-12:20

Class Location: AHF B10 (To be confirmed)

Instructor: Dr. Caitlin O'Connell

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Office hours: By appointment Th 12:30-2:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the behavior of wild primates and the ecological models that attempt to explain the evolution of these behaviors. The evolution and taxonomy of primates will be reviewed and you will learn how we distinguish a monkey from an ape, how you might be able to tell where a particular species is from, and other characteristics that allow us to group primates into different categories. We will then explore primate behavior through theoretical frameworks ranging from socioecological theory to sexual selection. Topics discussed include, but are not limited to, socioecology, aggression, kinship, cooperation, reproductive strategies, cognition, and conservation.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Primate Behavioral Ecology by Karen Strier, 5th Edition

Suggested Text:

Primate Ethnographies by Karen Strier (editor), 2017 (1st edition)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain the history and motives behind primate studies in terms of understanding human evolution and species variation.
- Recognize features and hypotheses associated with the origin of the primate pattern
- Identify primate taxonomy and characteristics unique to each taxonomic group.
- Distinguish between the different elements of primate socio-ecology, social groups, and factors that contribute to group variation, including male and female reproductive strategies and their influence on social organization.
- Describe the principles of natural selection and sexual selection
- Discuss characteristics associated with stages of the primate lifecycle.
- Identify threats to primate populations and organizations involved in the development of conservation policies.

ATTENDANCE AND COURSE MATERIALS

- Students will need to attend class to do well in this course! The textbook material is related and complementary to lecture material. However, lectures will not be tightly tied to the format of the textbook and both need to be mastered to do well on exams. Please read the text to understand broad ideas, theories, definitions, and to learn which primate groups and species are associated with learned concepts. The text provides different examples than what is covered in class to supplement your learning and to help to clarify concepts. We will also read journal articles and popular articles – posted on Blackboard - related to the topics we are discussing in class and spend time talking about them on catch-up/discussion days.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **Exam 1 (25%):** This test will be multiple choice and short answer format and will cover all preceding lecture materials, videos, and textbook readings.
- **Exam 2 (25%):** This test will be multiple choice and short answer format and will cover all preceding lecture materials, videos, and textbook readings covered since Term Test One.
- **Research Project (25%):** Focused literary research on a specific topic or species, 5-7-page paper using 6 primary references. Project check in required Week 12
- **Zoo project (15%):** Visit any zoo or primate facility to evaluate a primate species with regards to their welfare. You will use interviews, signage, and behavioral methods to make your final assessments using the knowledge gained in this course. 2-page report on animal welfare in a zoo setting
- **Class participation (10%):** Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions. Missing classes reduces your participation score.

MISSED EXAMS

Missed tests automatically receive a score of zero. In the event of an emergency or illness, you **MUST** notify the instructor **BEFORE** the exam by email, and documentation may be requested before or at the time of the scheduled make-up test. Make-up tests may differ in form and content from the original exam.

COMMUNICATION ETIQUETTE

- Please use your university account for all correspondence. Emails from other accounts (e.g. gmail) may not be replied to.
- Use a clear subject line that includes the course name/section and the topic of the email such as “HBIO 306 Question about journal article”

- Show that you have made an effort to find the answer first in the text and lecture material (or even an outside source). State what you know in relation to what you are having a difficult time understanding.
- Include your full name in the signature of your email.
- **Please note: I may choose not to respond to emails that do not follow the format outlined above** so please be thorough and respectful when addressing me with a concern and in return, I will try my very best to get back to you as soon as possible to accommodate your needs.

SCHEDULE OF COURSE TOPICS

***May be subject to modifications**

Week 1: Introduction, Strier 1

T Aug 27 Class 1: Introduction to the course, introduction to primate studies, *Ethno* 1

Th Aug 29 Class 2: What is a Primate? *Ethno* 2,3,5

Week 2: Primate taxonomy and distribution, Strier 2, 3

T Sep 3 Class 3: Strepsirrhines & platyrrhines, *Ethno* 4

Th Sep 5 Class 4: Catarrhines, *Ethno* 10

Week 3: Evolution and Sociality, Strier 4

T Sep 10 Evolution and social behavior Kinship and altruism

Th Sep 12 Class 5: Sexual selection

Week 4: Mating, Strier 5

T Sep 17 Jan 28 Class 6: Social systems

Th Sep 19 Class 7: Mating systems and strategies, *Utami et al. 2009 reading on Blackboard

Week 5: Foraging, Strier 6

T Sep 24 Class 8: Sexual Coercion, Infanticide

Th Sep 26 Class 9: Foraging, *Ethno* 13

Week 6: Socioecology Strier 6, 7, 8

T Oct 1 Class 10: Ecology of female relationships, *Ethno* 17

Th Oct 3 Class 11: Ecology of male relationships, *Ethno* 16, 18

Week 7: Life History Strier 9

T Oct 8 Class 12: Life history and demography, *Ethno* 15

Th Oct 10 Class 13: Exam 1

Week 8: Development and Life History Strier 9

T Oct 15 Class 14: Parental care and development, *Ethno* 6

Th Oct 17 NO CLASS Fall Break

Week 9: Learning and Culture Dugatkin 5,6, Strier 10

T Oct 22 Class 15: Learning and cultural transmission

Th Oct 24 Class 16: Primate welfare (Zoo Assignment Guidance)

Week 10: Cooperation and Aggression Dugatkin 10, 15

T Oct 29 Class 17: Cooperation

Th Oct 31 Class 18: Agonism and aggression, *Ethno* 9

Week 11: Communication Strier 10

T Nov 5 Class 19: Communication, *Ethno* 12

Th Nov 7 Class 20: Rise of the Warrior Apes

Week 12: Play and Personalities Dugatkin 16, 17

T Nov 12 Class 21: Play

Th Nov 14 Class 22: Personality and Behavior

Week 13: Community Ecology Strier 11

T Nov 19 Class 23: Guest lecture TBD *Ethno* 9,14

Th Nov 21 Class 24: Community Ecology

Week 14: Primate Conservation Strier 12

T Nov 26 Class 23: Primate conservation I

Th Nov 28: NO CLASS Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: Primate Conservation Strier 12

M Apr 15 Class 25: Primate conservation II, *Ethno* 20, 21

W Apr 17 Class 26: Article discussion, article TBD

Week 16: Wrap-up

T Nov 3 Class 27: Research project discussion

Th Nov 5 Class 28: Exam 2, Primate Welfare Project Due

Final Research Project Due: Tuesday, December 17th, by 10AM

Statement 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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Any form of academic dishonesty that is suspected (plagiarism, looking at another student’s exam, using prohibited materials during an exam, etc) will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421
studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.