

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY
LONDON CANADA**

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
FALL/WINTER 2026-27**

PSYCHOLOGY 3228B SECTION 001

EVOLUTION AND PSYCHOLOGY

1 Calendar Description

A survey of evolutionary approaches to the study of human behaviour, including evolutionary psychology.

Antirequisites: Psychology 3229A/B

Prerequisites: A mark of at least 60% in 1.0 credits of Psychology at the 1000 level or Biology 1001A and registration in third or fourth year.

3 lecture hours

Course Weight: 0.5

Unless otherwise stated, students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all prerequisites prior to enrolling. Where prerequisites have not been met, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the course. In accordance with Western policy, this decision is not subject to appeal.

In the event of a discrepancy between this outline and Senate or University policies, the latter shall prevail. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of this course outline for pedagogical or operational reasons. Any such changes will be communicated to students in a timely manner.

2 Course Information

Instructor: Prof. Scott MacDougall-Shackleton
Office & Phone: AFAR 200
Office Hours: TBA on OWL Brightspace
Email: smacdou2@uwo.ca

Teaching Assistant: TBA

Time and Location of Classes: In Person. See Student Centre for Timetable

3 Course Materials

Required text: Evolution & Psychology, SA MacDougall-Shackleton, SAGE Publishing

Softcover edition: US\$63; 90-day ebook rental: US\$31 (pricing from publisher website)

This text is available through the campus bookstore in hard copy or eBook rental. There will also be a copy on short-term loan at Weldon library.

4 Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The following table outlines the course learning outcomes and how they are assessed.

Learning Outcome	Learning Activity	Assessment
Depth and Breadth of Knowledge - identify and describe key concepts in evolutionary theory including natural selection, sexual selection, inclusive fitness theory, life history theory, and parental investment theory - identify major historical milestones in evolutionary thought and its application to understanding human behaviour	Lectures and textbook readings In-class discussions	Quizzes and Exams
Knowledge of Methodologies understand how we can test evolutionary hypotheses	Lectures and textbook readings	Quizzes and Exams
Application of Knowledge identify common fallacies made when considering evolution and human behaviour	Lectures, textbook reading, and in-class discussions	Written assignment Exams
Communication Skills communicate succinctly and clearly about evolutionary explanations	Written assignment and peer evaluation	Written assignment
Awareness of Limits of Knowledge identify shortcomings of evolutionary approaches, and limits of evolutionary methods when applied to human behaviour	Lectures, textbook readings, in-class discussions	Exams, Written assignment

5 Evaluation

Weekly Online Quizzes (Best 10 of 13)	5%
In class activities (Best 10 of 12)	5%
Short Writing Assignments (2 x 10%)	20%
Midterm Exam (multiple choice)	30%
Final Exam (multiple choice)	40%

Weekly quizzes will consist of 5 questions (multiple choice, fill in the blank, etc). Quizzes will be due 5 PM each Friday. Quizzes are open-book and are submitted through OWL. The quizzes are designed to be completed in 10 minutes, but you will be allowed 30 minutes to complete them.

In-class activities will occur on Fridays during class time, usually at the start of class. These will be a variety of active learning exercises or discussion that are completed during class. An internet-enabled device (phone, tablet, laptop) will be required for these activities.

The writing assignments will be a short written response (usually less than 500 words maximum) to assigned readings and may also involve peer evaluation of other students' written work. Information about the assignments will be posted on OWL and you will submit assignments through OWL.

The midterm exam will be based on both lecture material and assigned readings for the first half of the course. This assessment is considered to be central to the learning objectives for this course. Accordingly, students seeking academic consideration for this assessment will be required to provide formal supporting documentation. Students who are granted academic consideration for this assessment will be provided an opportunity for a make up midterm (see Policy on Missing Coursework below).

The final exam will be based on both lecture material and assigned readings for the second half of the course. This exam will be scheduled by the office of the registrar.

The evaluation and testing formats for this course were created to assess the learning objectives as listed in section 4 and are necessary for meeting these learning objectives. All evaluations listed in this course outline are required components of the course and together account for 100% of the final grade. Weightings and assessment formats may be adjusted where required to support course learning objectives, with appropriate notice to students.

Policy on Missing Coursework

Quizzes

Only the top 10 of the quizzes will be included in the final grade. No make-up quizzes are provided, because each quiz is worth only up to 0.5% of your final grade in the course and you may miss up to 3 without penalty. You will receive a score of 0 for any missing quizzes, over and above those dropped. If you require a longer-term accommodation for a health or wellness concern lasting more than a week, please seek official academic consideration with documentation. In these cases, the final quiz grade will be reweighted within category.

In-class activities

Only the top 10 of the weekly activities will be included in the final grade. No make-up activities are provided, because each activity is worth only 0.5% of your final grade in the course and you may miss up to 2 without penalty. You will receive a score of 0 for any missing activities, over and above the dropped ones. If you require a longer-term accommodation for a health or wellness concern lasting more than a week, please seek official accommodation academic consideration with documentation. In these cases, the final activity grade will be reweighted within category.

Assignments

Written assignments will be available for at least 3 weeks prior to the due date. Students who miss the deadline must request academic consideration prior to the deadline and will receive an extension of 48 hours (including weekends/holidays) from the end of their academic consideration period to submit their assignment. Otherwise, a grade of zero will be applied.

Exams

Makeup exams will be provided only to students with documented academic considerations. The midterm exam (and final exam) are considered to be central to the learning objectives for this course. Accordingly, students seeking academic consideration for the midterm will be required to provide formal supporting documentation. Makeup exams will be scheduled at a time following the original exam date. Students unable to complete either the original or makeup exam will take the exam the next time the course is offered.

Students who encounter extenuating circumstances affecting their academic responsibilities may submit a request for academic consideration in accordance with Western University's Academic Consideration policies. Requests must be submitted through the [Student Absence Portal](#) and may require supporting documentation.

This course is exempt from the Senate requirement that students receive assessment of their work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade at least three full days before the date of the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty.

Course grades within the Psychology Department are expected to be distributed around the following averages:

70%	1000-level to 2099-level courses
72%	2100-2999-level courses
75%	3000-level courses
80%	4000-level courses

In the event that course grades are significantly higher or lower than these averages, instructors may be required to make adjustments to course grades. Such adjustment might include the normalization of one or more course components and/or the re-weighting of various course components.

Policy on Grade Rounding

Course grades are rounded to the nearest whole number. No additional assignments will be offered to enhance a final grade. Requests to change a grade because it is needed for a future program will not be considered.

6 Assessment/Evaluation Schedule

Quizzes:	Available by each Monday and due each Friday by 5PM
In-class activities:	Completed in-class each Friday
Written Assignment 1:	Due Feb 12, 2027
Written Assignment 2:	Due Mar 25, 2027
Midterm Exam:	Feb 24, 2026, 7-9PM
Final Exam:	To be scheduled during April Exam period

7 Class Schedule

Tentative Schedule; Consult OWL Brightspace site for updates

Week	Date	Topic
1	4-Jan	Introduction
	6-Jan	
	8-Jan	
2	11-Jan	Natural Selection
	13-Jan	Primates and Early Homo species
	15-Jan	
3	18-Jan	Human Origins
	20-Jan	Evolutionary Approaches
	22-Jan	
4	25-Jan	Evolutionary Psychology
	27-Jan	Development
	29-Jan	
5	1-Feb	Heritability
	3-Feb	Sexual Selection
	5-Feb	
6	8-Feb	Mate Choice
	10-Feb	Social Development
	12-Feb	
Reading Week		
7	22-Feb	Kin Selection
	24-Feb	Inclusive Fitness
	26-Feb	
8	1-Mar	Perception
	3-Mar	
	5-Mar	
9	8-Mar	Cognition and Memory
	10-Mar	
	12-Mar	
10	15-Mar	Language
	17-Mar	
	19-Mar	
11	22-Mar	Psychopathology
	24-Mar	
12	29-Mar	Personality and Ind Differences
	31-Mar	

	2-Apr-27	
	5-Apr-27	
13	7-Apr-27	Cultural Evolution
	9-Apr-27	

Final Exam TBA

8 Academic Integrity

Scholastic offences are treated seriously at Western University. Students are expected to understand and comply with the University's standards of academic integrity. Scholastic offences may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the University. Please read [Western's Scholastic Offences](#) policy for definitions and examples of Scholastic offences.

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices will be allowed during midterm and final examinations.

Devices will be required for the in-class activities, and may be used during class and in completing weekly quizzes.

Plagiarism Detection Software

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western and Turnitin.com.

Use of AI

This course is designed to develop your own critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills. Accordingly, the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot) to generate course content is **not permitted**, unless explicitly authorized by the instructor for a specific assignment. All use of artificial intelligence tools must comply with Western University's academic integrity standards.

Students may not use AI tools to:

- Generate written text, arguments, analyses, or interpretations
- Draft or rewrite assignment responses
- Paraphrase substantial portions of source material
- Create references or cite sources not independently verified

Limited, non-substantive uses of AI (e.g., spelling or grammar checks) may be permitted only if they do not alter the intellectual content of the work. Any permitted use must be explicitly disclosed. All submitted work must represent the student's own thinking and independent effort. Students are fully responsible for verifying the accuracy, originality, and integrity of any material they submit. Unauthorized or undisclosed use of AI constitutes a potential scholastic offence and will be handled in accordance with Western University's policies on academic integrity. Students are responsible for ensuring that all work complies with Western's scholastic integrity standards.

Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

9 Academic Accommodations and Accessible Education

Western University is committed to providing an accessible learning environment. Students with disabilities or medical conditions requiring accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessible Education as early as possible. Accommodations will be implemented in accordance with University policy. Please review [Western's policy on academic accommodations](#) for student with disabilities. Accessible Education provides supports and services to students with disabilities at Western. If you think you may qualify for ongoing accommodation that will be recognized in all your courses, visit [Accessible Education](#) for more information. Email: aew@uwo.ca Phone: 519 661-2147

10 Absence & Academic Consideration

Please review Western's policy on [Academic Considerations](#):

11 Other Information

Helpful Websites

- Western's academic policies are available at the [Office of the Registrar](#).
- Departmental policies are available at the [Psychology Department website](#).
- Learning supports available at [Learning Development & Success](#).

Well-being

Western University provides a range of supports to promote student well-being. Students are encouraged to seek assistance when needed. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Health and Wellness at Western](#) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you.

Grade Appeals

If you wish to appeal a grade, please read the [policy documentation](#) on requests for relief. Please first contact the course instructor. If your issue is not resolved, you may make your appeal in writing to the Undergraduate Chair in Psychology (psyugrd@uwo.ca).

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