

MWF 9:00 – 9:50 am
ELA 229

Instructor: Dr. Carrie Veilleux
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office hours: M 10-12 pm, W 1-2 pm
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If you are unable to attend office hours, feel free to make an appointment!

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this advanced undergraduate course is to provide an overview of non-human primate behavior and ecology. Compared to most other mammals, primates are exceptionally social, often living in complex societies and exhibiting great behavioral and cultural diversity. For anthropologists, primates can offer models for understanding the evolution of human behavior and social systems. In this course, we will use an evolutionary approach to examine how various environmental and social factors (such as food, sex, and predation) have influenced variation in primate social organization and behavior.



Objectives: After taking this course you should be able to:

- 1) Describe the diversity of primate social systems, ecology, and patterns of social behavior.
- 2) Understand what it means to take an evolutionary approach to thinking about primate behavioral biology.
- 3) Be able to articulate evolutionary hypotheses for a given pattern of nonhuman primate social behavior (e.g., mate choice) and to design and critique tests of those hypotheses using logic and evidence.

Course Overview:

Section I: Introduction to Primates, Methodologies, and Evolution

Primates exhibit remarkable variation in their social systems, mating styles, and ecological niches. We will meet the major groups of primates and begin exploring how they vary. We will review basic evolutionary concepts and cover terminology related to primate behavioral ecology that will be applied the rest of the semester. We will also discuss methods used by scientists to study primates in the field and lab.

Section II: Surviving in a Dangerous World

As they go about their daily lives, primates have to deal with finding food, avoiding predators, and competing with other animals for access to preferred resources (food, mates, sleeping sites,

etc.). We'll explore the different strategies used by primates to navigate the challenges of their environments and how these challenges shape the evolution and diversity of primate sociality.

Section III: Sex, Friends, and Enemies: Navigating the Social Landscape

A major part of primate life is interacting with members of the social group. We'll examine the different social strategies employed by females and males, parents and offspring, and explore the types of interactions that occur between individuals (forming coalitions, competing for mates).

Section IV. Cognitive Strategies and Cultural Variation

Primates use a variety of cognitive strategies to cope with both the ecological and social worlds. We'll explore how we think primates see the world, examining their understanding of social relationships and intentions, evidence for cultural traditions in different primates, and tool use.

TEXTBOOKS, READINGS, & ASSIGNMENTS

The Evolution of Primate Societies (2012), John C. Mitani, Joseph Call, Peter M. Kappeler, Ryne A. Palombit, & Joan B. Silk, editors. The University of Chicago Press. ISBN 9780226531724. Available at the University Bookstore or Amazon (\$35.26). Also as an e-book through University of Chicago Press (\$7-40).

Online Materials: Additional readings and assignments will be available online in TRACs.

Optional: Primate Behavioral Ecology, 3rd or 4th Edition (2007 or 2010). Karen B. Strier. A great resource if you don't have prior experience in physical anthropology or primatology. The older edition (3rd, 2007) is ~\$15 on Amazon. I also have a copy of the 3rd edition that I can lend out (there are no copies in the library).

GRADING

Your grade for the semester will be based on the following five components:

Exam 1 – Intro to Primates	20%
Exam 2 – Surviving in a Dangerous World	20%
Exam 3 – Sex, Friends, and Enemies & Cognitive Strategies	30%
Homework Assignments	15%
Zoo Observation Project	10%
Participation	5%

Final Grade Ranges: **A** = 100-89.5; **B** = 89.49-79.5; **C** = 79.49-69.5; **D** = 69.49-59.5; **F** = < 59.49

Exams (70%): There will be THREE exams. The first two exams will correspond to the first and second sections of the course (20% each), while the third exam will cover the third and fourth section of the course (25%). Exams will be non-cumulative and will cover all lecture material and assigned readings. All exam questions will be objective format (e.g. true/false, multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer). Make-up exams will be

given ONLY with *documented proof* of dire emergency or illness. You must contact me within *three days* of a missed exam to qualify for a make-up.

Homework Assignments (15%): There will be 5-6 homework assignments or in-class quizzes/activities (2-3% total grade each). Homework assignments will be posted on TRACs. For late homework assignments, one letter grade will be deducted for each day late. Missed quizzes/in-class activities cannot be made up.

Zoo Observation Project (10%): For this assignment, you will need to go on your own to one of the local zoos (Austin Zoo or San Antonio Zoo) and spend time observing primate behavior. You will complete a short observation assignment and report.

Participation (5%): Participation is an important component of this class, and you are expected to come prepared having done the readings. On discussion days, you are expected to come with discussion questions prepared, ask questions and participate in discussions. Attendance will be taken randomly throughout the semester.

COURSE POLICIES

Students with disabilities: Students with special needs (as documented by the Office of Disability Services) are encouraged to meet with me at the beginning of the semester to discuss any needs.

Grading Policies: If you have any questions about your grade on any exam, I will be happy to recheck your whole exam. Simple errors of grading (e.g., incorrect addition) will be corrected immediately. *More complicated issues should be addressed in writing within 3 days after the return of the exams.* Please include the exam with your request. You have 3 days after the exams have been returned to you to notify me of any errors or disagreements. After that, grades are final.

Extra Credit: You will be provided *ONE* opportunity for bonus work. The assignment will be posted on TRACs and will be due in class on the last day of class (APRIL 29).

If you are struggling in the course, please come for help *during* the semester when there is still time for me to help you. Take advantage of my office hours or make an appointment with me. Do not wait until the course is over and ask me to change your grade because you are trying to graduate, or you have had a tough time with your personal life this semester. By then, it is too late for me to help you. If your performance during the semester is adversely affected by personal problems (e.g., death of a family member, mental health issues, etc.), you are encouraged to contact your dean's office as soon as possible to discuss your options.

ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

Texas State University-San Marcos Honor Code

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our University live by the principles in this Honor Code. These

principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest. (see <http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01-att1.html>)

Learning and teaching take place best in an atmosphere of intellectual fair-minded openness. All members of the academic community are responsible for supporting freedom and openness through rigorous personal standards of honesty and fairness. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty undermine the very purpose of the university and diminish the value of an education.

Cheating Policy

"Cheating" means engaging in any of the following activities.

- a) Copying from another student's exams, laboratory assignment, or homework, or from any electronic device or equipment.
- b) Using materials not authorized by your instructor during an exam.
- c) Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work. This might include hand gestures, signals, etc.
- d) Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered or administered exam.
- e) Falsifying data (such as for the zoo assignment).

"Plagiarism" means the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work offered for credit.

"Collusion" means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing any work offered for credit.

For more information on what is and what is not cheating, please visit:

<http://www.txstate.edu/honorcodecouncil/Student-Resources/Myths-about-Cheating-and-Plagiarism.html>

Without exception, any student found cheating on an assignment will receive a grade of zero for the assignment, be dropped one letter grade for the final course grade, and will be referred to the Honor Code Council. Note that any attempt to alter a graded, returned exam in order to improve the score will be considered cheating and will result in a grade of zero for the exam.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Jan 14: First day of class
- Jan 30: Last day to drop with refund (ends at midnight)
- Mar 10-17: Spring Break
- Mar 21: Last day to drop a class
- Apr 18: Last day to withdraw (by 5 pm)
- Apr 29: Last day of class
- May 3: Final exam due (by 1pm)

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Topics may be added/eliminated and dates may change based upon class progress.

Section I: Introduction to primates, primatology and evolution

Jan. 14 (M): Introduction to course, what is a primate?
Nystrom & Ashmore (2008): Introduction to the Nonhuman Primates (TRACs)

Jan. 16 (W): Primate ecological diversity
Fleagle (1999): Primate Lives (TRACs)

Jan. 18 (F): Primate Social Diversity
Nystrom & Ashmore (2008): Primate Social Organization (TRACs)

Jan. 21 (M): MLK HOLIDAY – NO CLASSES

Jan. 23 (W): Film, “Primates” (BBC, 2009)

Jan. 25 (F): Evolution, natural selection and fitness
Strier (2011): Evolution and Social Behavior (TRACs)

Jan. 28 (M): Evolution and primate taxonomy
Nystrom & Ashmore (2008): Primate Classification (TRACs)

Jan. 30 (W): Natural history of strepsirrhines **HW #1 DUE**
Skim: *Evolution of Primate Societies* Ch. 2

Feb. 1 (F): Natural history of tarsiers and platyrrhines
Skim: *Evolution of Primate Societies* Ch 2-3

Feb. 4 (M): Natural history of catarrhines
Skim: *Evolution of Primate Societies* Ch. 4-6

Feb. 6 (W): Studying Primates: Intro to Behavioral Methods
Campbell et al. (2011): Behavioral Methods (TRACs)

Feb. 8 (F): Studying Primates, Discussion and review

Feb. 11 (M): EXAM 1

Section II: Surviving in a Dangerous World

Feb. 13 (W): Predation: types of predators, responses to predators
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 8

Feb. 15 (F): Predation as a selective force on primate sociality

-Hill RA, Lee PC. (1998). Predation risk as an influence on group size in cercopithecoid primates: implications for social structure. *J Zool* 245:447-56.

Feb. 18 (M): Digestibility of primate foods

Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 7

Feb. 20 (W): Spatiotemporal distribution of primate foods

Evolution of Primate Societies Ch7

Feb. 22 (F): Food as a selective force on primate sociality

Snaith TV, Chapman CA. (2007). Primate group size and interpreting socioecological models: do folivores really play by different rules? *Evol Anthropol* 16:94-106

Feb. 25 (M): Diseases and parasites

Nunn CL. (2012). Primate disease ecology in comparative and theoretical perspective. *Am J Primatol* 74:497-509.

Feb. 27 (W): Life history variation

Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 10

Mar. 1 (F): Bringing it all together: socioecological models and primate sociality

Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 9

Mar. 4 (M): Human socioecology discussion

Marlowe FW (2005). Hunter-gatherers and human evolution. *Evol Anthropol* 15:54-67.

Mar. 6 (W): Catch up, review, film

Mar. 8 (F): EXAM 2

Mar. 11-Mar. 17 SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES

Section III: Sex, Friends, and Enemies: Navigating the Social Landscape

Mar. 18 (M): Sexual selection and parental investment

Strier: *Evolution and Sex* (pg 113-144)

Mar. 20 (W): Mate choice

Manson (2007) Mate choice. *Primates in Perspective*, 2nd ed. pg 476-488.

Mar. 22 (F): Female strategies

Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 14

- Mar. 25 (M):** Male strategies
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 17
- Mar. 27 (W):** Infanticide as an evolutionary strategy and counter-strategies
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 19
- Mar. 29 (F):** Parent-offspring conflict and offspring strategies
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 11
- Apr. 1 (M):** Dominance and power
Sapolsky (2005). The influence of social hierarchy on primate health.
- Apr. 3 (W):** Cooperation: cooperation among kin
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 21
- Apr. 5 (F):** Reciprocal altruism and game theory
Duffy et al. (2007). Male chimpanzees exchange political support for mating opportunities. *Current Biol.* (2 pgs)
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 22
- Apr. 8 (M):** Aggression and reconciliation
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 23

Apr. 10 (W): AAPA CONFERENCE – NO CLASSES
Apr. 12 (F): AAPA CONFERENCE – NO CLASSES

Section IV: Cognitive Strategies and Cultural Variation

- Apr. 15 (M):** Film (“Clever Monkeys”)
- Apr. 17 (W):** Cognitive strategies for coping with the environment
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 27
- Apr. 19 (F):** Cognitive strategies for navigating social relations
Anderson et al. (2013). Third-party social evaluation of humans by monkeys.
Nature Communications (4 pgs)
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 28
- Apr. 22 (M):** Primate communication systems
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 29
- Apr. 24 (W):** Primate cultural traditions & tool use
to be determined
- Apr. 26 (F):** Primate conservation
Nystrom & Ashmore (2008). Primate conservation. *Life of Primates*

ZOO OBSERVATIONS DUE

Apr. 29 (M): Discussion: human sociobiology/review **EXTRA CREDIT DUE**
Evolution of Primate Societies Ch 20, 26
Pawlowski & Dunbar (1999) Impact of market value on human mate choice
decisions.

May 3 (F): final exam period scheduled 8-10:30 am