



# EAST TEXAS A&M

## Evolutionary Psychology PSY325.01W

COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer II 2025  
7/7/2025 through 8/7/2025  
Online

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Shifang Tang, Ph.D.  
**Office Location:** Henderson 209  
**Office Hours:** Zoom meetings by appointment  
**Email Address:** [shifang.tang@etamu.edu](mailto:shifang.tang@etamu.edu)  
**Preferred Form of Communication:** Email  
**Communication Response Time:** 24-48 hours on weekdays

**Note.** Emails without proper salutations or not sent from LEOMAIL will **NOT** be responded to.

### COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

#### ***Textbook(s) Required***

Bloom, P. (2010). How pleasure works: the new science of why we like what we like.  
Norton: New York

#### ***Optional Texts and/or Materials***

Videos on adaptation view of evolution and spandrel view of evolution

Additional handouts and materials may be distributed in class or placed on eCollege.

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## **Course Description**

In this course, we will understand the basics of the adaptation view of evolution and the spandrel view of evolution. We will examine the underlying mechanisms of how humans derive pleasures from everyday life activities. The topics include food, attachments to certain everyday objects, art, and performances. You will be encouraged to appreciate and apply the knowledge that is discussed.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. To differentiate between the adaptation and spandrel views of evolution, encouraging students to appreciate their distinct contributions to the scientific understanding of human behavior.
2. To introduce students to the appropriate discourse and methods used by psychologists in the study of human pleasure-seeking activities from an evolutionary perspective.
3. To examine how psychologists test, interpret, and demonstrate psychological concepts, theories, and principles in real-world phenomena related to human pleasure.
4. To foster an appreciation for interdisciplinary approaches in the scientific study of human evolution, helping students understand how various fields contribute to understanding human pleasure and behavior.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will be able to appreciate the interdisciplinary approaches to the scientific understanding of human evolution. In particular, this course separates natural selection view of evolution from the spandrel view of evolution.
2. Students will be able to appreciate and to some extent follow the discourse appropriate to how psychologists communicate about the scientific study of the evolution of human pleasure-seeking activities.
3. Students will gain an overview of how psychologists test, interpret, and demonstrate concepts, theories and principles in real world phenomena.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

You need to be able to read the textbook, attend class, and review lecture materials.

You will need to have computer skills, including

- the learning management system
- Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

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- Windows system or Mac system.

The essential computer skills in modern life: See an example at <http://www.yti.edu/blog/top-four-essential-computer-skills.asp>

### **Instructional Methods**

This is an online course, which is not to be interpreted as self-paced. Rather, you are required to log on regularly (preferably every day) in order to succeed. You may consume the material at a more rapid pace than set by the below schedule, but assignments, quizzes, and exams will still take place according to the schedule. Quizzes and Exams will be open for 2-3 days. **If you are unable to complete the exam in this time frame, you must contact me ahead of time to re-schedule.**

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## **Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course**

- 1) Check and read class emails promptly for announcements, updates, clarifications, etc.
- 2) Take notes while you read the assigned materials. When we travel, we take our own pictures to organize our experience instead of downloading pictures online later. Similarly when we learn, we take our own notes to organize our thoughts.
- 3) Quiz yourself often. Can you define a concept in your own words?
- 4) Study the materials on a regular basis. Consider the Pomodoro technique. Set aside 20-25 minutes each time, and study.

## **GRADING**

To be on the safe side, assume that I grade on a numerical scale. However, I reserve the right to reward exemplary attendance and participation.

A = 90-100 pts

B = 80-89 pts

C = 70-79 pts

D = 60-69

F < 60 pts

**Questions about Grades:** Any questions about a grade for a particular assignment, quiz, or exam should be brought to my attention within a week of the particular grade being posted.

## **Assessments**

**The selected book is different from the typical textbook most undergraduate classes use. It is simply fun to read and very easy to follow. The topics are fascinating.**

Reading the textbook is essential to your successful completion of these assignments. The questions will align with each of the 3 learning outcomes, in particular, the first 2 outcomes. Typically there will be video lectures on basic theory of evolution. In addition to understanding the theories, students will be expected to identify the mechanism discussed in their selective readings of the textbook that is within the scope of adaptation view of evolution or the spandrel view of evolution.

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To accomplish the 3 learning outcomes, we will use questions of various formats overall, including T/F questions, multiple choice questions, short answer questions, and essay questions.

### **Reading Quizzes (14 pts) :**

You may use your textbook or notes during the quizzes. However, the quizzes are timed. So, you need to study the assignment materials before starting the quiz. The quiz typically consists of multiple choice questions.

### **Discussions (86 pts) :**

Students will be asked to do discussions. The specific discussion requirements will be announced in D2L.

Your work should be substantive and civil. Please observe the following criteria when posting answers:

- 1) Does the submitted work demonstrate the understanding of the materials being discussed? Please make an explicit mention of the theory and viewpoints you use for your arguments by using **at least one direct quotation** from the readings and video lectures. *The general drive-by answers will NOT be considered as successful completion (i.e., 70% of the assignment grades).*
- 2) Does the argument in the posting hold together and move forward?
- 3) Are there grammatical and spelling errors?

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **LMS**

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

[https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom\\_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu](https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu)

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## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a East Texas A&M campus open computer lab, etc.

### Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor.

### Interaction with Instructor Statement

Typically, I will respond to your emails within 24 hours from Mon to Fri. It will take longer during the holidays and weekends. I can also meet with you via Zoom. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### Course Specific Procedures/Policies

#### Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

### University Specific Procedures

#### Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-code-of-conduct/>.

If you believe someone has engaged in behaviors that do not align with the Code of Student Conduct or you have other concerns, please visit the File a Report page at <https://www.tamuc.edu/office-of-student-rights-and-responsibilities/concerns-incident-reporting/>

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Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

## **Academic Integrity**

Students at East Texas A&M are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy  
[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy  
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Graduate student academic dishonesty policy:  
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

Graduate student academic dishonesty form:  
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

## **East Texas A&M Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage.

## **Artificial Intelligence**

East Texas A&M acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

## **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides

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comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Services

Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

**Phone (903) 886-5930**

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

**Website:** <http://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campusServices/StudentDisabilityServices/default.aspx>

### **Mental Health and Well-Being**

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



### **East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

### **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

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## **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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## COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

1	July 7-13	The essence of pleasure	Preface & Ch 1
2	July 14-20	Foodies	Ch 2
3	July 21-27	Attachments “Irreplaceable”	Ch 4
4	July 28- August 3	Arts and Performance	Ch 5
5	August 4-7	Why pleasure matters	Ch 8

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