

AN-100 Foundations of Human Behavior: Sex and Aggression

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

Examines biological and cultural foundations of sex and aggression, with an emphasis on critical examination of the popular media. (3)

Course Content

This course examines biological and cultural foundations of human behavior using an anthropological perspective. Subject materials are drawn from primate studies, human prehistory, and cultural and physical anthropology. Emphasis is placed on the critical examination of commonly-held ideas about human nature, particularly as they are presented in the popular media.

Nature of Course

1. **Emphasis on Reading:** Students will be asked to read assigned sections of the text and to locate, read and report on relevant professional and popular articles which relate to the subject matter.
2. **Emphasis on Writing:** Students will be asked to write abstracts on the articles they research, and essays critiquing two films dealing with popular representations of early human behavior.
3. **Out-of-Class Projects:** In general, the out-of-class projects are the two essays mentioned above, article summaries, and illustration projects relating to lecture material.
4. **Teaching Format:** Traditional lecture and interactive discussions based on the film critiques and article summaries.

Student Expectations

Students will be expected to question their own assumptions about human behavior, and to demonstrate their ability to research questions about this topic in both the popular and scientific behavior. With respect to tests, students are expected to integrate, synthesize, and discuss the material covered in lectures, videos and readings.

HL-120 Health Perspectives

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

Health topics with wide-ranging importance are examined. Issues are examined from various perspectives with special emphasis on the influence that individual health behavior decisions have on personal, societal, and global health status. (3)

Course Content

Health topics are investigated from differing viewpoints. A complex topic such as national health care insurance allows the investigation of political, economic, moral, and legal issues that impact decision making. Students critically consider their own views on diverse topics and compare their views to others.

Nature of Course

A variety of teaching methods are used throughout the course. Lecture time places an emphasis on interaction among students and the instructor. Small group discussions allow students a chance to exchange views with classmates who may have differing views. Class debates are scheduled to allow oral arguments on selected topics for which students have prepared written debate stances. Outside readings, with written summaries, provide opportunities for students to be informed of the latest health news from major news sources. In-class readings and assignments are designed to focus attention on controversial issues and prompt response in discussion. Role playing fosters understanding of health behaviors and decisions that affect each individual.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to be informed class participants for discussion of assigned topics. At minimum, this implies staying current with assigned readings in the textbook and other assigned readings. All out-of-class assignments are due on the deadlines published at the first class meeting. Students must satisfactorily complete examinations, quizzes, and debate papers.

PL-204 Ethical Theory

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

A normative study of human behavior and conduct including an examination of ethical theories and theories of moral development. (3)

Course Content

The course examines various theories, principles and systems which prescribe how human being ought to live their lives in personal, social and civic contexts. In addition to basic theories of human nature and psychology, the course focuses on five traditional normative theories: ethical naturalism, religious ethics, utilitarianism, the ethics of pure reason, and contractual ethics. The structure and content of each theory will be examined and evaluated for consistency and coherence, practical applicability, and compatibility with psychological theories of moral personality. Finally, the relation between normative theories and theories of moral development is examined. Additional topics studied in the course are theories of value, justice, punishment, free will, and responsibility.

Nature of Course

The course aims to develop an understanding of the nature and content of normative ethical theories, how they are distinct from scientific and descriptive theories, and how they may be applied to problematic situations for the resolution of conflict, guidance of choice and decision, and the determination of responsibility and merit.

The course combines lecture and discussion of assigned texts. Students will be expected to do a good deal of reading out of class, and should be prepared to discuss and apply the readings to case situations. Students should devote five to six hours per week to this course outside the classroom. Essay questions are a component on all exams.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to read assigned texts, attend class regularly, and participate in discussion both in class and on-line. Students should also expect to write one or more short papers on assigned topics, and demonstrate achievement on midterm and final examinations.

PY-101 Psychological Perspectives on Human Behavior

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

Examination of human behavior and experience from a psychological perspective. Application of psychological principles to understanding of human behavior. (3)

Course Content

This course covers the basic concepts and principles of psychology as applied to a variety of human behaviors and experiences. The student will become acquainted in a systematic and comprehensive manner with theory and research pertaining to the major areas of psychology. Topics typically covered include theories of personality; learning and memory; social behavior and interpersonal attraction; developmental processes over the life span; motivation and emotion; coping, abnormal behavior and therapy; sensation and perception; and ethical issues in research. Through the study of these various aspects of human behavior and experience, the student should acquire a fuller understanding of his/her own behavior.

Nature of Course

The course is designed to foster the development of critical thinking and communication skills related to human behavior and experiences. This will be accomplished through the use of lectures, reading of the text, class discussions, group activities, and class projects. By participating in these activities, students will have the opportunity to increase their knowledge of human behavior and then to use this knowledge to place their own experiences in better perspective.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to perform satisfactorily on examinations and assignments and to participate in class discussions and projects. Examinations include both objective and written items.

PY/CF-120 The Child: Development from Conception to Adolescence

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

An overview of the social, cognitive, physical and emotional changes that occur from conception to adolescence. Application of principles of development to the understanding of child development and behavior. (3)

Course Content

This course will present an overview of the social, cognitive, physical, and emotional development of the child from conception to adolescence. Theoretical, empirical, and practical perspectives on child development will be presented and integrated. Cultural and historical variations in the concepts of children and of development will be discussed as they relate to differences in the treatment of children.

Nature of Course

The teaching format will combine lecture and discussion styles in the classroom, and independent learning experiences outside the classroom. Students will be expected to read the text and may be assigned some additional readings in preparation for exams and for class discussions and projects. Students will complete one or more course projects that will include written and/or oral reports. Evidence of critical thinking and effective communication will be emphasized.

Student Expectations

Students' understanding of material in the text, any supplemental readings, and classroom discussions will be assessed by examinations. These may consist of multiple choice, matching, completion, or essay items. Brief quizzes may be given at the discretion of the instructor.

Student evaluation also will be based on informed participation in classroom activities/discussions and satisfactory completion of all outside projects/writing assignments.

PY-151 Social Decision-Making***Catalog Description (including prerequisites)***

Concepts, theories, and research that contribute to understanding, analyzing and evaluating people's thinking and behavior in social psychological interactions. (3)

Course Content

The purpose of this course is to reveal to students how people process information about their social psychological environment, form beliefs and opinions about issues, and make personal decisions about their social interaction and behavior. Thus, it is the critical study of how human cognition influences, evokes, modifies, and suppresses social psychological responses. Emphasis in the course will be on the attributions, schemas, inferences, and heuristics people use as they attempt to understand their social environment and make decisions about their social behavior. Attribution refers to judgments that we make as we attempt to explain the causes of our own and other peoples' behavior. Schemas are the cognitive knowledge that we have about a stimuli in our environment. Social inference refers to the process of collecting or combining the information that we have about a stimulus into a judgment about it. Heuristics are "shortcuts" that we take in making inferences about complex social stimuli. Specific attention in this course will be directed toward the influence of these various aspects of social cognition on social behavior by applying general principles of social cognition to many different aspects of people's social psychological lives.

Nature of Course

The course will provide an opportunity for students to study social-cognitive processes in many forms of social psychological interaction. The influence of social cognition on individuals' everyday lives will be emphasized throughout the course. Classroom presentations will combine a variety of approaches, such as formal lectures, group projects, discussions, demonstrations, slides, and videotapes. An emphasis will be played on activities which incorporate the use of critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis. It is expected that students will be able to write a paper on an issue concerning an aspect of social cognition, in which they will be required to analyze alternative positions and to reach a personal conclusion regarding the issue.

Student Expectations

Students will be expected to read assigned material, prepare homework assignments, and engage in class discussion and activity. They should plan to observe and offer explanations for interpersonal interactions, as may be appropriate for the course. Students will be asked to write a review of an aspect of social cognition or an analysis of various types of social beliefs. In addition to the homework assignments, there will be three hourly examinations and a final examination.

Student Evaluation

1. Level of performance on four examinations-60%.
2. Quality of participation in classroom activities (eight-ten debates, panel discussions, classroom demonstrations, or oral reports for each student)-10%.
3. Quality of written reports (eight-ten written reports)-10%.
4. Quality of contribution to class discussion-20%.

PY-220 Psychological Development Across the Life Span

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

Broad overview of human development across the life-span. Reciprocal nature of the individual/environment interaction is emphasized. (3)

Course Content

This course is intended to provide a survey of physical, intellectual, social and emotional development across the life span. Particular emphasis will be placed upon examining the interrelationships which exist among these areas of human development in light of present and past socio-cultural influences.

Nature of Course

The course will combine lecture and discussion formats in order to stimulate critical thinking about development across the life span. Students will be expected to read the textbook as well as relevant professional articles which relate to the subject matter. Students may be asked to summarize and integrate this material with their own experiences through various writing assignments/activities. Students will be expected to participate in group discussions which are organized around particular topics/themes affecting human beings as they proceed through the life span.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of and ability to apply information they have learned on tests, in discussions, and in their writing assignments. Students will be asked to demonstrate preparation for formal discussions and a willingness to participate in both formal and informal discussions.

PY-222 Development of the Adolescent

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

The basic physical, cognitive, social and personality development of the adolescent period will be examined. Efforts will be made to understand current issues affecting adolescence in light of recent empirical and theoretical knowledge. (3)

Course Content

This course is intended to provide a survey of fundamental areas affecting the psychological development of the adolescent (physical and cognitive development, peer and parent relations, and autonomy and intimacy). Such development will be examined in the context of the home, school, and typical social environment of the adolescent.

Nature of Course

In order to explore and think critically about adolescent development, students will be expected to participate in a variety of activities. These may include interviews with teachers, parents, peers, analyses of articles drawn from popular and professional sources, and group discussions organized around particular themes or issues affecting adolescents. Students will be required to engage in several different writing activities ranging from responding to essay questions on tests to exploring their own perceptions of adolescence, and to develop the ability to understand and apply the findings of relevant research.

Student Expectations

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily on tests, on writing assignments, and in group discussions.