

30473-COMPARATIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Fall Semester, 2009

Dr. Mauricio R. Papini (SWR 336, phone: 817-257-6084, e-mail: M.Papini@tcu.edu).

TA: Leo Ortega (e-mail: l.a.ortegamu@tcu.edu).

TR, 15:30-16:50, WSH 247.

Web site: <http://personal.tcu.edu/~papini/index.htm>

Outline

Aug/25-Sep/8: Animal evolution: process and pattern. (5 lectures).

Tentative video: "Evidence for evolution"

Reading assignments: chapters 2 and 3.

Sep/10 - FIRST EXAM: Class material (lectures, videos, etc.) and reading assignments.

Sep/15-29: Patterns of brain-behavior evolution (5 lectures).

Reading assignments: chapters 5 and 6.

Oct/1 - SECOND EXAM: Class material and reading assignments.

Oct/6-22: Comparative analysis of learning and cognition (6 lectures).

Tentative videos: "Inside the animal mind: intelligence, emotion, consciousness"

"Monkey in the mirror"

Reading assignments: chapters 7, 8, and 9.

Oct/27 - THIRD EXAM: Class material and reading assignments.

Oct/29-Nov/12: Behavioral development (5 lectures).

Tentative video: "Secret life of the brain, I: A baby's brain"

Reading assignments: chapters 10, 11, and 12.

Nov/17 - FOURTH EXAM: Class material and reading assignments.

Nov/19-Dec/3: Primate evolution (4 lectures).

Tentative video: "In search of human origins"

Reading assignment: Chapter 14.

Dec/8 - FIFTH EXAM: Class material and reading assignment.

Objectives

The main goal is to provide you with knowledge about the factors that contribute to the evolution and development of behavior. You will learn a basic vocabulary and a set of concepts and theories that will enable you to appreciate the importance and scope of comparative psychology as an interdisciplinary field. This course is organized around five fundamental topics: evolutionary theory, brain evolution, animal learning and cognition, behavioral development, and primate evolution.

Textbook

Papini, M. R. (2008). *Comparative psychology. Evolution and development of behavior. Second Edition*. New York: Psychology Press.

Exams

There will be 5 exams, each worth a maximum of 40 points (maximum total points in exams: 200; see below). In terms of reading material, there will be no overlap between the exams. There will be no comprehensive final. Each exam will involve 40 multiple-choice questions, each with 4 alternatives, only one correct alternative per question, and each question will be worth 1 point.

Missing Exams

Make up session for missing exams **15:00, Tuesday, Dec/15, WSH 247.**

Extra Points

For each hour of participating in research through SONA, one point will be added to your final course score, up to a maximum of 10 hours or 10 extra points. A file with instructions on how to register for participation in experiments (SONA system) can be found in the course's web page.

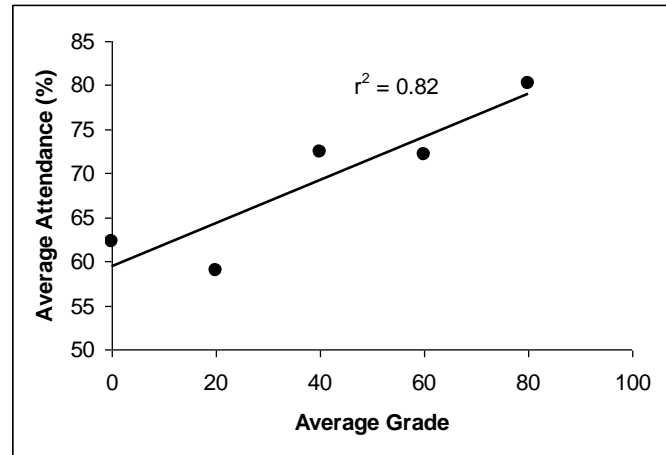
Grading

Your final score will be the sum of the scores obtained in the 5 exams plus the extra points (maximum extra points: 10). Thus, a student who scores the maximum number of points will have a final score of 210 (200 from exams plus 10 from extra points). If your final score is between 180-210 you will receive an A, 160-179 B, 140-159 C, 120-139 D, and below 120 F.

Attendance Policy

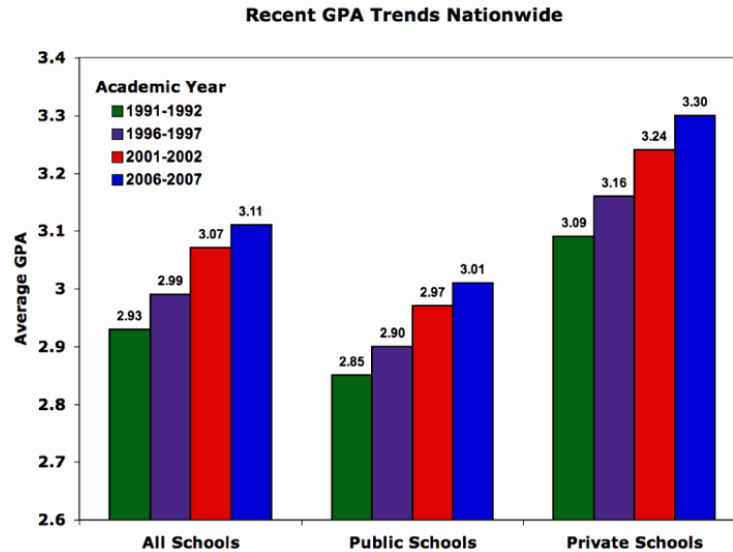
This course has a total of 30 meetings of which 5 are allocated to the exams. Attendance in the remaining 25 lectures will be monitored. It is recommended that you attend all the lectures since this course depends heavily on material presented in class. It is unlikely that you will obtain a C or better grade if you miss more than 20% of the 25 lectures (that's about 5 absences in the entire semester). Here is evidence of the correlation between attendance and grades from

several courses offered over the past several years. Notice that attendance accounts for 82% of the variance in grades! I may add that I found strong correlations like this one in my other courses, suggesting that this is probably true for most courses you take.



Concern about Grade Inflation

New data on grade inflation shows that there is a general trend across both public and private schools toward higher grades over the period ranging between 1991 and 2007 (see www.gradeinflation.com for more information). This trend is not apparently present in community colleges. Notice in the graph given below that this trend is especially robust in private schools. Although there are several interpretations of these results, if the trend continues, soon a diploma from a private school may be worth less than one from a public school in the job market. Whether or not this would be fair is irrelevant to your professional future. TCU was not sampled in the course of the research represented in this figure, but, as a private school, its graduates may be affected anyway. I provide this information so that you become aware of a potential problem.



Students with Disabilities

If you require accommodation for a disability (physical, learning, or otherwise), please contact the Coordinator of Academic Services for Students with Disabilities. Once I have received a letter from the Coordinator's office that outlines need-specific accommodations, we can then implement fair procedures targeted to your learning requirements.

Academic Misconduct

In order to encourage and preserve the honor and integrity of the academic community, TCU expects its students to maintain high standards of personal and scholarly conduct. Academic misconduct includes the following acts:

A. Cheating

1. Copying from another student's test paper, lab report, other report, or computer files and listings.
2. Using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test.
3. Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or a lab without permission.
4. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release.
5. Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, to take a test or other assignment or to make a presentation.

B. Plagiarism

The appropriation, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit

therefore.

C. Collusion

The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

D. Abuse of resource materials

Mutilating, destroying, concealing, or stealing such materials.

E. Computer misuse

Unauthorized or illegal use of computer software or hardware through the TCU Computer Center or through any programs, terminals, or freestanding computers owned, leased, or operated by TCU or any of its academic units for the purpose of affecting the academic standing of a student.

F. Fabrication and falsification

Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

G. Multiple submissions

The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.

H. Complicity in academic misconduct

Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

All instructors or proctors shall have the right to examine materials in the student's possession during quizzes, examination, and/or laboratory sessions. In instances of cheating during an examination or other classroom or laboratory activity or exercise, the instructor shall have the right to suspend the student(s) credit for the examination or exercise. Faculty may impose the following sanctions for academic misconduct:

A. Grant no credit for the examination or assignment in question (treated as a missed assignment).

B. Assign a grade of F (or a zero) for the examination or assignment in question.

C. Recommend to the dean that the student be dropped immediately from the course with a grade of F. This grade cannot be changed by student-initiated withdrawal.

Also note that the dean of the college may enforce specific sanctions. Procedures for handling cases of alleged academic misconduct have been carefully drawn to protect the rights of individual students and to safeguard the University's commitment to academic integrity.