

COURSE DETAIL

EVOLUTION, CULTURE, AND HUMAN NATURE

Country

Netherlands

Host Institution

Utrecht University - University College Utrecht

Program(s)

University College Utrecht

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

Sociology Biological Sciences

UCEAP Course Number

133

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

EVOLUTION, CULTURE, AND HUMAN NATURE

UCEAP Transcript Title

EVOLUTN & HUM NATUR

UCEAP Quarter Units

6.00

UCEAP Semester Units

4.00

Course Description

Darwin's idea of evolution by means of natural selection has united the biological disciplines in the previous century and is currently recognized as a very fruitful concept for Humanities and Social Sciences as well. This course on evolution offers a synthetic view and understanding of human nature, cooperation, and culture from the perspective of biological evolution. It allows students of different departments to be acquainted with the evolutionary theory and its manifold implications as well as to practice evolutionary thinking. Evolutionary thinking refers to analyzing complex topics from an evolutionary point of view, applying the concept of evolution to understand what has shaped the human being over millions of years into its current appearance, behavior, and cultural expressions. A large part of the course deals with different aspects of cooperation, including altruism and reciprocity, and its biological and social relevance. Through this course, students combine their knowledge from different departments and disciplines, and construct a fresh and interdisciplinary look at broader scientific, social and cultural issues, all aimed to foster an improved understanding of human nature. Although Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection has been recognized as one of the great achievements of human kind and as the most profound shift in conceptual thinking in the last millennium, the evolutionary theory nevertheless is also notoriously controversial. Not only in society (i.e. creationism, intelligent design, and eugenics), but also within the academic world, groups of scientists question the relevance and applicability of evolutionary thinking to human affairs. Attention is also given to the arguments and counterarguments that are often used which still lead to debates.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

UCINTEVO31

Host Institution Course Title

EVOLUTION, CULTURE, AND HUMAN NATURE

Host Institution Campus

Interdepartmental

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

Interdepartmental

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