



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

Evolutionary Psychology

Course Code	P_BEVOLPS
Credits	6
Period	P1
Course Level	300
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sc.
Course Coordinator	prof. dr. M. van Vugt
Examiner	prof. dr. M. van Vugt
Teaching Staff	S.E. Hudspith, prof. dr. M. van Vugt
Teaching method(s)	Lecture

Course Objective

The course will introduce students to -- and familiarize them -- with the main theories, concepts, and research findings in the emerging scientific discipline of Evolutionary Psychology. The main goal of the course is to give students insights into why humans behave the way they do by viewing them through an evolutionary lens (the way a biologist would look at a particular animal species). Central in this course is the question whether certain human attributes, traits and behaviors are products of evolved psychological mechanisms that enabled our ancestors to solve various problems related to their survival and reproduction. Examples include psychological adaptations for finding a partner, for (grand)parenting, altruism, aggression, working, leading, status and self-defense.

During the course you will get insights into some basic questions about human nature:

- Where did humans evolve?
- What do genes tell about our behavior?
- What explains our relatively big brain size?
- How do men and women differ in their sexual strategies?
- Why do we prefer certain foods over others?
- What is the evolutionary logic behind warfare?
- Is religion an adaptation or byproduct?
- How does cultural evolution work?
- Why do we talk, sing, dance, play and watch sports?

Course Content

This course trains students in how to explain human psychology and behavior from an evolutionary perspective by using insights from evolutionary psychology, biology and anthropology. During the course we will use evolutionary psychology to understand such topics as human sexuality, aggression, cooperation, parenting, religion and culture (among other things). The course consists of frontal lectures, assignments and a final, end-of-course exam..

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Lectures and two written assignments.(essays)

Method of Assessment

End-of-course exam with around 70 multiple choice questions and two written essay-assignments during the course. The assignments do not count towards the final grade but need to be passed to avoid 1 point grade-deduction from the final. No AI-language model can be used for the essays.

grade. The assignment passes are only valid for the year in which the examination is taken.

Entry Requirements

NO

Literature

Buss, D. M. (2019). *Evolutionary Psychology: The New Science of the Mind* (sixth edition). Routledge. Plus relevant scientific articles as conveyed by the teacher through Canvas.

Additional Information Target Audience

VU students

Additional Information

This course is also part of the University Minor Psychology and the Brain. There is room for max 50 VU University minor students.

Custom Course Registration

NA

Explanation Canvas

Information regarding the course will be available on Canvas (from August)

Recommended background knowledge

Some basic knowledge of psychology and some training in statistics and methods in psychology is desirable