

COURSE CONTENT

Course Code / Title	: HP3202 Primate Behavioural Ecology
Pre-requisites	: (HP2100 or BS0004 or MH2500) and (HP2200 or ES2303 or ES2302 or BS2001)
No. of AUs.	: 3
Contact Hours	: 39

Course Aims

This course will provide you background on the scientific study of primate behaviour and ecology. You will be educated about the field of primatology, how primate behavioural research is conducted, and the evolutionary approach to understanding their behaviour as adaptation to environmental conditions. You will learn about studies on primate taxonomy, evolutionary history, social behaviour, sex and reproduction, feeding ecology, male and female strategies, life history and development, communication, and learning and cognition. You will also be introduced to conservation issues facing primate species. Overall, you will gain a general understanding of what primate field studies have contributed to the scientific understanding of behaviour and the Primate order.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Apply the concept of natural selection to primate behavioural strategies
2. Identify the taxonomy and evolutionary relationships of primates
3. Recognize ecological influences on the evolution of behaviour
4. Recall and evaluate studies in primate behavioural ecology
5. Explain behavioural strategies of primates
6. Describe primate social systems and strategies
7. Give explanation to primate life histories and developmental stages
8. Reason on models of communication, learning, and cognition in primates
9. Provide examples of conservation issues facing primate species
10. Complete a project on primate behavioural ecology or conservation

Course Content

Behavioural ecology examines the evolutionary basis of behaviour due to ecological influences. In this course, you will learn the behavioural ecology of primate societies and individual-level behaviour. You will be introduced to the field of primatology and become familiar with the

evolutionary history and influences on their taxonomy and behaviour. You will be trained in approaches to studying primate behaviour, particularly looking into methods used for field studies of primates in nature. You will review primate taxonomy and evolutionary relationships within the Primate order. You will discover the evolutionary approaches used to understanding primate social behaviour, sexual behaviour, reproduction, and male and female strategies. You will find out about the feeding and foraging ecology of primates and how this impacts their social systems. You will come to know more about primate life history, and gain knowledge about the infant, juvenile, and pubescent periods of development across primates. In the course, you will also discover about primate communication, intelligence, cognition, and learning, taking us into the behaviour ecology of psychological features. Lastly, you will be familiarized with conservation issues facing primate species, and potential future threats to their survival.

Course Assessment

CA1	In-class tests	:	45%
CA2	Class Activities	:	10%
CA3	Homework: Learning by Doing	:	10%
CA4	Project: Communicating about Primates	:	35%

	Total		100%

Reading and References

Strier, K. (2017) Primate Behavioural Ecology. 5th Edition. Routledge, NY. (S)

Planned Weekly Schedule (subject to changes, if any)

Week	Topic	Course LO	Readings/ Activities
Week 1	Introduction to Primate Studies	1,2,3	
Week 2	Primate Taxonomy	2,3,5,7	
Week 3	History of Primates	2-6	
Week 4	Evolution of Social Behaviour	2-6	
Week 5	Evolution of Sex & Reproduction	2-6	
Week 6	Feeding & Foraging	1-6	
Week 7	Female Strategies	1-6	
Week 8	Male Strategies	2-6	
Week 9	Life History and Development	1-8	
Week 10	Communication & Cognition	1-8	
Week 11	Primate communities and ecology	1-8	
Week 12	Conservation of primate species	1-9	
Week 13	Project Presentation	10	