

# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *HUMAN ALTRUISM - 51883*

*Last update 09-10-2016*

*HU Credits: 2*

*Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)*

*Responsible Department: psychology*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: 2nd Semester*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Salomon Israel*

*Coordinator Email: [salomon.israel@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:salomon.israel@mail.huji.ac.il)*

*Coordinator Office Hours: Mondays immediately following the lecture*

*Teaching Staff:*

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Dr.

Course/Module description:

Large scale cooperation with others that are genetically unrelated appears to be a uniquely human phenomenon. Human altruism – the concern for the welfare of others – is commonly observed in everyday social exchanges and yet remains one of the great enigmas of evolutionary biology. This course will review the wide-ranging approaches used to understand human altruism including evolutionary perspectives, game theoretic models, biological underpinnings, psychological processes, and experimental paradigms.

Course/Module aims:

Familiarize students to different approaches for studying human altruism.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Describe the evolutionary paradox of altruism and enumerate theories explaining the existence of human altruism.

Delineate experimental paradigms used to model altruistic behavior in the laboratory

Identify multiple mechanisms contributing to altruistic behavior

Differentiate between ultimate and proximate causes of altruism.

Attendance requirements(%):

Students are expected to attend lectures, although attendance will not be checked

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The majority of the course will be based on frontal lectures.

The last few weeks of class will be devoted to student based presentations. The final grade will be based on a final paper (50%), presentation (40%), and class assignments (10%)

Course/Module Content:

The evolutionary paradox of altruism

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*Evolutionary theories of altruism: Kin selection, reciprocal altruism*

*Modeling altruism with game theory*

*Modeling altruism in the laboratory*

*Biological systems and altruism: oxytocin and vasopressin systems*

*Psychological perspectives: personality, theory of mind, empathy, warm glow*

*Required Reading:*

*The reading list will be updated before the beginning of the 2nd semester.*

*Additional Reading Material:*

*Course/Module evaluation:*

*End of year written/oral examination 0 %*

*Presentation 40 %*

*Participation in Tutorials 0 %*

*Project work 50 %*

*Assignments 10 %*

*Reports 0 %*

*Research project 0 %*

*Quizzes 0 %*

*Other 0 %*

*Additional information:*