Title of the course: EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY AND ECONOMICS

Course ID:

Level of education: Seminar  Academic semester: Optional

Professor's name: ÉVA POLLÁK  Academic title: College psychologist

Hours per semester: 30 (2 hours per week)  Credits: 4

Exam: Oral presentation and end-term paper  Pre-requisites: None

Aims of the course

Economists have become increasingly interested in the connection between economics and psychology. Psychological insights about human nature can be informative for economic models. This course surveys a variety of topics at the crossroads of economics and (mostly evolutionary) psychology, including: risk taking and harm avoidance, manipulative and violent behavior, decision making and conflict resolution, altruism and reciprocit, the connections between emotions and economic behavior, concern for relative status and addictive behavior. We will explore how combining psychology with economics can help explain behavior in many realms, such as marriage and mating, work and investing, or reaching happiness. Students are expected to read the two compulsory books that will be the base of discussions.

Course outline

1. Introduction
2. Risk taking and harm avoidance
3. Manipulative and violent behaviour
4. Decision making and conflict resolution
5. Altruism and reciprocity
6. Connections between emotions and economic behavior
7. Relative status
8. Happiness
9. Addictive behavior
10. Marriage and mating
11. Work and investing
12. Discussion of the work concluded (end-term papers due)
13. Conclusions, discussion of the end-term papers

Requirements and assessment

- Active (compulsory) presence at the seminars
- One oral presentation of a chosen topic
- One End-term paper (due on the 12th week of the course)

Readings


King Sigismund College
Budapest, February 2010