

BL4263 The Question of Culture in Animals

(BL4263 online module handbook version 41)

Credits: 15

Semester: 2

Module Organiser

Dr Luke Rendell

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Pre-requisite Modules:

Before taking this module
you must pass BL3319

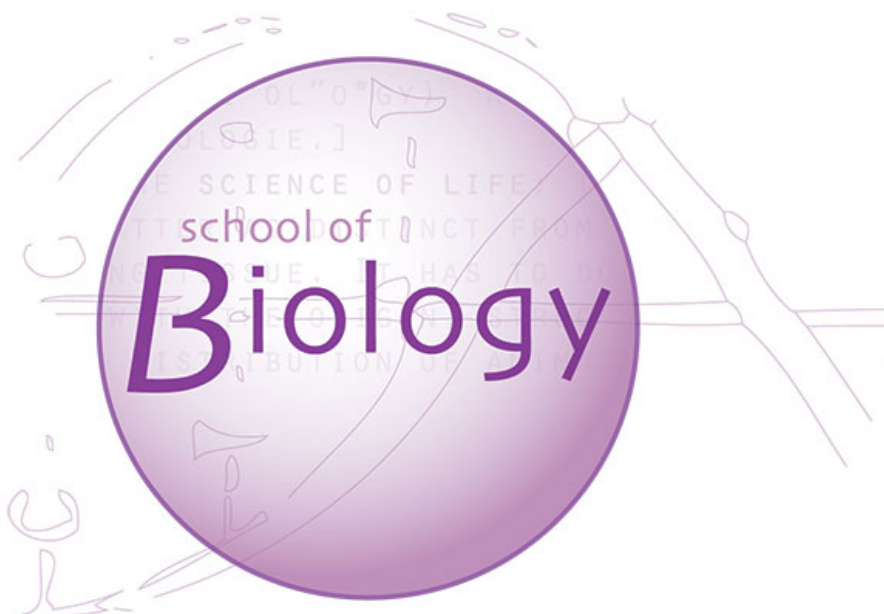
Anti-requisite Modules:

Post-requisite Modules:

Additional Module

Information:

[Please check MMS regularly
for additional module
information](#)



The existence and extent of social learning and cultural transmission in non-humans is a very active area of current research, as well as of controversy, with vigorous ongoing debate. The aim of this module is to provide an introduction to this area through considering the conceptual issues and direct and indirect evidence for cultural transmission in a range of non-human animals, including insects, fish, birds, primates and cetaceans. We will consider what is meant by the term 'culture?', how it is used and studied in the human context, how it can be studied in non-humans, and the evidence for and against such processes being present in a range of non-human societies.

[BL4263View content for BL4263 \(2023/4\) in the Module Management System \(MMS\)](#)

[View the current Biology Online Module Catalogue for BL4263](#)

[BL4263View BL4263 \(2023/4\) in the University of St Andrews Module Catalogue](#)

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BL4263: Timetable

Legend (not all modules have every event type):

lecture	tutorial	workshop	practical	other
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Semester 2: Week 2

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Wednesday 24-01-2024 14:00 to 16:00	Bute Building Lecture Theatre A	Dr Luke Rendell -	Lecture L1: Session 1: Introduction - The question of culture <small>2023-4_BL4263_L1</small> Introduction to the course. Definitions and concepts of culture from anthropology, psychology and biology. Social learning. Cultural evolution. Studying culture in humans and non-humans. The key attributes of human culture. The animal culture debate.

Semester 2: Week 3

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Monday 29-01-2024 15:00 to 17:00	Bute Building Lecture Theatre A	Dr Luke Rendell -	Lecture L2: Session 2: Cetaceans <small>2023-4_BL4263_L2</small> Evidence for culture in whales and dolphins

Semester 2: Week 4

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Tuesday 06-02-2024 14:00 to 16:00	Bute Building Lecture Theatre A	Dr Luke Rendell -	Tutorial T1: Session 3: Journal Club I - make sure you read the papers beforehand <small>2023-4_BL4263_T1</small> We will discuss papers from MMS/Moodle and how to write a critical review

Semester 2: Week 5

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Wednesday 14-02-2024 15:00 to 17:00	Bute Building Lecture Theatre A	Dr Mike Webster -	Lecture L3: Session 4: Insects and fish <small>2023-4_BL4263_L3</small> Evidence for cultural processes in insects and fish

Semester 2: Week 6

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Wednesday 21-02-2024 15:00 to 17:00	Bute Building Lecture Theatre A	Dr Luke Rendell -	Lecture L4: Session 5: Ecology and Evolution <small>2023-4_BL4263_L4</small> We will discuss how evolving views of culture in animals affect how we think about their ecology and evolution

Spring Break: 26-Feb-2024 to 01-Mar-2024

Semester 2: Week 7

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Tuesday 05-03-2024 09:00 to 11:00	St Mary's College Lecture Room 3	Dr Maria Tello Ramos -	Lecture L5: Session 6: Birds <small>2023-4_BL4263_L5</small> Evidence for social learning in birds

Semester 2: Week 8

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Tuesday 12-03-2024 09:00 to 11:00	St Mary's College Lecture Room 3	Dr Mike Webster -	Lecture L6: Session 7: Social learning in non-grouping animals <small>2023-4_BL4263_L6</small> Social learning in fish

Semester 2: Week 9

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Tuesday 19-03-2024 09:00 to 11:00	St Mary's College Lecture Room 3	Dr Luke Rendell Dr Mike Webster	Tutorial T2: Session 8 - Journal Club II - - make sure you read the papers beforehand <small>2023-4_BL4263_L2</small> We will discuss papers 2 & 3 and the writing of critical reviews when papers disagree

Semester 2: Week 10

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Thursday 28-03-2024 09:00 to 11:00	Bute Building Lecture Theatre D	Dr Cat Hobaiter -	Lecture L7: Session 9 - Primates <small>2023-4_BL4263_L7</small> Evidence for cultural processes in our nearest taxonomic relatives

Semester 2: Week 11

DATE & TIME	VENUE	STAFF	EVENT
Thursday 04-04-2024 09:00 to 11:00	Scottish Oceans Institute SOI Corner Room	Dr Ellen Garland -	Lecture L8: Session 10: Implications for conservation and management <small>2023-4_BL4263_L8</small> We will discuss how new knowledge of animal culture interacts with conservation issues

BL4263: Reading List

[BL4263Click for BL4263 reading list](#)

BL4263: Assessment

100% Coursework

[BL4263View coursework assessment details for BL4263 \(2023/4\) in MMS](#)

The following related information applies to all Biology modules:

School of Biology Marking Criteria:	See JH booklet info (st-andrews.ac.uk)
Late submission of continuous assessment work:	All late submissions of coursework that do not require electronic submission should be made via the Biology Teaching Office, Level 2, BMS Building, North Haugh.
Exam details:	See School of Biology UG Handbook JH booklet info (st-andrews.ac.uk) : All Biology exams will be conducted online for 2022-23.
Exam timetable:	See Timetables - Exams - University of St Andrews (st-andrews.ac.uk)
Expected attendance:	See JH booklet info (st-andrews.ac.uk) for detailed attendance requirements.
Good Academic Practice & Avoiding Academic Misconduct:	See JH booklet info (st-andrews.ac.uk)
University Student Handbook:	University Student Handbook
School and University regulations in the School and University Undergraduate Handbook relating to absence reporting, penalties and rules for late submission of work, extensions for coursework, return of coursework, S-coding, good academic practice and Academic Alerts.:	JH booklet info (st-andrews.ac.uk) University Student Handbook

Who to ask

(Information in this section applies to all Biology Modules)

Before contacting staff, students should check the content of the Biology Undergraduate Handbook, the module handbook and specific task instructions.

Questions about

General teaching matters
Rescheduled or cancelled events
Lecture or practical content
Completing assessed practical assignments
Completing assessments
Marking on continuous assessment
Marking on exams
Rearranging practical days
Absence and/or extensions
Difficulties with academic progress which impact more than one module:
Overall performance, progress or future directions:
Disability:
For advice and support on any issue e.g. academic, financial, international, personal or health matters, or if you are unsure of who to go to for help:

University assistance with urgent matters out of office hours:

Contact

Biology Teaching Office (bioteach@st-andrews.ac.uk)
Check your University email
The lecturer who presented the material
The lecturer who set the assignment
Module Organiser (Dr Luke Rendell ler4@st-andrews.ac.uk)
The Demonstrator or Module Organiser (Dr Luke Rendell ler4@st-andrews.ac.uk)
Module Organiser (Dr Luke Rendell ler4@st-andrews.ac.uk)
Module Organiser (Dr Luke Rendell ler4@st-andrews.ac.uk)
Module Organiser (Dr Luke Rendell ler4@st-andrews.ac.uk) **and** the Biology Teaching Office (bioteach@st-andrews.ac.uk)
Year Coordinator
See School of Biology UG Handbook for list: [JH booklet info \(st-andrews.ac.uk\)](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/jh-booklet-info)
Advisor of Studies
Disability Coordinator (biodisabilities@st-andrews.ac.uk)
Advice & Support Centre
Address: 79 North Street, St Andrews
Email: theasc@st-andrews.ac.uk
Web: <https://www.standrews.ac.uk/ask-a-question/>
Tel: 01334 462020
Tel: 01334 476161
Web: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/advice/counselling/incrisis/>

Biology Teaching Office:

We are happy to hear from you about teaching matters. The School of Biology Teaching Office is open Monday to Friday 09.00 - 13.00 and 14.00 - 17.00. School of Biology staff will respond to your emails during these hours. Our team will provide a response to you within three working days.

Biology Teaching Office (Level 2), University of St Andrews, Biomolecular Sciences Building, North Haugh, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9ST

Email: bioteach@st-andrews.ac.uk

Tel: 01334 46 3602 or 3566

BL4263: Contributing Staff

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[Dr Mike Webster](#)

Lecturer in Behavioural and
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BL4263: Learning Outcomes

Students completing module BL4263 successfully should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge about the study of behavior generally and in cetaceans in particular.
- demonstrate familiarity with the interdisciplinary debate about the evolution of culture.
- read and assess primary literature critically.
- constructively discuss areas of scientific controversy.
- write critical evaluations of scientific work.

BL4263: Acquired Skills

Practical Skills

Transferable Skills

- Group discussion - participating
- Journal club
- Short informal presentation (using PowerPoint or not)
- Paper critique
- Short essay (1000-2000 words)
- Critically evaluating sources/information
- Finding literature
- Referencing
- Searching databases
- Sourcing figures/tables
- Generating questions
- Reflective analysis
- Critiquing experimental design
- Organising group work
- Working in pairs/small groups

Policies

(Information in this section applies to all Biology Modules)

- The procedures and regulations followed by the School of Biology are outlined in the [University Handbook](#) and in the School of Biology UG handbook [JH booklet info \(st-andrews.ac.uk\)](#)
- All coursework associated with the module must be completed and submitted by its due date.
- Specific School regulations relating to absence reporting, penalties and rules for late submission of work, extensions for coursework, return of coursework, S-coding, Good Academic Practice and Academic Alert are stated in the School of Biology UG handbook [JH booklet info \(st-andrews.ac.uk\)](#) and students are required to carefully read these regulations.
- Students are also referred to the University Handbook, available at: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/studenthandbook/>