

Psychology 335

Conditioning, Learning, and Behavior

Fall, 2007

Instructor: Stacey Zaremba, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Monday 9:00 – 11:00 am
Tuesday 6:00 – 6:30 pm
Wednesday 9:00 – 11:00 am
Thursday & Friday by appointment only.

If none of these times are convenient for you, other times can be arranged by appointment. Please feel free to call me.

Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday (2b: 8:50 – 10:00)

Class Room: 235 PPHAC.

Course Description:

The procedures, phenomena, and processes of conditioning and learning in animals and humans compose the subject matter of this course. Major issues, research findings, and contemporary theories of conditioning and learning will be considered. The behavioral approach to the study of learning will be emphasized. Topics include classical (pavlovian) and instrumental (operant) conditioning and their interaction; reinforcement; stimulus generalization, discrimination, and control; biological constraints on learning; and cognitive components of conditioning and learning.

Because laboratory work is a part of this essential course we will conduct lab meetings in our class. The lab meetings will be used to prepare the laboratory assignments and to discuss and analyze data.

Course Requirements

Laboratory Project:

There will be one laboratory project in the course. Students will work together in research teams of 2-students to participate in an experiment on spatial learning in rats. Details regarding the lab project will be provided in class. Most of the laboratory work (running the animals) will be completed outside of regular class time. The lab will require the use of live rats and students will be made aware of the guidelines for the care and use of animal subjects. These guidelines will be reviewed and discussed in class. Those students opposed to working with animals on ethical grounds, or unable to work with animal due to health reasons, must see the instructor for an alternative computer simulation method.

Once the experiment is conducted and the data will be pooled across groups for analysis. Each student must write a final report using APA style and format. Late lab reports will be devalued by 1/2 a letter grade for each day late.

Examinations:

There will be four exams given during the course of the semester. The exams will cover all the material presented in the lectures and the material from the required readings. All four exams will be given during the normal class time. All exams are non-cumulative. These exams will be comprised of short answer and essay questions. Note: Exams will be given only on the days scheduled, and the only excuse for failing to take an exam is documented illness or death in the family. An unexcused absence from an exam will be recorded as a zero grade. Make-up exams will be administered at 7:30 am.

Attendance and Class Participation:

This class, due to its size and content, is one in which participating in class is quite important. Attendance for this course is expected at all class meetings and missed classes will lower the student's grade. The lectures are intended to supplement the readings. As such, the lectures will not duplicate the reading materials but will emphasize the most central aspects of the chapter and/or discuss particularly difficult concepts. Students are expected to have read the assigned material before class meets and should be prepared to discuss the material in class.

Evaluation:

Your grades for this course will be determined according to your performance on the four essay exams, the APA lab report, and class participation.

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|------------------------|-----|
| Exams (15 % each)..... | 60% |
| APA Lab-Report | 25% |
| Participation*..... | 15% |

* Because this class has an animal laboratory component your class participation grade will reflect your effort and responsibility regarding your lab animals well-being.

Policy on Plagiarism

The Moravian College faculty has become increasingly concerned by the problem of plagiarism on campus. The Psychology Department's policy on this subject is important for students to understand. Simply put, plagiarism is the intentional misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own. This includes such diverse situations as quoting directly from a published work without giving the author credit, having your roommate write the paper, "borrowing" from fraternity or sorority files, buying a paper from a professional service, and so on. The policy of the department is that the student must keep all note cards and rough drafts on a paper until the grade is assigned. The instructor may request these materials, along with the source materials, at any time. Evidence of plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the College policy on academic honesty, copies of, which are available at the departmental secretary's desk.

Required Readings:

- (MD) Domjan, M., (2003), *The Principles of Learning and Behavior*. 5th Edition, Thomson/Wadsworth Press.
- (RR) The journal articles listed below have been placed on reserve in Reeves Library.

Course Outline

Week 1: August 28 & 30

Organizational Meeting and Syllabus Review (8/28)

Introduction to Learning and Behavior (8/30)

(MD) Chapter 1

Week 2: September 4 & 6

Historical Origins and Ethical Issues (9/4)

(MD) Chapter 1

The Nature of Elicited Behavior (9/6)

(MD) Chapter 2 Pgs. 28 - 35

Week 3: September 11 & 13

Habituation and Sensitization (9/11)

(MD) Chapter 2 Pgs. 39 - 51

EXAM I (9/13)

Week 4: September 18 & 20

Spatial Learning Lab: An Introduction (9/18)

(MD) Chapter 11 Pgs. 315 - 332

(RR) Articles to be distributed in class.

Principles and Mechanisms of Classical Conditioning (9/20)

(MD) Chapter 3 & 4

Week 5: September 25 & 27

Principles and Mechanisms of Classical Conditioning (9/25)

(MD) Chapter 3 & 4

Spatial Learning Article Search – No Class

Week 6: October 2 & 4

Applications of Classical Conditioning: Taste Aversion; Systematic Desensitization and Drug Tolerance (10/2)

(MD) Chapter 3 & 4

(RR) To be placed on reserve in Reeves.

EXAM II (10/4)

Week 7: October 9 & 11

Fall Break (10/9)

Animal Care and Use (10/11)

(RR) Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals
National Research Council

Week 8: October 16 & 18

Basic Principles of Operant/Instrumental Conditioning (10/16 & 10/18)

(MD) Chapter 5

Week 9: October 23 & 25

Schedules of Reinforcement and Choice Behavior (10/23 & 10/25)

(MD) Chapter 6

Week 10: October 30 & November 1

Applications of Operant/Instrumental Conditioning (10/30)

(MD) Chapter 5 & 6

(RR) Readings to be placed on reserve in Reeves.

EXAM III (11/1)

Week 11: November 6 & 8

Lab Project: Research updates and Lab report writing

Week 12: November 13 & 15

Stimulus Control of Behavior

(MD) Chapter 8

Week 13: November 20 & 22

Film on Behavior Analysis and self-abusive behavior: Harry (11/20)

No Class (11/22)

Week 14: November 27 & 29

Principles of Aversive Conditioning: Punishment (11/27)

(MD) Chapter 10

EXAM IV (11/29)

Week 15: December 4 & 6

Spatial Learning Results Reviewed and Discussed (12/4)

Research Papers Due (12/4)

Evaluations and Closure (12/6)