

Psychology 335

Conditioning, Learning, and Behavior

Fall, 2014

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Office Hours: Monday 11:15 – 11:15
Tuesday 2:30 – 4:00
Wednesday 11:15 – 11:15
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 e-mail or call me.

Class Time: Monday & Wednesday (8:55 – 10:05)

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 an essential part of this 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. Students are expected to allocate extra time outside of class to complete lab assignments.

Course Goals: The course has three major aims. The first is for students to gain mastery of the basic concepts, technical vocabulary, and research methods of the field of conditioning and learning. The second aim is for students to become adept in recognizing the relevance of conditioning and learning in their personal lives and in other areas of psychology. The third aim is to encourage students to become more objective in how they view behavior and become more critical in how they think about explanations of behavior.

Course Requirements

Examinations:

There will be three exams administered during the course of the semester. The exams will cover all the material presented in the lectures and the material from the required readings. The first two exams will be given during the normal class time. The third exam will be administered during finals week. 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.

Spatial Learning Research Lab:

We will investigate spatial learning in rats this semester. The project will involve designing and conducting a spatial learning experiment. The class will come up with the research question after reading the literature. Additional details regarding the project will be provided in class. Most of the laboratory work will be completed outside of regular class time. Because the lab will require the use of live rats 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. You are required to write a report using APA style and format. Late papers will be devalued by 1/2 a letter grade for each day late.

Student Presentations: Applications of the Basic Principles:

Students will work in small groups to present various topics related to the application of Classical and Operant Conditioning. Each group will organize a 30-minute presentation (presentation dates and topics are listed below). For each of the presentations you must: clearly state the relationship between the application being discussed and the basic learning principle(s) it relates to; present a clear and detailed description of the application; and discuss the use and effectiveness of your application. Each group must select a reading that will be distributed to your classmates on your application. Your reading is due to me **two class periods** before your presentation date. Each group must develop a PowerPoint presentation that highlights the most significant information relevant to your topic. Copies of the PowerPoint presentation must be distributed to all students on the day of your presentation. The material from these presentations will be covered on the exams.

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.

NO CELL PHONES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Evaluation:

Your grades for this course will be determined according to your performance on the three essay exams, the two Spatial Learning Research Projects, the student presentations, and class participation.

Exams.....	40%
Spatial Learning Project	25%
Participation.....	15%
Application Presentation.....	20%

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.

Disability Services:

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic & Disability Support, located on the first floor of Monocacy Hall, or by calling 610-861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

Required Readings:

- (PHS) Powell, R.A, Honey, P.L., & Symbaluk, D.G. (2013), *Introduction to Learning and Behavior*.. 4th Edition, Wadsworth Press.
- (RR) The journal articles listed below will be distributed in class or placed on reserve in Reeves Library.

Course Outline

(Outline subject to change at the discretion of the instructor)

Week 1: August 25 & August 27

Organizational Meeting and Syllabus Review (8/25)
Introductions via Associations

Introduction to Learning and Behavior (8/27)

(PHS) Chapter 1

Week 2: September 1 & 3

Harry – the power of Applied Behavior Analysis (9/1)

Historical Origins of the Behavioral Approach and What is Learning? (9/3)

(PHS) Chapter 1

(RR) Behaviorism: Definition and History

Schools of Behaviorism – One-page summaries.
(Watson, Hull, Tolman, Bandura, and Skinner)

Week 3: September 8 & 10

Behavioral Research Methods (9/8)

(PHS) Chapter 2
(RR) Behaviorism: Definition and History

*Ethical Issues: Behavioral Approach
(Using Animals and Application Issues) (9/10)*

(PHS) Chapter 2
(RR) Martin and Pear: Ethical Issues

Week 4: September 15 & 17

The Nature of Elicited Behavior (9/15)

(PHS) Chapter 3 (pages 96 -100)
(RR) Ireton, Schleidt, & Thompson: Mallard Courtship Displays

Habituation and Sensitization (9/17)

(PHS) Chapter 3 (pages 100 – 104)

Week 5: September 22 & 24

EXAM I (9/22)

Spatial Learning Project begins (9/24)

Week 6: September 29 & October 1

Spatial Learning Research and Introduction to the Animal Facilities

(RR) Articles will be distributed in class.

Week 7: October 6 & 8

Basic Principles of Classical Conditioning (10/6 & 10/8)

(PHS) Chapters 3 (pages 109 – 127) & 4

Week 8: October 13 & 15

Recess (10/13) Have fun – Be safe!

Basic Principles of Classical Conditioning continued (10/15)

(PHS) Chapters 3 (pages 109 – 127) & 4

Week 9: October 22 & 22

Student Presentations: Applications of Classical Conditioning: Taste Aversions (10/20)

(PHS) Chapter 12

Student Presentations Applications of Classical Conditioning: Drug Tolerance and Systematic Desensitization (10/22)

(PHS) Chapter 5

Week 10: October 27 & 29

EXAM II (10/27)

Basic Principles of Operant/Instrumental Conditioning (10/29)

(PHS) Chapter 6 & 7

Week 11: November 3 & 5

Spatial Learning Research – Data Collection

Week 12: November 10 & 12

Basic Principles of Operant/Instrumental Conditioning

(PHS) Chapter 6 & 7

Week 13: November 17 & 19

Basic Principles of Operant/Instrumental Conditioning wrap-up (11/17)

(PHS) Chapter 6 & 7

Student Presentations: Applications of Operant/Instrumental Conditioning: Token Economies and Learned Helplessness and Depression (11/19)

(RR) Operant Conditioning: Causal Factors and Explanations
(pages 208 – 219)

Week 14: November 24 & 26

Student Presentations: Applications of Operant/Instrumental Conditioning: Self-Control (11/24)

(PHS) Chapter 10 (pages 406 -426)

Thanksgiving Week – no classes – Enjoy and Be Safe!! (11/26)

Week 15: December 1 & 3

Spatial Learning Research Wrap-Up (12/1)

Evaluations and Closure (12/3)

Finals Week

Exam III