PSYC 304 – 2D3/2D4 – Principles of Learning Lab

Spring 2021

Instructor: Grace Wild, B.S.

Email: gwild@gmu.edu

Office Hours: Zoom Meetings – Monday 2-4 pm \*Must email me first

### Course Description:

The objectives of this course are to provide students experience with conditioning procedures and to enhance individual writing abilities through APA-format lessons and assignments. Students will also be expected to apply information gathered in lecture to assignments throughout this course. As a class, we will aim to understand the process of completing various conditioning experiments using the Sniffy text. Development in APA-formatting will be demonstrated through assignments, student presentations, and two papers.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of the semester, students will have…

* Gained experience in running/completing various conditioning procedures
* Developed APA-formatting skills
* Developed individual writing abilities in a scientific setting

**Required Text:**

Alloway, T., Wilson, G., & Graham, J. (2012). *Sniffy the Virtual Rat Pro, Version 3.0.* Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning. ISBN-13: 978-1-111-72627-6

\*\*\*the program CD is not required

**Suggested Text:**

American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

\*This is a good resource as all written assignments will require APA format. This is a new edition of APA so Purdue OWL (another free resource for APA formatting) is still completing their adjustments.

**Class Format**

This class will be held entirely online. Students must participate in laboratory assignments (Sniffy Assignments, presentations, papers) to ensure that they have an understanding of the course content and are able to apply them (see Course Schedule). This laboratory course will deliver content via Blackboard. If students are unsure about a specific assignment, they should email the instructor.

**Grading:**

Grades are a reflection of your effort to acquire and apply mastery of the course material.

**This lab will be 25% of your final grade towards Psyc 304.**

Extra Credit Assignments provided to students may impact points up to that 330-point mark (students cannot earn more than 330 points in this course).

Points for the course

**Assignment** **Possible Points**

Sniffy Assignments (5) 50

APA Student Presentation 50

Papers (2) 200

Paper 1 Outline, Rough Draft, Peer-Review 30

 Assessment\*

**Total points 330**

**\***for the first paper, an outline (10 points), rough draft (10 points), and peer-review assignment (10 points) will be required for submission and graded respectively.

Grading Scale

Grades will be calculated as follows:

96 – 100% = A+

90 – 95% = A

86 – 89% = B+

80 – 85% = B

76 – 79% = C+

70 – 75% = C

60 – 69% = D

< 60% = F

**NOTE: STUDENTS CANNOT PASS THE COURSE IF THEY FAIL TO SUBMIT ONE OR BOTH PAPERS**

**Add/Drop Deadlines**:

Last day to add: Monday, Feb. 1st

Last day to drop (w/ 100% tuition refund): Friday, Feb. 12th

Final day to drop (w/ 50% tuition refund): Tues., Feb. 16th

Withdrawal period (w/ 100% tuition liability): Wed. Feb 17 - Mon. Mar 1

**Technology Use:**

Blackboard will operate as the main vehicle of tech communication for this course. All work will be submitted via Blackboard. Course content, links, and notes will be made available on the course’s BB page. Considerations will be made on an individual basis. However, all students are responsible for seeking their own resolution of technological issues during this course. If there is an issue that you cannot solve on your own, please feel free to contact IT via email: support@gmu.edu or by phone: 703-993-8870

**Class Cancellation Policy:** Due to classes being online, classes will operate each week according to schedule regardless of outside events. The instructor will provide information to the class via email and Blackboard (also see Schedule).

**The Honor Code**

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor System and Code. (<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>). Students are encouraged to study together as much as possible throughout the course, however, no assistance, sharing of information, or discussion of exam items or answers between students may take place. For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author. Students may not reproduce (including uploading to the Internet) any portion of the exam. Students who attempt to photograph or in any way capture information about the exam for others’ use will be reported for an honor violation. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to GMU procedures. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student’s.

**Students with Special Concerns and Accommodations**: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resources Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. It is important that all accommodations be made early in the semester.

**Communications via GMU email:**

Official Communications via GMU Email: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason email account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

\*\*When communicating with me, I please ask that you include your **FULL NAME**, **Psyc304,** and **LAB SECTION** in the **subject** of the email. This will help me see your email faster.

**Student Support:**

Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling & Psychological Services (3129 Student Union Building I, http://caps.gmu.edu/) at 993-2380 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything.

**Academic Support:**

I want you to succeed in this course and at GMU. I encourage you to communicate with me via email, during office hours, or through a schedule appointment about course content or to discuss any questions/concerns you may have. The best way to succeed in this course is to ask questions and stay on top of deadlines. If any problems arise for you personally that may hinder your progress in this course, please contact me.

* Students can also utilize the GMU writing center: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

**Late Policy:**

Assignments will be made available to you each Sunday leading into the week the assignment is due, and assignment submissions are due on Sunday, by 11:59 pm. **Sniffy Assignments and student presentations will not be accepted late.** If a **paper** is late, up to a maximum of 7 days, a penalty of up to 10% of the original total points will be applied. **In cases of emergency,** which gets in the way of completing course work on schedule, email me **as soon as possible** and we can privately discuss late submission provided there is a proof of emergency (ex. hospitalization record, etc.).

**Make-up Policy:**

Considering that this course will be held online in its entirety, the only considered case of any make-up opportunities on assignments would be if the student experiences an emergency or extraordinary circumstances. If there is a case of an emergency or extraordinary circumstance, please contact me **as soon as possible**.

**COURSE SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

**Sniffy Assignments:**

Sniffy assignments will be completed, as scheduled below, using the Sniffy textbook. There will be questions accompanying the experiments that each student will submit individually through the BB portal. **Responses on these questions (from the worksheet) must be accurate and insightful to demonstrate your effort and knowledge and understanding of the course content. Inaccurate, generic, extremely short, or verbatim book responses will lose a minimum of .50 points each.** Specific directions for completing these experiments are laid out in the book. Demonstration slideshows and/or videos will be made available via Blackboard for Sniffy experiments.

**Student Presentations:**

Student presentations will be designed to cover/review APA-style formatting for your writing. PowerPoint will be the required platform for this project and will submitted through Blackboard. Students will either be asked to record over the presentation or present them to the instructor at a pre-determined date. All slides (without a recording) will be submitted by 11:59 PM on Saturday, as is with all normal assignments. You will be allowed to use the APA manual and internet to generate a presentation slideshow. A certain allotment of points will be reserved for each student’s response to other presentations. More specific information about this presentation will be provided to students via a project description and rubric.

**Papers:**

There will be **two** papers in this lab course. The first paper will be based on three of the Sniffy experiments that are completed in lab. It will be written in the form of a research paper containing the following, an introduction on classical conditioning, methods for the three experiments, and results for said experiments. This is the only paper assigned that will require submissions of parts of the paper leading up to the final submission, as well as revisions of the paper after grading. The second paper will either be a research proposal or a critical video review of select animal training videos (this will be determined by the instructor). For the proposal, students would come up with their own research experiment (that involves classical or operant conditioning) and then write a complete introduction in addition to methods sections. For the critical review, students would critique the training methods used in their chosen video and provide an analysis for/against the methods, supported by research literature. More specific instructions and information for each paper will be posted on BB as they approach.

* The APA publication manual online: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

**Writing Intensive:**

Psyc304 has been approved as a writing intensive course by George Mason University. The laboratory portion of this course requires students to complete 2 APA-style papers, for a combined minimum of 3500 words written. The completion of these, along with the completion of Psyc304 with a grade of “C” or better, fulfills the writing intensive requirement of the Psychology major.

**Disclaimer**

This course is based on the progression of the 304 lecture and may change throughout the semester accordingly. The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and its content. Any changes will be announced in writing. If you are confused about a deadline, please let me know. If there is a change in a deadline, either by me or by events outside of our control, I will inform you as soon as possible.

**Schedule:**

The schedule is charted below. It is important to note that the deadlines set by the instructor are set regardless of technical difficulties or questions. **The earlier issues are made aware to the instructor or IT, the earlier they can be resolved.** Each student is responsible for mitigating the negative effects of any issues. Students are expected to use viable data management (i.e. saving and backing up work) and time management strategies to any issues (i.e. laptop/computer failure, Sniffy program issues, BB maintenance shutdown, student illness, etc.).

**Tentative(!!) Course Schedule**

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| **Day** | **Assignment/Lab Topic** | **What’s due?** |
| Week 1 (1/25 – 1/31) | Lab Overview | **Review Syllabus** |
| Week 2 (2/1 – 2/7) | Classical Conditioning: Sniffy  | **Select Presentation Topic** |
| Week 3 (2/8 – 2/14) | Classical Conditioning: Sniffy  | **Outline for Paper 1 is due 2/14, 11:59 PM** |
| Week 4 (2/15 – 2/21) | Classical Conditioning: Sniffy  |  |
| Week 5 (2/22 – 2/28) | Work on Presentations/ MakePresentation Appointment | **Paper 1 Rough Draft due 2/28, 11:59 PM** |
| Week 6 (3/1 – 3/7) | Respond to Presentation Discussion Questions | **Paper 1 Peer Review due 3/7, 11:59 PM** |
| Week 7 (3/8 – 3/14) | **Spring Break – No Classes** |  |
| Week 8 (3/15 – 3/21) | Extinction, Reinforcement, & Recovery: Sniffy  | **Paper 1 Final Draft due 3/21, 11:59 PM** |
| Week 9 (3/22 – 3/28) | Paper 2 Description Review |  |
| Week 10 (3/29 – 4/4) | TBD | **Paper 1 Revisions due 4/4, 11:59 PM****Select Paper 2 Topic** |
| Week 11 (4/5 – 4/11) | Punishment: Sniffy  |  |
| Week 12 (4/12 – 4/18) | EC Activities |  |
| Week 13 (4/19 – 4/25) | One-on-One Writing Consult Sessions | * Sessions are optional (sign-up)
* Bring drafts, notes, and questions

EC assignments due 5/2, 11:59 PM |
| Week 14 (4/26 – 5/2) | **Last Week of Classes** | Paper 2 DueSunday, May 2nd, 11:59 PM |
| Week 15 (5/3 – 5/9) | Finals Week | Nothing! Study for the Lecture Final Exam. |