**PSYC 304-001 Principles of Learning Lecture**

**Fall 2021**

**Instructor**: Aaron Booth Location**:** Innovation Hall 133

**Email**: abooth5@gmu.edu **Time:** TR 9:00-10:15

**Office Hours**: Thursday 10:30-11:30 or by appointment

**Office Location:** David King Hall 2035

**Course goals:**

This course will introduce you to the experimental analysis of learning and behavior. Although much of the focus will be on animal learning in the laboratory, the importance of basic learning mechanisms in understanding animal and human behavior, as well as the application of learning theory to real-world examples, will be stressed. Specifically, students will form a strong understanding of the underlying mechanisms involved in both classical and operant conditioning, as well as how to apply these conditioning procedures in the real-world.

**Required text:**

Powell, R.A., Honey, P.L., & Symbaluk, D.G. (2016). *Introduction to Learning and Behavior, Fifth Edition*. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.

**Grading:** The lecture grade will consist of the following weighted components:

Best **3** of 4 exams 600 points (200 points each)

Best **10** of 12 quizzes 300 points (30 points each)

Attendance 100 points

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**Total: 1,000 points**

The final grade for PSYC304 will be based on the combined grades you earn in the lecture (75%) and the lab (25%) portions of the course.

Note that grades posted on Blackboard are not necessarily weighted correctly, since it is impossible to account for the dropped quizzes and exam through the blackboard grading system. If you need help determining your grade, don’t hesitate to contact me.

**Although we will still have classes in-person, due to rising COVID levels I will also be posting videos of the lecture to Blackboard. You MUST attend in-person for the 1st day of class and the Exam days. However, if you so choose, on other days you can watch the lecture videos online instead.**

**Attendance:** The material covered in the videos will be the basis of quizzes and exams. Since videos of each class will be posted online there are two ways to earn attendance credit.

*In-Person*: At the start of class I will pass out an attendance sheet. As long as you write your name on that sheet you will get credit for that class.

*Online*: To make sure that everyone is watching the videos, I will include a passphrase at a random point in each of the lecture videos starting with the Chapter 2 lecture video. An assignment labeled “Attendance” will be posted on Blackboard. To receive credit for that class you will need to type in the passphrase by midnight of the same day the lecture was held in-person. If you showed up in-person you will receive credit even if you don’t turn in this assignment.

Attendance will count for a total of 100 points (4 points per lecture + 8 free points).

**Quizzes:** We will have weekly ONLINE quizzes covering the chapter material. Quizzes will be due midnight on either Wednesday or Friday (see course schedule). Quizzes may consist of either short answer, true/false, multiple choice, and/or fill-in-the-blank questions. Quizzes will be open notebook, with no strict time limit, however, they should be worked on individually. All quizzes should be turned in online via Blackboard. There will be 12 quizzes total with your highest 10 being counted towards your grade (lowest 2 quiz grades dropped). Quizzes will be worth 30 points each for a total of 300 points.

**Exams:** All students will be required to take the first three exams IN PERSON. Exams will consist of short answer, true/false, multiple choice, and fill-in-the-blank questions. These first three exams will not be open book. Dates for all exams can be found on the schedule. Any updates (e.g., due to university closings) will be announced through email and a revised schedule posted on Blackboard. You will have until the end of class to complete the exam, even if you show up late. If you miss the exam day that exam will receive a grade of zero. The 4th exam is cumulative and will be an ONLINE, open book exam covering everything that we went over throughout the semester. There will be 4 exams total with your highest 3 being counted towards your grade. This means that if you are happy with your grades after the first 3 exams, you can choose to not do the Final Exam. Exams will be worth 200 points each for a total of 600 points.

**Absences:** Dropping the lowest exam grade and the two lowest quiz grades is intended to provide relief for anyone who needs to miss graded work due to illness, personal or employment obligations, or for any other reason. If you find that you must miss more work than can be dropped I encourage you to consult the university catalog or contact your advisor or academic dean’s office for information on withdrawing from a course, including late and selective withdrawal policies and procedures.

**Inclement weather and other cancellations:** If you haven’t already done so, please sign up for Mason Alert emergency notifications at <http://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/> If the university closes, an online lecture will be made available on blackboard and we will continue with our schedule as outlined on the syllabus.

If for some reason I need to cancel a class, I will send out an announcement and email you. Please check your email regularly, including before leaving for class.

**Writing Intensive:** PSYC304 has been approved as a writing intensive course. To meet this requirement, students will complete several writing assignments, including a complete research paper, in the lab. All papers will conform to APA style guidelines. Successful completion of these papers, and completion of PSYC304 with a grade of C or better, meets the writing intensive requirement of the psychology major.

**Preparation before class:** Students should complete reading by the assigned due date. Lectures and discussions will be more interesting and more meaningful for students who have done the reading in advance. In order to be attentive, you should not engage in any multi-tasking activities during class – that means no texting, e-mail, web surfing, doing homework for other classes, etc. Please turn off all cell phones and other potential sources of disruption at the start of class. During class laptops may be used only for taking notes. If you must arrive late or leave early please do so as quietly as possible and be considerate of your classmates by sitting near an exit.

**Disability accommodations:**  If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me early in the semester. If you have not already done so, contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474.  All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Please keep in mind that it might not be possible to grant last-minute requests for accommodations, so it is important to make all arrangements well before the date when the accommodation is needed.

**Honor code:** All students are expected to be familiar with, and abide by, the University Honor Code. As required by the Honor Code, all suspected violations will be reported.

**Grading Scale:**

Lecture Quizzes (10 x 3% = 30%) + Exams (3 x 20% = 60) + Attendance (10%)

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A+ 97% or above A 93-96% A- 90-92%

B+ 87-89% B 83-86% B- 80-82%

C+ 77-79% C 73-76% C- 70-72%

D 60-69% F 59% & below

Grades will be rounded up from .5%. For example, an 89.5% would become an A-, however, an 89.49 would become a B+

**Important dates:** Last day to add a class: August 30

Last day to drop a class with 100% refund: September 7

Last day to drop a class: September 14th

Selective withdrawal period: September 28 – October 27

**Principles of Learning**

**Fall 2021**

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| **Date:** | **Course Schedule:** | **Assignments** **Due:** |
| 8/24 | Introduction to Class | Read Chapter 2 |
| 8/26 | Chapter 2: Research Methods | **8/27: Chapter 2 Quiz**  Read Chapter 3 |
| 8/31 | Chapter 3: Elicited Behaviors and Classical Conditioning |  |
| 9/2 | Chapter 3: Elicited Behaviors and Classical Conditioning | **9/3: Chapter 3 Quiz**  Read Chapter 4 |
| 9/7 | Chapter 4: Classical Conditioning: Basic Phenomena and Various Complexities |  |
| 9/9 | Chapter 4: Classical Conditioning: Basic Phenomena and Various Complexities | **9/10: Chapter 4 Quiz**  Read Chapter 5 |
| 9/14 | Chapter 5: Classical Conditioning: Underlying Processes and Practical Applications |  |
| 9/16 | Chapter 5: Classical Conditioning: Underlying Processes and Practical Applications | **9/17: Chapter 5 Quiz** |
| 9/21 | **EXAM 1 (Chapters 2-5) (In-Person)** | Read Chapter 6 |
| 9/23 | Chapter 6: Operant Conditioning: Introduction |  |
| 9/28 | Chapter 6: Operant Conditioning: Introduction | **9/29: Chapter 6 Quiz**  Read Chapter 7 |
| 9/30 | Chapter 7: Schedules and Theories of Reinforcement |  |
| 10/5 | Chapter 7: Schedules and Theories of Reinforcement | **10/6: Chapter 7 Quiz**  Read Chapter 8 |
| 10/7 | Chapter 8: Extinction and Stimulus Control |  |
| 10/12 | ***No Class (Go to your Monday Classes this day)*** |  |
| 10/14 | Chapter 8: Extinction and Stimulus Control | **10/15: Chapter 8 Quiz**  Read Chapter 9 |
| 10/19 | Chapter 9: Escape, Avoidance, and Punishment |  |
| 10/21 | Chapter 9: Escape, Avoidance, and Punishment | **10/22: Chapter 9 Quiz** |
| 10/26 | **EXAM 2 (Chapters 6-9) (In-Person)** | Read Chapter 10 |
| 10/28 | Chapter 10: Choice, Matching, and Self-Control |  |
| 11/2 | Chapter 10: Choice, Matching, and Self-Control | **11/3: Chapter 10 Quiz**  Read Chapter 11 |
| 11/4 | Chapter 11: Observational Learning and Rule Governed Behavior |  |
| 11/9 | Chapter 11: Observational Learning and Rule Governed Behavior | **11/10: Chapter 11 Quiz**  Read Chapter 12 |
| 11/11 | Chapter 12: Biological Dispositions in Learning |  |
| 11/16 | Chapter 12: Biological Dispositions in Learning | **11/17: Chapter 12 Quiz**  Read Chapter 13 |
| 11/18 | Chapter 13: Comparative Cognition |  |
| 11/23 | Chapter 13: Comparative Cognition | **11/30 Chapter 13 Quiz** |
| 11/25 | ***No Class (Thanksgiving Break)*** |  |
| 11/30 | ***No Class (Makeup Day/Study Day)*** |  |
| 12/2 | **EXAM 3 (Chapters 10-13) (In-Person)** |  |
| 12/7 | Makeup Day |  |
| 12/9 | **Final Exam Posted Online (Chapters 1-13*)*** | **12/12: Final Exam** |