



PSY 341.001 Learning and Motivation

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10 - 10:50; BA 346

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2014

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COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

This course covers the principles and theories of learning, behavior, and motivation in human and non-human species. Covered topics will include: classical conditioning, operant conditioning, reinforcement schedules, avoidance, punishment, comparative cognition, and observational learning.

Textbook

Klein, S. B. (2014). *Learning: Principles and applications* (7th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. ISBN: 978-1-4129-8734-9

The textbook is available in the campus bookstore or online from various vendors (e.g. amazon.com, chegg.com, etc.). You are responsible for completing the assigned chapter readings indicated on the syllabus before coming to class. Therefore, you will need the textbook for this course. Please contact me via the email address above if you have any trouble obtaining a copy due to availability.

Student Learning Outcomes: Goals and Assessment

Learning Goals

1. Students will be able to identify and define various theories of learning and motivation.
2. Students will learn how to apply the knowledge acquired in the course to their daily lives.
3. Students will learn to recognize the use of various methods of learning in both humans and non-humans.
4. Students will learn and use appropriate APA style formatting, grammar, and spelling in academic writing.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

My goal throughout this course is to give you the opportunity to learn about, appreciate, and recognize the various methods in which we learn and are motivated. Each course requirement listed below is designed to evaluate your progress in meeting the outcomes listed in the previous section.

1. Attendance

Students are required to attend all class periods and attendance will be taken at each class. If a student has more than 3 unexcused absences (see the Student Handbook for a list of excused absences), he or she will be asked to drop the course. If he or she chooses not to drop the course, I will institute an administrative drop for that student.

2. Exams

There will be a total of 5 exams throughout the semester, with each test covering roughly the three prior chapters of material or three prior weeks of class. In order to evaluate your retention of the information presented in this course, each exam is **cumulative**. Exams will cover **anything** discussed in class, including class policies, syllabus contents, and information contained in the attendance quizzes. Take note, however, that the majority of the questions for each exam will encompass the areas discussed since the previous test.

No electronic devices will be allowed to be visible during a test day. Any cell phones or other electronic devices that are visible will result in that student's exam being forfeit (it will be entered as a grade of 0).

At the conclusion of the semester the lowest of the six regular exam grades will be dropped, meaning that **the final exam will not be dropped**. In total your exams will account for 80% of your final grade. See the grading policy below for details. Your final exam will be take-home. It will be an essay exam and will be due by midnight Monday, December 8. (That is no later than 11:59 p.m. on 12/8).

3. Paper and Debate

Students will be divided into groups of approximately 6 (based on final class enrollment) and assigned a controversial topic in learning. Half of the groups will prepare a presentation regarding the pros (or pluses) of the topic and the other side will refute these claims. For example, the topic of requiring students to wear school uniforms. If you were on the pro-uniform side, you would present the reasons for requiring students to wear uniforms. If you were on the other side of the argument, you would present reasons that school uniforms are not a good idea. To prepare your presentation, you must anticipate the likely arguments of the other side and prepare to refute them.

Each group will prepare a 5 page paper (APA format) presenting their arguments and a 3 page paper rebutting the anticipated arguments of the other side. The paper and the debate presentation will be a group effort. Your score will be determined based on overall presentation, quality of the paper, and an evaluation by the other members of your group as to the amount of time/effort you contributed to the project.

There will also be a formal debate on each topic. During that time, your team will present its arguments and will have an opportunity to refute the arguments of the other side. There will also be a time set aside for the audience to ask questions.

You will receive more information as we get closer to debate time. The paper will be worth 100 points as will the debate presentation. The paper will be due on the date of your presentation.

Topics

Learning styles: fact or fiction

Standardized tests improve learning: yes or no

Is it ethical for students and faculty to be friends on Facebook

Do students learn better in flipped classrooms

Should tablets replace textbooks

Is homework beneficial to learning

Should grading be strictly pass/fail

Blank slate: fact or fiction

GRADING & EVALUATION

Exams	500 pts
Final Exam	200 pts
Paper	100 pts
Debate	100 pts

Grading:

A = 810-900 points
B = 720-809 points
C = 630-719 points
D = 540-629 points
F = Less than 540 points

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

You will need access to a computer that has access to the internet and to word processing software such as Microsoft Word in order to complete your media portfolios. If you do not personally have this technology available to you, the library on campus will provide assistance to you.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

The best method to reach me is by email. I will respond to all emails within 24 hours during the weekdays and within 48 hours on the weekends. While email communications do not have to be formal letters, proper email etiquette should be observed, including:

- Write in complete, properly formatted sentences.
- Indicate which class you are in, including the course and section number (e.g. PSY 341.001).
- Include your full name as it is displayed on the class roster.
- Be respectful and courteous at all times.

If you would like to speak to me in person, my office hours are given at the top of the syllabus. You may set up an appointment with me via email or by speaking to me immediately after class.

As listed in the student objectives above, my goal is to help you succeed in understanding the impact that psychology has on our daily lives. I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Academic Conduct & Honesty.

The Student Handbook (Policies and Procedures, Code of Student Conduct) University states that “All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” Violation of this code will lead to an initiation of the disciplinary procedures described in the Student Handbook. Proper student conduct also includes maintaining a standard of academic honesty. In essence, **cheating** and **plagiarism** of all forms will not be tolerated. Plagiarism means that you cannot use the words and ideas of another person without giving that person credit. When using the exact words of someone else they should be placed in quotation marks with a proper (APA) citation to follow. When using the ideas of another person, their work should be cited appropriately immediately following or immediately prior to this use. Cheating has several definitions, but can be simply defined as “to act dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain or provide an advantage.” If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism,

please see me. **Students who are identified as having engaged in cheating or plagiarism will earn an F in the course.**

Missed Tests and Changes to the Syllabus Schedule

As stated in the attendance section of this syllabus, your lowest grade on the first four exams will be dropped before your final grade is calculated. As such, I will give **NO** make-up exams due to absences. If there is an extremely unusual circumstance that may cause you to miss more than one exam, you should contact me at the earliest possible time to discuss the situation. However, please note that if you miss more than one exam I recommend that you drop the course.

The course schedule is at all times tentative, as there will possibly be circumstances throughout the semester that will necessitate its modification (e.g. bad weather days). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of changes to the schedule, which will always be announced in class. For this reason it is again important that you attend class regularly.

ADA STATEMENT

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library- Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Electronic-Devices Usage Policy

From the Student Handbook:

Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. Faculty members have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

a. Breaches of Conduct

The University regards the following as illustrations of misconduct by individuals or groups which may result in review by the appropriate disciplinary agencies:

(24) Failure to comply with the directions of a university administrative official or faculty member.

Class Policy

1. Students will have all electronic devices turned off and put away before class begins..
2. Students are expected to use laptops only for taking notes. No cell phones or other electronic devices, unless otherwise specified in the syllabus, are permitted to be used during class. You are not permitted to surf the internet during lab.

3. Inappropriate conduct will result in the following actions:

- a. verbal warning
- b. private conference
- c. written warning
- d. removal of the student from the class

4. The instructor may, for breach of student conduct and at his or her discretion, remove the student from the classroom for one class period without prior warning.

Participation in Research

Supporting Psychological Science: Research Participation Requirement

As part of your course requirement, you will need to complete a total of 5 credit hours of research participation. **HOWEVER**, if you do not have any unexcused no-shows (i.e. you do not show up for a study) you will be required to complete only 3 credit hours. Students who complete the 3 credits without acquiring any no-shows will be allowed to complete an additional 2 credits for extra credit.

Failure to complete the required number of credits will result in the reduction of your final grade by one letter grade. That is, if you have an “A” and do not complete the required credits, your final grade will be a “B.”

You will be able to sign up for various studies through the SONA system. Instructions on how to do this will be provided in a separate handout. Studies are worth different amounts of credit depending upon how long it takes to complete the study. You may sign up for any combination of studies you wish as long as you complete the required number of credits.

A pre-screening questionnaire is required before participating in many of the studies. You may earn .5 credits by completing the pre-screening within the *first two weeks* of the semester.

Your participation in these studies is vital in order for the department to accomplish its research goals, make its contribution to the development of psychological science, and demonstrate what Texas A&M University-Commerce does in the national and international frontier of knowledge. Furthermore, the studies will give you an opportunity to learn about some of the things we do in this field and may turn out to be fun for you as well!

The alternative to the research experiment participation will be to complete an original 20 page research project, as specified by your instructor. If you choose to do the research project instead of the research experiments, you must make an appointment and meet individually with the instructor prior to Monday, September 8, 2014, and the written project will be due by Monday, December 1, 2014, in class.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

*As this schedule is **tentative**, it is the **student's** responsibility to be aware of changes announced **in class**.*

	Date	Topics	Reading
Week 1	8/25/14	Syllabus./Ice Breaker/ Intro to Learning	Chapter 1
	8/27/14	Traditional Learning Theories	Chapter 2
	8/29/14	Traditional Learning Theories; The Modification of Instinctive Behavior	Chapter 2; Chapter 3
Week 2	9/1/14	NO CLASS/ LABOR DAY BREAK	
	9/3/14	The Modification of Instinctive Behavior; Review	Chapter 3
	9/5/14	JUST IN CASE DAY	
Week 3	9/8/14	EXAM 1	
	9/10/14	Principles of Pavlovian Conditioning	Chapter 4
	9/12/14	Principles of Pavlovian Conditioning; Theories of Pavlovian Conditioning	Chapter 4 Chapter 5
Week 4	9/15/14	NO CLASS/GROUP WORK DAY	
	9/17/14	Theories of Pavlovian Conditioning	Chapter 5
	9/19/14	JUST IN CASE DAY/REVIEW	
Week 5	9/22/14	EXAM 2	
	9/24/14	Principles of Appetitive Conditioning	Chapter 6
	9/26/14	Principles of Appetitive Conditioning; Principles and Applications of Aversive Conditioning	Chapter 6: Chapter 7
	9/29/14	Principles and Applications of Aversive Conditioning; Theories of Appetitive and Aversive Conditioning	Chapter 7; Chapter 8
	10/1/14	Theories of Appetitive and Aversive Conditioning	Chapter 8
Week 7	10/3/14	NO CLASS/ARMADILLO CONFERENCE	
	10/6/14	JUST IN CASE DAY/REVIEW	
	10/8/14	EXAM 3	
	10/10/14	Biological Influences on Learning; Stimulus Control of Behavior	Chapter 9; Chapter 10
Week 8	10/13/14	NO CLASS/GROUP WORK DAY	
	10/15/14	Stimulus Control of Behavior	Chapter 10
	10/17/14	JUST IN CASE DAY/REVIEW	
Week 9	10/20/14	EXAM 4	
	10/22/14	Cognitive Control of Behavior	
	10/24/14	Cognitive Control of Behavior	Chapter 11
Week 10	10/27/14	JUST IN CASE DAY/REVIEW	Chapter 11
	10/29/14	EXAM 5	
	10/31/14	Memory Processes	Chapter 12
Week 11	11/3/14	Memory Processes	Chapter 12
	11/5/14	JUST IN CASE DAY/REVIEW	
	11/7/14	EXAM 6	
Week 12	11/10/14	OPEN DAY	
	11/12/14	Presentation 1	
	11/14/14	Presentation 2	
Week 13	11/17/14	Presentation 3	
	11/19/14	Presentation 4	

11/21/14

NO CLASS/PSYCHONOMICS CONFERENCE

	Date	Topics	Reading
Week 14	11/24-28/14	NO CLASS/ THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS	
Week 15	12/1/14	Presentation 5	
	12/3/14	Presentation 6	
	12/5/14	Presentation 7	
Week 16	12/8-12/14	FINALS WEEK/FINAL EXAM DUE	