Learning and Conditioning

PSYC 3361-501
Summer 2024 - Online

Professor: Dr. Steven Estrada
Email: estradasm@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: I'll be holding office hours by appointment over zoom

Send me an email to schedule an appointment. My schedule is open and I will be available to meet within 24 to 48 hours of your email, Monday through Friday.

Course Description

Examination of the principles of learning and cognition from the perspective of experimental psychology, with an emphasis on learning theories and neuroscience. The approaches of Pavlov and Skinner are predominant throughout the course, although the concepts of other learning theorists are also presented.

Course Structure

This is an online course. Content is divided into three parts. Content and assessments are designed so that they may be completed at a time of your own choosing within certain date/time windows (i.e., asynchronously).
**Readings/Materials**

All reading material for this course will be posted on D2L and it is all freely available. You do not need to purchase a textbook for this course.

**D2L**

All course material will be posted here on D2L. This includes all graded material (quizzes, exam, assignments, discussions). Grades will also be posted here as they occur throughout the course.

**Course Requirements**

The course will include 15 short quizzes, 3 short writing assignments, 6 discussion posts, and a Final Exam. Extra credit may be offered throughout the semester. However, if extra credit is offered, the opportunity will be made available to all students (i.e., there will be no special cases).

**Quizzes**

You will have a quiz associated with each content module in this course. These quizzes may be cumulative, to a degree. There will be 15 quizzes total (1 per week), and your lowest graded quiz will be dropped (14 will count toward your final grade). These will be worth 5 points each (for 70 points total).

**Assignments**

3 short writing assignments will be given during the semester. Instructions for each will be posted on D2L. These will all follow the same basic format: 2 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font (or similar). These must be submitted
as a Microsoft Word document (.docx) or PDF. These will be worth 10 points each (for 30 points total).

**Discussions**

You will have two discussions for each part of the course (Parts I, II, and III). Instructions for each will be posted on D2L. These will all follow the same basic format: 2 posts per discussion topic, with a 2-sentence minimum for each post (but you can write much more if you’d like). One post should be from you on the designated topic and the other should be a reply to another student’s post. These will be worth 2 points each (for 12 points total).

**Final Exam**

The final exam will open during the last week of class. This exam will be cumulative and will be worth 70 points.

**Make-Up/Late Work Policy**

If there are circumstances beyond your control that prevent you from completing course material, make-up opportunities may be offered at the discretion of the professor. Make-up requests must be made no later than 24 hours passed the due date.

**Grading Policy**

Grades will be determined by your performance on quizzes, assignments, discussion posts, and a final exam. Your final grade will be calculated as a percentage of points earned out of 182. Grades will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (14 total, at 5 points each)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments (3 total, at 10 points each)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion Posts (6 total, at 2 point each) 12
Final Exam 70

Total 182

A  >89.4%
B  79.5% - 89.4%
C  69.5% - 79.4%
D  59.5% - 69.4%
F  <59.5%

Your Grade (%) = Points Earned / 182

Grades will be posted on D2L as they occur throughout the course.

Credit Hour Justification (3 Credits)

PSYC 3361 “Learning and Conditioning” (3 credits) is designed to introduce students to the study of learning and conditioning by covering principles of learning and conditioning from the perspective of experimental psychology with an emphasis on learning theory including the approaches of Pavlov and Skinner and the concepts of other learning theorists. This course covers the equivalent of 2.5 contact hours per week for 16 weeks, and also includes a 2.5 hour final examination period. Students typically have significant weekly reading assignments, writing assignments, are expected to take regular tests, and a final examination. These activities average at a minimum 6 hours of work each week, during long-semesters, to prepare outside of classroom hours. Online course sections contain extensive written content that includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture sections receive, requiring students to engage the online modules for at least three hours per week during long semesters. For every hour a student spends engaging with the online content, he/she
spends at least two hours completing associated activities and assessments.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to do the following things at a basic level:

- Understand the basic workings of the nervous system and describe how learning occurs at a cellular level
- Understand the basics of associative learning (classical and operant conditioning)
- Distinguish various memory systems throughout the brain
- Appreciate the influence of learning on psychological disorders
- Apply learning strategies to improve your own learning and to teach others (both humans and pets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Program Learning Outcomes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Level</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinnings of psychology as a science</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Policies

Academic Integrity (A-9.1)

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH,
or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Additional Helpful Information**

SFASU values students' mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.
Important Dates/Deadlines

On-campus Resources

SFASU Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

Crisis Resources

Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Quizzes Due</th>
<th>Discussions Due</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 7/16</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, 7/28</td>
<td>4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 8/7</td>
<td>10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 8/7</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All assessments are due before midnight on their assigned date
U.S. Central Time (i.e., the time in Nacogdoches, TX)
## Course Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part I</strong></td>
<td>7/8 to 7/16</td>
<td><strong>Cells and Neural Communication</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Neuroanatomy</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Learning at a Cellular Level</strong></td>
<td>Quizzes 1, 2, 3&lt;br&gt;Discussions 1, 2&lt;br&gt;Assignment 1&lt;br&gt;&lt;b&gt;Due Date: 7/16&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part II</strong></td>
<td>7/16 to 7/28</td>
<td><strong>Classical Conditioning Introduction</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Classical Conditioning Phenomena</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Classical Conditioning Neuroscience</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Operant Conditioning Introduction</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Operant Conditioning Phenomena</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Operant Conditioning Neuroscience</strong></td>
<td>Quizzes 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9&lt;br&gt;Discussions 3, 4&lt;br&gt;Assignment 1&lt;br&gt;&lt;b&gt;Due Date: 7/28&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part III</strong></td>
<td>7/28 to 8/7</td>
<td><strong>Mental Health – Addiction</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mental Health – Stress/Anxiety</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mental Health – Depression</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Special Topics – Training a Dog</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Special Topics – Education</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Special Topics – Sleep</strong></td>
<td>Quizzes 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15&lt;br&gt;Discussions 5, 6&lt;br&gt;Assignment 3&lt;br&gt;&lt;b&gt;Due Date: 8/7&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>8/7</td>
<td>Final Exam due on 8/7 before midnight</td>
<td>Final Exam&lt;br&gt;&lt;b&gt;Due Date: 8/7&lt;/b&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The professor reserves the right to change this schedule to best meet the needs of the class*