

1-2014

PSYX 560.01: Advanced Learning and Cognition

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Syllabus

PSYX 560
Advanced Learning & Cognition
Spring 2014

Dr. Allen Szalda-Petree Office: Skaggs 201 Phone: 2091 Email: allen.szalda-petree@umontana.edu Office Hours : M, T, W 10-11 Department URL <i>cas.umt.edu/psychology</i>	Materials - Cognition, Evolution, and Behavior (2nd Ed) - Shettleworth (2010) - Adaptive Behavior and Learning (Internet edition 2003) – Staddon (2010) - Selected readings on Moodle
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Course overview

The purpose of the course is to provide a balanced view of the major modern perspectives on animal behavior (human primates included) with an emphasis on learning and cognition. There are three primary goals of this course: 1) develop an understanding of the ways in which the environment and evolution shape behavior, 2) gain an appreciation for the similarities and differences in the ways in which animals communicate, learn and solve the day to day problems of living, and 3) expose students to the logic of carrying out empirical investigations both within and across species. The major topics to be covered include perception, attention, learning, discrimination, concept formation, memory, spatial learning, numerical competency, communication, and language.

Assessment:

Exams: (50%)

1. Take-home Midterm (25% of final grade)
2. Take-home Final (25% of final grade)

Paper and presentation: (Paper= 30%; Presentation=10%)

One major term paper is required at the end of the Semester. I will distribute a list of possible topics for you to choose from or you may choose your own topic (**with prior approval**). These must be in-depth papers addressing in detail either the research thus far (literature review), an experimental proposal, a theoretical proposal, or any combination thereof. The last 3 weeks of class have been set aside for 45 minute in-class presentations of your work. The final written version (in APA style) is due May 4th.

Class Participation: (10%)

Participation in class discussions will be evaluated informally; I will be looking for contributions to the class discussions that demonstrate familiarity with the readings.

Classroom Behavior:

General

As a university student, certain behavior is expected of you. Most importantly, it is your responsibility to meet the requirements of this course. You may expect me to be in the classroom on time, prepared & organized, and open to discussion/questions pertaining to the day's subject material.

I will expect you to be in the classroom on time, to be awake and attentive, to participate in

demonstrations/discussions, and to be respectful toward the instructor and other students.

I understand there will be circumstances beyond your control that, on occasion, will require you to leave class early. Please plan accordingly by notifying me at the beginning of class and choose seating that will result in minimal disruption.

You should feel free to ask any questions in class. Also, please feel free to see the instructor about any classroom issue during office hours.

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator (contact UM's DSS for more information - <http://life.umd.edu/dss/>).

Wireless communications (cell phones/pagers/computers/PDAs)

For what should be blatantly obvious reasons, the use of wireless communications devices during class is prohibited. This specifically includes such activities as 1) placing or receiving phone calls, 2) sending or receiving text messages, and 3) internet searching, game playing, etc.

If you are an emergency professional (physician/nurse, counselor/therapist, EMT, etc) or you are expecting an **EMERGENCY** communication please set your wireless device to silent alarm mode and quietly exit the classroom to respond.

Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://life.umd.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php.

The Student Conduct Code discusses plagiarism. However, it is a serious offense worth re-mentioning. This course requires students to adhere to APA format when citing, paraphrasing, or referencing sources. If you have plagiarized, either intentionally or accidentally, you will receive a zero on the entire assignment. If you plagiarize a second time, you will fail the course.

Dropping/Adding/Changing grade option

Please refer to the Registrar's website on policies and dates for dropping/adding/changing grade options - http://events.umd.edu/?calendar_id=27&upcoming=upcoming&

Grading:

Grades will be assigned using the adjacent performance criteria for all exams and final course grade.

<u>Percent Correct</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90 - 100 %	A
80 - 89 %	B
70 - 79 %	C
60 - 69 %	D
0 - 59 %	F

Tentative Reading & Exam Schedule	
Jan 27 & 29	Shettleworth, Chapter 1 – Cognition and the study of Behavior Shettleworth, Chapter 2 – Evolution, Behavior, and Cognition: A Primer
Feb 3 & Feb 5	Staddon, Chapter 4 – Operant Behavior Staddon, Chapter 5 – Reward & Punishment
Feb 10 & 12	Shettleworth, Chapter 4 – Learning: Introduction and Pavlovian conditioning
Feb 17	Presidents Day – No School
Feb 19, 24 & 26	Shettleworth, Chapter 5 – Recognition Learning Staddon, Chapter 8 – Choice and Decision rules
Mar 3 & 5	Shettleworth, Chapter 6 – Discrimination, Classification, and Concepts Staddon, Chapter 10 – Stimulus control and Cognition
Mar 10 & 12	Shettleworth, Chapter 7 – Memory March 12 th : Midterm (covering Chapters 1-7) given at the end of class and DUE Mar 13 th by 5 pm
Mar 17 & 19	Shettleworth, Chapter 8 – Getting Around: Spatial Cognition
Mar 24 & 26	Shettleworth, Chapter 10 – Numerical Competence Shettleworth, Chapter 11 – Cognition and the Consequences of Behavior
Mar 31 & Apr 2	Spring Break
Apr 7 & 9	Shettleworth, Chapter 13 – Social Learning
Apr 14 & 16	Shettleworth, Chapter 14 – Communication and Language
Apr 21 & 23	Paper Presentations 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____
Apr 28 & 30	Paper Presentations 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____
May 5 & May 7	Paper Presentations 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
May 14	Final available at 8 am and DUE May 15th by 5 pm