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Fall 9-1-2001

### PSYC 260S.01: Fundamentals of Learning

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Szalda-Petree, Allen D., "PSYC 260S.01: Fundamentals of Learning" (2001). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 6247.

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# Syllabus

## Psychology 260 Fundamentals of Learning Fall Semester 2001

**Dr. Allen Szalda-Petree**

**Office:** PhP 201      **Phone:** 2091  
**Email:** pyadp@selway.umn.edu  
**Office Hours:** T, W, Th 10-11 & by Appt

### Required Text:

**Learning & Behavior** (4<sup>th</sup> ed) - Paul Chance

**Department URL** - [www.cas.umn.edu/psych](http://www.cas.umn.edu/psych)

### Course Objectives

There are three primary goals of this course: 1) acquaint students with current knowledge about learning processes, both elementary and complex, 2) provide simulations of classic learning processes, and 3) expose students to the logic of carrying out empirical investigations of an important psychological phenomenon. It emphasizes current theoretical and experimental investigations of simple learning processes as well as some exposure to current theories in animal cognition. The major topics to be covered include habituation, sensitization, Pavlovian conditioning, instrumental learning, vicarious learning, stimulus control, schedules of reinforcement, limits of learning, and basic animal cognition. Most of the research covered focuses on learning and acquired motivational processes as exemplified primarily in nonhuman animals. However, this is not to suggest the application of these processes will not extend to humans. In point of fact, many of the basic learning processes extend throughout the animal kingdom, with differences being due primarily to the animal's ecology and/or evolutionary history.

**Exams:** There will be 3 midterm exams and a comprehensive final. Each exam will be worth 50 points and will consist of 30 multiple choice items (1 pt each) and 2 short answer essay questions (10 pts each). You will be allowed to drop the lowest exam score of the four exams (including the final) and use the three highest exam scores for the calculation of your final grade. Both lecture and book material will be covered on each exam in approximately equal proportions. As a general rule the multiple choice items will be drawn primarily from the text while the essay questions will be taken mostly from the lecture materials. Makeup exams will NOT be given except under unusual circumstances and will consist entirely of essay questions. See the following reading schedule for exam dates.

**Grading:** Grades will be assigned using the adjacent performance criteria for all exams.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent Correct</u>
A	90 - 100 %
	80 - 89 %
B	70 - 79 %

C	60 - 69 %
D	0 - 59 %
F	

## Tentative Reading & Exam Schedule

Sept 4 & Sept 6	Chapter 1 - Introduction: Learning to Change
Sept 11 & Sept 13	Chapter 2: The Study of Learning & Behavior
Sept 18 & Sept 20	Chapter 3: Pavlovian Procedures
Sept 25 & Sept 27	Pavlovian Procedures continued
Oct 2	Chapter 4: Pavlovian Applications
<b>Oct 4</b>	<b>Exam I - Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
Oct 9 & Oct 11	Chapter 5: Operant Procedures: Reinforcement
Oct 16 & Oct 18	Chapter 6: Operant Procedures: Punishment
Oct 23 & Oct 25	Chapter 7: Operant Applications
Oct 30 & Nov 1	Chapter 10: Schedules of Reinforcement
Nov 6 & Nov 8	Schedules of Reinforcement continued
<b>Nov 13</b>	<b>Exam II - Chapters 5, 6, 7, 10</b>
Nov 15	Chapter 8: Vicarious Learning
Nov 20	Chapter 9: Generalization, Discrimination, & Stimulus Control
Nov 27 & Nov 29	Generalization, Discrimination, & Stimulus Control continued
Dec 4 & Dec 6	Chapter 12: The Limits of Learning & Animal Cognition
Dec 11	Animal Cognition continued
<b>Dec 13</b>	<b>Exam III - Chapters 8, 9, 12</b>
<b>See course schedule</b>	<b>Final - Chapters 1-10, 12</b>