

**PSYC 304—PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING****Thursday Evenings—7:20 to 10:00****West Building, room 1008**

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
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Office Hours	Thursday Evenings 6:00 to 7:00	Aquia Building, room 337

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Principles of Learning is a course, which has been designed to introduce you to principles related to the experimental analysis of behavior. While these principles will be presented through animal learning in the laboratory, students will be expected to apply this information (e.g., basic learning mechanisms) to human behavior and apply learning theory to real-world examples.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

Domjan, M. P. (2009). *The Principles of Learning and Behavior*, Sixth Edition. ISBN-13: 978-0-495-60199-9.

Alloway, T., Wilson, G., & Graham, J. (2004). *Sniffy the Virtual Rat Pro*, Version 2.0. ISBN-13: 978-0-534-63360-8.

**GRADING**

The lecture portion of the grade will be computed based on the following:

- a. 4 exams—80 percent (20 percent each)
- b. 4 Article Summaries—20 percent (5 percent each)

The final grade for PSYC304 will be based on the combined lecture grade (75 percent) as well as the lab (25 percent) of the course.

**EXPECTATIONS**

1. **Technology and Communication**—All students are expected to maintain and regularly access their George Mason University email accounts. Communication from the instructor will be transmitted to students' Mason email accounts.
2. **Writing Intensive**—PSYC304 is an approved writing intensive course in the psychology major. In the laboratory you will have multiple writing assignments that build upon one another and that the total amount of writing equals or exceeds George

Mason University's 3,500-word minimum. The lab will include an introduction to Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and on-line searches using PsycINFO and other electronic databases, which will satisfy a portion of the "technology across the curriculum" requirement. Blackboard will be used to maintain individual student records. Most extra-class communications will be completed by e-mail.

### **GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY HONOR POLICY**

"Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." Students are expected to adhere to this policy at the risk of the following—"The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation."

*Students in this course may enroll PSYC328 to earn an extra hour of course credit.*

### **SPRING 2012 ADD & DROP DEADLINES**

The last day to add a course is Tuesday, January 31, 2012. The last day to drop a course is Friday, February 24, 2012. *Although there is a selective withdrawal option for undergraduate students from Monday, February 27 through Friday, March 30, students are strongly encouraged to speak with an advisor before choosing this option.*

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If you are a student with disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 709.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

### **SCHEDULE**

While subject to change, what is presented below is a tentative schedule that will be used to structure class readings, discussions, and assignments. To gain the most from class lectures and discussions, students are expected to complete required reading assignments in advance of the class session. Any changes to the schedule will be communicated to students in writing.

Please note that all assignments (e.g., article summaries) are due at the beginning of each class session.

DATE	CLASS SESSION	TOPIC	REQUIRED READING	ASSIGNMENT DUE*
1.26	1	Opening Class Session, Overview, and Introduction	Chapter 1	
2.2	2	Elicited Behavior, Habituation, and Sensitization	Chapter 2	
2.9	3	Classical Conditioning: Foundations	Chapter 3	
2.16	4		Exam #1—Chapters 1, 2, & 3	Article Summary #1
2.23	5	Classical Conditioning: Mechanisms	Chapter 4	
3.1	6	Instrumental Conditioning: Foundations	Chapter 5	
3.8	7	Schedules of Reinforcement and Choice Behavior	Chapter 6	
3.15		Spring Break—No Class Session		
3.22	8		Exam #2—Chapters 4, 5, & 6	Article Summary #2
3.29	9	Instrumental Conditioning: Motivated Mechanisms	Chapter 7	
4.5	10	Stimulus Control of Behavior	Chapter 8	
4.12	11	Extinction of Conditioned Behavior	Chapter 9	
4.19	12		Exam #3—Chapters 7, 8, & 9	Article Summary #3
4.26	13	Comparative Cognition I: Memory Mechanisms	Chapter 11	
5.3	14	Comparative Cognition II: Special Topics	Chapter 12	
5.10		Cumulative Final Exam 7:30 to 10:15		Article Summary #4