

PSY211: Psychology of Learning

TERM: Fall, 2008

TIME: Tuesday/Thursday 8:00 – 9:15 a.m.

LOCATION: Hardy Tower 140

INSTRUCTOR: B. Charles Tatum
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TEXT:

Chance, P. (2003). *Learning and Behavior* (5th Edition). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

COURSE MATERIALS:

Tatum, B. C. (2007). *Psychology of Learning Course Materials*, San Diego, CA: Montezuma Publishing

SCHEDULE:

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
Sep 2, 4	Introduction, Stimuli & Responses	Chapter 1, Chapter 2 (pp. 34-41)
Sep 9, 11	A Scientific Approach to Learning	Chapter 2 (pp. 41-62)
Sep 16, 18	Classical Conditioning	Chapter 3, 4
Sep 23, 25	Review (Sep 23), EXAM # 1 (Sep 25)	ParScore Student Enrollment Sheet (Form No. F-288, PAR-L) Wide Red Form
Sep 30, Oct 2	Reinforcement	Chapter 5, Chapter 7 (pp. 219-222)
Oct 7, 9	Punishment	Chapter 6
Oct 14, 16	Schedules	Chapter 10 (pp. 347-367)
Oct 21, 23	Generalization, Discrimination & Transfer	Chapter 9 (pp.303-331)
Oct 28, 30	Review (Oct 28) EXAM # 2 (Oct 30)	ParScore Test Form (Form No. F-289 PAR-L) Narrow Red Form
Nov 4, 6	Learning & Memory	Chapter 11
Nov 11	Veteran's Day (no class)	
Nov 13, 18	Social Learning	Chapter 8, Chapter 7 (pp. 226-229)
Nov 20, 25	Cognitive Learning	Chapter 7 (pp. 222-226, 235-244) Chapter 9 (pp. 332-337)
Nov 27	Thanksgiving Break (no class)	
Dec 2, 4	Language Learning	Chapter 7 (pp. 229-235) Chapter 12 (pp. 426-427, 434-436)
Dec 9	Evolution, Genetics & Adaptation	Chapter 1 (Review pp. 22-30) Chapter 12 (pp. 428-434, 436-444)
Dec 11	Review	
Dec 16	EXAM # 3 and Optional Final Exam (8:00-10:00 a.m., Hardy Tower 140)	ParScore Test Form (Form No. F-289 PAR-L) Narrow Red Form One form for each test

OBJECTIVES:

- Learn the basic principles of learning and conditioning
- Understand traditional and contemporary approaches to learning
- Comprehend the scientific approach to learning
- Master the concepts underlying social, language, and cognitive learning
- Know the research on learning, memory, and forgetting
- Grasp the significance of genetics, evolution, and brain physiology on learning

REQUIREMENTS: Your grade in the class will be determined by your performance on three, non-cumulative examinations and one optional final exam (cumulative for the semester). The exams will draw on material from both the text and class. The exams will consist of objective style questions (multiple choice, true/false) graded electronically. Each exam will be weighted equally and will determine one-third of your final grade. If you choose to take the final exam, your grade will be determined by the three highest exam scores. That means that if you do poorly on one of the first three exams, you can improve your grade by doing well on the final exam.

POLICIES:

- (1). Make-Up Exams: If you cannot take the exam when scheduled, please make arrangements for a make-up exam before the regularly scheduled exam. Only in rare cases (e.g., unexpected illness or emergency) will you be allowed to do a make-up exam after the exam has been given.
- (2). Extra Credit: Your grade is determined by your performance on the exams. Because of the size of this class, extra credit assignments are not an option. If you need an opportunity to make up for poor performance on an exam, take the optional final.
- (3). Office Hours: I am a part-time instructor and do not have an office on campus. If you need to contact me outside of class, you may call me at work or home. If you need to see me in person, we can arrange to meet 30 minutes before class or immediately after class.
- (4). Class Attendance: I will not take attendance and so your presence in class is strictly voluntary. Fifty percent of the material on the exams will come from the class sessions, and this information cannot be obtained from the textbook. In addition, I will give sample questions and show videos in class. These questions and videos will only be available in class, so if you miss a session you will not have access to this material. Therefore, the incentive to come to class is not only the pleasure of my brilliant class presentations, but also better test performance.
- (5). Blackboard: The syllabus and handouts are posted on Blackboard. Your exam scores will also be posted on Blackboard. Important class notices will appear occasionally, so logon to Blackboard at least weekly. I do not use the email system in Blackboard, so use the email given in this syllabus if you wish to contact me.
- (6). Study Aids: There is Study Guide for each exam in the Course Materials (available at the Bookstore for a nominal fee). The study guide will also be available on Blackboard. The textbook supplies many study supports (e.g., practice quizzes, review questions, in-chapter queries, bold-faced terms) and I give sample questions in class.
- (7). Textbook: It is library policy not to carry textbooks in their holdings, and I do not have an extra textbook that I can put on reserve. The textbook is a vital part of this course and I urge you to obtain one. If you cannot afford a new book, you can buy one used, borrow one from another student, or form a collective and purchase a group book.
- (8). Grading Scale: Grades are based on a standard percentage scale shown below. Each of the three exams is worth 50 points, and your final grade for the class will be based on the percentage of the total 150 points you earn. (You may also take the optional final if you want to improve your point total; a high score on the final will replace your lowest exam score.) I sometimes curve the grades downward (i.e., lower the cut-off points to make it easier to get a higher grade) if I feel that the class is having difficulty with the material. However, I do not do this until all of the grades are in at the end of the semester, so please do not ask if I

will curve the grades prior to the final exam because I will not know. The grading scale below will apply unless I decide to curve the scores at the end of the term.

- (9). Requests for Grade Changes: Once grades are posted, they are final. Do not ask me to change your grade unless there has clearly been an error in the calculation of your grade. In the interest of fairness to all students, I must assign grades based on exam performance and cannot make exceptions regardless of the circumstance.

<u>Percent</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Test Score</u>	<u>Final Point Total</u>
93-100	A	47-50	140-150
90-92	A -	45-46	135-139
87-89	B+	43-44	131-134
83-86	B	41-42	125-130
80-82	B -	40	120-124
77-79	C+	38-39	116-119
73-76	C	36-37	110-115
70-72	C -	35	105-109
67-69	D+	33-34	101-104
63-66	D	31-32	95-100
60-62	D -	30	90-94
Below 60	F	Below 30	Below 90

RECOMMENDED STUDY STRATEGIES:

Class Preparation

- ✓ Read the material in the text prior to class
- ✓ Do the “Practice Quiz” at the end of the chapter (sometimes we won’t read all of the chapter, so just do the quiz for the assigned material)
- ✓ Come to all class sessions
- ✓ Pay attention in class and take notes
- ✓ Ask questions in class (there are no dumb questions from students, just an occasional dumb answer from your instructor)

Exam Preparation

- ✓ Begin studying at least one week before the exam (don’t cram the night before)
- ✓ Review the Study Guide. Define the key terms *in your own words*. Formulate responses to the key issues/distinctions/questions
- ✓ Quiz yourself (or get in a study group and quiz each other) on the “Review Questions” at the end of each chapter
- ✓ Review the course materials and make sure you are not confused about anything
- ✓ Call or e-mail me if you are unclear about any of the information (if you call or e-mail too close to the exam date you may not get a response, so get your questions in early)
- ✓ Bring questions to the review sessions
- ✓ Get plenty of sleep the night before the exam

Exam Taking

- ✓ Listen carefully to my instructions before you attempt the exam
- ✓ Read each question and *all* of the alternative choices carefully
- ✓ Come to the front of the room and ask me to explain any questions you are not clear about
- ✓ Go back over your exam and be sure you answered every question
- ✓ Do not go back and change an answer unless you are *absolutely* sure you now know the correct answer (your first guess is usually your best guess)