



**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND EDUCATION: PSYCHOLOGY**

**COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2014**

**PY 2810 (A2) / PSYC 387 (AU): PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIOUR – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Bruce Galenza      **PHONE:** 780-539-2994  
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**OFFICE HOURS:** Mon 10:00 – 11:30/1:00 – 2:00, Tues/Thur 10:00 – 2:00, Wed 10:00 – 1:00, Fri 11:30 – 1:00, weekend mornings.

**PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:** PY 1040 and PY 1050

**REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

Powell, R.A., Symbaluk, D.G., & Honey, P.L., (2013). Introduction to learning and behaviour (4<sup>th</sup> Ed), Thomson Wadsworth.

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:** This course will be an introduction to the psychological theories of learning. It will describe and evaluate the scientific method and the process of theory building in psychology, the evolutionary context in which learning occurs, reflexes and fixed action patterns, Sociobiology, the Behaviourist theories of classical and operant conditioning, criticisms of the behavioural perspective and the transitional memory theories, and introduce the modern emphasis on cognitive theories and models. This course is the first of a pair of courses in this field of psychology, and is generally followed by the advanced course in cognition. This course is designed primarily for serious students of theoretical psychology and the behavioural sciences, students interested in their own intellectual growth and development, and students who intend careers as teachers or instructors facilitating the learning others.

**CREDIT/CONTACT HOURS:** 3 credits / 3 hours per week

**DELIVERY MODE(S):** Lecture/Discussion

**GENERAL GOALS:** This course may be different from any other course you have ever taken. There will be no memorizing lists of facts or definitions; students must learn the material, organize it for themselves so that they understand it, and apply it to their own lives such that they can reflect upon how these principles have been at work creating the people that they are now. Further, students are required to develop the skills of discussing, both through written and verbal communication, their knowledge of course material.

Please be aware that your normal strategies for passing classes may not work here and new strategies may have to be developed; do so quickly. There are no standard multiple choice examinations; seven minor summary papers (3-4 pages minimum, typed and double spaced) are assigned, plus a comprehensive 30% final examination that will include an eighth paper. Extra readings will be recognized, going beyond lecture material will be rewarded.

**COGNITIVE GOALS:**

As a result of participating in this course, students will demonstrate the following learning outcomes through written and oral communication:

1. Knowledge structures; organized, related and interrelated information, the ability to identify, abstract out, analyse, and structure the essential elements of theories and perspectives. The “what” of the psychology of learning.
2. Procedural knowledge; research methods and procedures, and communication of ideas. The “how” of psychology of learning.
3. Metacognitive judgement; independent, critical, and analytic thought concerning the proper use of the procedures and the generation of examples of personal learning illustrating these principles. The “where” and “when” of psychology of learning.
4. Affective considerations; understanding the value of this work and its application. The “why” of the psychology of learning.

**BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES:** (Note: These are my planned topics; however, I reserve the right to change them as student interests and abilities dictate. Changes will be well advertised. Also, I intend to let student interests and abilities guide the speed of the course; consequently, there are no dates given for these papers but it will work out to about one per week and a half.)

As a result of taking this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss Gilbert Ryle's and J.B. Watson's (Behaviourist - Logical Positivist) position on the existence of "mind" and its place as a causal agent in human behaviour.
2. Define, explain, and give examples of the Sociobiological (E.O. Wilson, George Boeree) perspective of human behaviour, including genetic determinism, reflexes, habituation, FAP's, and complex social behaviour.
3. Define, give examples, and apply the principles of Pavlovian or classical conditioning, including conditioned and unconditioned stimuli and responses, as well as its principles such as acquisition, extinction, discrimination, generalization, and stacking. Place the theory in its Behavioural and Evolutionary contexts. Discuss and give novel examples of the complex modifiers of conditioning such as latent inhibition, sensory pre-conditioning, overshadowing, potentiation, blocking and inhibitory conditioning.
4. Define, explain, and give examples of the principles of Thorndikian instrumental conditioning and Skinnerian operant conditioning, including acquisition, extinction, and positive and negative reinforcement and punishment, stimulus control, discrimination, and generalization, habits, and copying.
5. Define, explain, and give examples of reinforcement and its use in behaviour control, including schedules of reinforcement. Define, explain, and give examples of the principles and uses (and side effects) of punishment in controlling behaviour.
6. Discuss and evaluate the behavioural perspective in terms of its ability to explain all human and animal behaviour and its effectiveness in application through behaviour modification (This paper should emphasise what it CAN do; you may introduce criticisms but save extensive treatment of them for a later paper.)
7. Define, explain, and give examples of the evolutionary basis of human learning, especially the Biobehaviourist concepts of biological effects on enabling and constraining learning, including instinctive drift, and autoshaping, and discuss how this is a challenge to the classical Behavioural perspective.
8. Define, give examples, apply, and evaluate the paradigm shift from Behaviourism to Cognitivism, as exemplified by the theories and principles of Tolman's purposive behaviorism and others. What are the major criticisms of the Behavioural perspective and how does Bandura's Social Learning theory account for them.

**TRANSFERABILITY:** AU, CUC, Concordia, MacEwan, King's, U of A, U of C, U of L.

**\*\* Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

**GRADING CRITERIA:**

<b>GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE</b>			
<b>GRADING CONVERSION CHART</b>			
<b>Alpha Grade</b>	<b>4-point Equivalent</b>	<b>Percentage of Class</b>	<b>Designation</b>
<b>A<sup>+</sup></b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>EXCELLENT</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3%</b>	
<b>A<sup>-</sup></b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>FIRST CLASS STANDING</b>
<b>B<sup>+</sup></b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>9%</b>	
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>GOOD</b>
<b>B<sup>-</sup></b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>16%</b>	
<b>C<sup>+</sup></b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>SATISFACTORY</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>13%</b>	
<b>C<sup>-</sup></b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>9%</b>	
<b>D<sup>+</sup></b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>MINIMAL PASS</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3%</b>	
<b>F</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>FAIL</b>
<b>WF</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline</b>

**ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION:** Assessment will be based on the seven papers, each weighted at 10%, plus a comprehensive 30% final examination that will include an eighth paper. Following the final grade assignments, students will be subjectively assessed for bonus points on the basis of their involvement in, and contributions to, the class, and attendance.

Research psychology recognizes the authority of, and bases its judgements on, carefully collected data, as opposed to opinion, tradition, or authority. In keeping with this philosophy, rather than me imposing my authority on you and telling you what you must know and then arbitrarily assigning cut-off points for grades through non-standardized tests, you as a class will inform me what you are capable of, through my careful measurement of your performance. Students will be assessed according to their relative position within the class. The field of psychology always measures human behaviour in this way. This method will be explained fully in the first class period; a handout is available if requested.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:** This is adult education. You will be treated as such and are expected to behave accordingly. It is expected that all students will display a professional attitude and behaviour in the classroom. This includes reliability, respect for and cooperation with your fellow students and the instructor, attention to fellow students' questions and instructors' responses, determination to achieve first-class work while meeting deadlines, and constructive response to criticism.

**STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Refer to the Student Conduct section of the College Admission Guide at <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/programs/calendar/> or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at [www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/\\*\\*](http://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/**)

\*\*Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

**A GENTLE WARNING:** Some students try to copy work from textbooks or other published writing and claim it as their own. This form of cheating is called plagiarism or theft of intellectual property. This is easy for me to spot; the difference in writing style between undergraduates and professionals is immediately obvious.

Other students may try to buy papers from the Internet or copy from other students. This is also easy for me to spot as a purchased paper is invariably different in scope from the highly

specific requirements of this course. Further, it can be seen when the student shows no knowledge during class discussion of what was in the paper that he or she has just submitted.

A third way of cheating is to buy or borrow papers from students who took this course from me last year. Please be forewarned that I have changed the course material, student requirements, and textbook substantially from last year, and papers from last year will be radically different and easily identified.

If you cheat in any way, you will be given a zero for the paper, an “F” for the term, and I will write a letter to the administration recommending you be suspended from my class and from the college.

#### **GENERAL COMMENTS:**

There is so much more to learn than we can cover in our limited class time. Make the most of your college experience by reading the text and other sources beyond what is called for in the papers. It will also make your papers all the more insightful. Note that there are no assigned papers for many parts of the text; however, you are still responsible for this material for the final exam.

My preferred teaching style is interactive lecture, derived from the teaching philosophy that little is learned until responses are made (either verbally or written).

I am extremely available for student consultation, and I will be more than happy to proof students' rough drafts and to further discuss course material.

Papers are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late papers will be graded but penalized 2 points per day. As adequate time is allotted between the end of the unit and the due date, no excuses other than medical situations, major emergencies, or single parenthood will be accepted. Ensure that you have an adequate supply of ink cartridges and paper and back up all papers on disk. Again, students must express themselves in written and verbal form using higher academic standards of grammatically correct and properly spelled Standard English. If I cannot read your papers, I cannot grade them.

