

# **Psychology 3525A - Hormones and Behaviour**

**Department of Psychology  
The University of Lethbridge  
Fall 2008**

## **Location:**

MW F, 12:00-12:50, W561

## **Instructor:**

Dr. Margaret Forgie

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Office Hours: By individual appointment at a mutually convenient time.

## **Graduate Teaching Assistant:**

Mr. Brandon Yardy

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## **Course Description:**

This course is designed to expand on the material covered at the second year level by providing an in-depth analysis of current theories and research in the field of behavioural endocrinology - the study of the relationship between hormones and behaviour. We will explore the proximate mechanisms via which hormones, and the endocrine organs that produce them, exert actions on the structure and function of the **mammalian** central nervous system and, thus, on behaviours. A wide range of topics will be covered including development, reproductive behaviours, parental behaviour, aggression and mood, feeding and drinking, biological rhythms, and stress to name a few. In each case, both the basic biology and physiology of each of the neural/hormonal systems, as well as the patterns of behaviour exhibited by the whole animal, will be addressed.

## **Course Prerequisite(s):**

The prerequisites for this course are two, 2000-level courses (3.0 credit hours each) in Psychology or Neuroscience. The recommended pre-requisite is Psychology 2700. Regardless of specific background, all students are expected to have a solid foundation in the scientific approach to understanding behaviour.

## **Required Texts:**

Becker, J.B., Breedlove, S.M., Crews, D., McCarthy, M.M. (2002). *Behavioral Endocrinology*, Second Edition. The MIT Press: Cambridge, MA.

Northey, M., and Timney, B. (2007). *Making Sense in Psychology and the Life Sciences. A student's guide to research and writing*, Fourth Edition. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, ON.

### **Course Requirements:**

- (1) Tests. There will be three short exams, approximately every 4 - 5 weeks during the semester (see the attached schedule of deadlines), and these tests will account for a total of 45% of your final grade (15% each). The last exam will take place on the last day of classes. There is no final exam in this course.
- (2) Presentations. Students will be responsible for giving a short, conference length presentation (= total of 10 minutes for presentation; 3 minutes for question period, with length of time strictly enforced by the instructor). Students will present in groups of three. This presentation will be worth 20% of your final grade with 10% accorded to the group, and 10% to each individual's contribution. All students will be required to submit a one paragraph statement of interest and then groups will be assigned based on matched interests. A handout will be distributed for this assignment and will be discussed in class.
- (3) Annotated Bibliographies. Each student will submit a separate annotated bibliography to accompany their presentation. This will be worth 15% of your final grade. A handout will be distributed regarding content and will be discussed in class.
- (4) Journal Assignment. There will be a written assignment consisting of an essay explaining a single, original research article concerning any topic in the area of behavioral endocrinology. Approaches from all levels of psychological analysis are encouraged (e.g., molecular processes in brain development to clinical endocrinology). The only caveat is that your target article **MUST** be a primary research paper that is published in a peer-reviewed/referred journal. Your submission will be worth 20% of your final grade. Following initial grading, students will be given the option of submitting a revised version for regrading. A handout for the assignment and regrading procedure will be provided.

### **NB.**

Late submissions of the Journal Assignment or the Annotated Bibliography will result in a 25% penalty per day. In the case of the journal assignment, you will also forfeit your opportunity to submit a revised version.

Failure to deliver your part of the in-class presentation will result in a grade of zero for both portions of the mark. Your group will be graded without your result.

All assignments will be graded with the assumption that all students have read and understood the contents of the second required text by Northey and Timney (2007).

**Students with Special Needs:**

If you have a documented condition that prevents you from fully participating in this course, including evaluation procedures, it is your responsibility to contact me if special arrangements are necessary to accommodate your individual situation. Please note that you must contact Counseling Services to acquire an official letter concerning your situation. No accommodations will be given without official notification from that office.

**Grading:**

Letter grades will be assigned to final percentages according to the following scale:

A+ (90+)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (67-69)	D+ (56-59)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (63-66)	D (50-55)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (60-62)	F (< 50)