

PSYC 3720: Learning

Tentative schedule

Instructor: Dr. Robert McDonald

CCBN: EP 1246

Phone: 394-3983

email: r.mcdonald@uleth.ca

Office Hours: By appointment

Readings: Learning and Behavior, First Edition
(author: Mark E. Bouton)

Course Website: <http://people.uleth.ca/~r.mcdonald/>

Content: Basic principles underlying change resulting from experience in all animals including humans. Topics include: learning theory, operant and classical conditioning, organizational principles of mammalian learning and memory, and applied approaches.

Requirements: There will be two midterm examinations worth 20% each; 5 learning assignments using Sniffy the Rat program worth 2 % each (10 % in total); 3 reaction papers worth 8.3% each (25% in total); and a final examination worth 25%. The midterm will consist of multiple choice and short or long answer questions. Reaction papers and Sniffy assignments will be penalized 10% for each day late. The final exam will be a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1 (Sept 4)	Introduction	N/A
Week 2 (Sept 9)	Learning Theory	Chapter 1, 2
Week 3 (Sept 16)	Reflexes to classical conditioning	Chapter 3
Week 4 (Sept 23)	Complex Conditioning I	Chapter 3
SEPTEMBER 30	Midterm #1	
Week 5 (Oct 2)	Complex Conditioning II	Chapter 4
Week 6 (Oct 7)	Complex Conditioning III	Chapter 5, 6
Week 7 (Oct 14)	Instrumental learning	Chapter 7, 8
Week 8 (Oct 21)	Instrumental Learning	Chapter 9, 10
Week 9 (Oct 28)	Punishment	Chapter 7
NOVEMBER 4	Midterm #2	
Week 10 (Nov 6)	Organization of Mammalian Learning and Memory	-----
Week 11 (Nov 11)	Applied Approaches	-----
Week 12 (Nov 18)	Classes cancelled (conference)	-----
Week 13 (Nov 25)	Applied Approaches	-----
Week 14 (Dec 2)	Applied Approaches	-----
DECEMBER 4	Last day of classes	

REACTION PAPERS

These assignments are designed to assess your ability to understand the concepts and data presented in the course, the implications of this material, and your own ideas about them. Three assignments will be given during the term and you will be given one week to return them to your instructor in class. The topics will be based on material covered in the course. Each paper should be 2 double spaced pages (12 font). I encourage you to discuss these assignments with me if you have any questions or concerns.

SNIFFY ASSIGNMENTS

These assignments are designed to give you direct experience with the design and execution of animal learning experiments discussed in class. Five assignments will be given during the middle portions of the term and you will be given one week to return them to your teaching assistant via email.

Your teaching assistant for this course is Erin Zelinski. If you have any questions about the Sniffy assignments please direct them to her.

erin.zelinski@uleth.ca

EP-1268

MIDTERM EXAMS

The midterms will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or long answer questions. You will be given exactly 60 minutes to complete each test according to my watch.

FINAL EXAM

The final exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and long answer questions. You will be given two hours to complete the test. The final exam will be administered during the final exam period on Wednesday, December 10 (2:00-5:00 pm-TENTATIVE).

MARKING SCHEME

A+ (88+), A (84-87), A-(80-83), B+(77-79), B(74-76), B-(70-73), C+(67-69), C(64-66), C-(60-63), D+(57-59), D(54-56), D-(50-53), F(<50)