

# Principles of Learning

PSYC 304

Summer 2006

**Instructor:** Dr. William Perez

**E-mail:** [wperez@gmu.edu](mailto:wperez@gmu.edu)

**Office Hours:** 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Tues, Thurs

Thomson Hall Room 131

**Phone:** (301)-347-9118 (my number at work)

## **Text books:**

Domjan (1998) The principles of learning and behavior. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Thompson Wadsworth.

Alloway, T, Wilson, G. & Graham, J (2005). Sniffy the Virtual Rat. (pro version 2.0). Thompson Wadsworth.

Additional reading materials will be distributed throughout the semester using the webct.

**Course Objectives:** This course is designed to be an overview of learning principles that guide animal behavior, particularly that of humans. Students will be expected to think critically about recent research findings and theoretical perspectives in the area.

**Grading:** Final grades will be based on a combination of your lecture and laboratory grades. The lecture will count 200 points towards your grade and the laboratory for 100. You will get specific grading information for the laboratory when you attend that class. The combined points from the lecture and laboratory will be reflected on a scale from 0% to 100%.

The letter grades in the class will be assigned with the following scale (percent of the 300 points obtained).

A -- 90% greater

B -- 80 to 89%

C -- 70 to 79%

D -- 60 to 69%

F -- 59% or less

## Lecture section grading:

- 1) There will be two exams during the term. These exams will consist of true/false and multiple choice questions. Each exam will be worth 40 points. There will be a comprehensive final exam. The final exam will count for 65 points.

- 2) There will be up to 5 quizzes during the term. These will be unannounced quizzes given at the start of class and will each have 5 to 10 multiple choice or true/false questions. The quizzes count for 25 points.
- 3) There will be one paper in the course. The paper will count for 30 points. Information regarding the paper will be posted on the webct.
- 4) I will take attendance every class and there will be 10 points awarded for class participation. The class participation points represent "extra" credit points that people can earn.

**So the point count is as follows:**

Term exams	80 points (40% of lecture grade)
Quizzes	25 points (12.5% of lecture grade)
Final Exam	65 points (32.5% of lecture grade)
Paper	30 points (15% of lecture grade)

Participation                      10 points (Extra Credit points)

**Note:** NO makeup exams or quizzes will be provided without a legitimate, documented excuse (e.g., grave illness requiring medical attention, court date). All papers are due at the start of the class on the scheduled date. Late work will be penalized two points for each day beyond the deadline.

**Expectations:** Class participation and discussion are essential for a complete educational experience. Students should be prepared to discuss topical issues related to textbook and readings. Oral defense of ideas is as important a skill as written presentation.

**Honor System:** The Honor Code of George Mason University will be strictly enforced in this course. It is a student's responsibility to be familiar with the Honor Code and to abide by it at all times.

**Special Needs:** If any students have special needs, please let me know on the first day of class.

**Webct:** We will be using the webct for assignments, notes, etc. You need to be able to download and upload papers and presentations to the webct. Make sure that you get any computer or internet problems sorted out at the start of the term.

**Note:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center(DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**Note:**                      *Last day to add - June 14th*                      *Last day to drop - June 21st*

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

<u>Day</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Chapter(s)</u>
6/6	(1) Introduction & Methods	D1,SN1&2 <sup>1</sup>
6/8	(2) Elicited Behavior	D2,SN3&4
6/13	(3) Classical Conditioning - Introduction (Paper: Topic & references due)	D3,SN45&6
6/15	(4) Classical Conditioning - Mechanisms	D4,SN7&8
<b>6/20</b>	<b>EXAM 1</b>	
6/22	(5) Instrumental Conditioning - Introduction (Paper: Detailed outline due)	D5,SN9&10
6/27	(6) Schedules -- Introduction	D6,SN11
6/29	(7) Schedules & Theories of Reinforcement	D6&7,SN12
<b>7/4</b>	<b>NO Class (Holiday)</b>	
7/6	(8) Stimulus Control of Behavior	D8,SN12,13&13
<b>7/11</b>	<b>EXAM 2</b>	
7/13	(9) Extinction & Conditioned Behavior	D9
7/18	(10) Aversive Control (Paper: Final Paper Due)	D10
7/20	(11) Animal Cognition I	D11
7/25	(12) Animal Cognition II	D12
<b>7/27</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>	

---

<sup>1</sup> D is for the book by Domjan, and SN is for the Sniffy book.