

# Psychology 3011: Introduction to Learning and Behavior

Fall Semester 2009

3:35—4:25 MW Smith Hall 100

**Course Objectives:** This course introduces students to the fundamental phenomena and principles of learning and behavior analysis by surveying the major theoretical and empirical approaches of the 20th century. Thus, students acquire an appreciation of the current state of the field by studying the theories and methods that have led to the current state of affairs. Although the content focus is the psychology of learning, the course addresses numerous basic issues in the philosophy of science and critical reasoning that pertain to the entire field of psychology.

**Text:** *Theories of Learning: A Historical Approach*, by John Malone, Wadsworth Group.

## Instructors:

Professor Gail Peterson, S223 Elliott Hall, 612-625-2863; [peter004@umn.edu](mailto:peter004@umn.edu)

Office Hours: M 1:00 - 2:00, Tu 3:00 - 4:00, or by appointment.

Professor Thomas Brothen, S248 Elliott Hall, 612-625-2805; [broth001@umn.edu](mailto:broth001@umn.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment.

**Teaching Assistants:** TAs meet with students in N120 Elliott Hall

Jeff Engelmann      [enge0351@umn.edu](mailto:enge0351@umn.edu)      (office hour posted on web)

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**Webpage:** Students who have registered for the course should go to [www.myu.umn.edu](http://www.myu.umn.edu) and log on with their x.500 and password. Then go to your “myU Space” page, and scroll down to [Psy 3011 - Section 001 - Fall 2009](#). Clicking on that will take you to the course webpage.

**Course Plan:** Psy 3011 is one of several courses undergoing constructive modification of their teaching techniques through the CLA Course Transformation Program (CTP). Because the CTP is ongoing through Fall 2009, Psy 3011 for this semester may be correctly thought of as still being *a work in progress*, and you students may rightly think of yourselves as participating in a venture into new pedagogical territory. The purpose of the CTP is to expand the use of digital technology in teaching, including the broadening of the ways (and “whens”) students engage the subject matter of their courses that the creative use of computer technology makes possible.

For Fall 2009, we have organized the course into 14 weekly “units”. The plan is for the unit process to be the same every week; the subject matter will change, of course. Because the first class meeting of the semester is on a Wednesday (September 9), **we will start each week’s unit on the Wednesday of the week**. Thus, a *unit* runs from Wednesday through Tuesday of the following week, with the next unit starting on the next Wednesday. The various in-class and online activities built into each unit include so many opportunities for you to earn points toward your final grade that it will not be necessary for us to give conventional midterm exams. There will, however, be a final exam, but even that will be somewhat unconventional in that you will take it online in an on-campus computer lab.

Because Psy 3011 has been a highly successful and popular course for decades, one might reasonably infer that the old adage “*if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it*” should apply. However, we sincerely believe that, even though the course will be dramatically different now, the changes we are introducing will result in your getting even more out of it (and enjoying your learning more) than your predecessors did. This is the third semester of this project, and our procedures this term will include practices suggested and endorsed by the previous two terms’ students. We look forward to your helping us make further improvements.

**Unit Procedure:**

- 1. Topic Introduction and Unit Pre-Work (Wednesday = Day 1 of New Unit):**
  - a. Prof introduces new unit topic (15-20 minute introductory lecture in class);
  - b. Student *Unit Pre-Work* (small group discussions **and writing to hand in for points**).
  - c. Student and Prof discussion of *Unit Pre-Work* problem and related issues.
- 2. Online Lecture and Mastery Quiz (Thursday-Monday):**
  - a. Students read textbook and view/study online lecture;
  - b. Complete online *Mastery Quiz (for points) before Monday class time*.  
 This quiz may be taken repeatedly; highest score *before Monday class time* counts.  
*After Monday’s class*, a similar “*Practice Quiz\**” will be available, but for no points.
- 3. Full Unit Discussion and prep for online assessments (Monday class session):**
  - a. Free-form Q&A discussion with Prof (15-20 minutes in class);
  - b. *Unit Post-Work* (small group problem-solving and concepts discussion).
  - c. Student and Prof open discussion of *Unit Post-Work* problem and related issues.
  - d. Online *Unit Matching Task (complete by midnight Tuesday for points)*.
- 4. Online Final Unit Quiz (This 10-point quiz, due before Wed. class, finishes the unit):**
  - a. Must have had 8-10 correct on *Mastery Quiz* (or *Practice Quiz* if you missed *Mastery Quiz* deadline) to be eligible to take the *Final Unit Quiz*.
  - b. Up to 3 takes of *Final Unit Quiz* permitted (*Practice-Quiz* taking between “takes” OK).
  - c. Highest score on *Final Unit Quiz* counts.
  - d. Missed *Final Unit Quizzes* can be made up last week of class.

**Unit point values toward grade:**

<i>Unit Pre-Work</i> (see #1 above) .....	1
<i>Mastery Quiz</i> (see #2 above) .....	2
<i>Unit Post-Work Matching Task</i> (see #3 above) ...	3
<i>Unit Quiz</i> (see #4 above) .....	10
<b>Total Unit Points</b> .....	<b>16</b>

**Total Semester points:**

Unit Points (16 per unit x 14 units)...	224
Final Exam (Proctored online) .....	76
<b>Total Course Points Available</b> .....	<b>300</b>

**Unit Schedule:**

<b>Unit #</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
1	Basic Conceptual Issues: <i>Is Your Mind Made Up?</i>	Preface & Chapter 1
2	E. L. Thorndike: The Original Connectionism	Chapter 2
3	I. P. Pavlov: Classical Conditioning	Chapter 3
4	On the Concept of the <i>Association</i>	Chapter 3 (again)
5	J. B. Watson: The Original Behaviorist	Chapter 4
6	Correlation, Causation, and Consciousness	Chapter 4 (again)
7	E. R. Guthrie: Practical Behaviorism	Chapter 5
8	Clark Hull: Physical Behaviorism (Part I)	Chapter 6 (Pp. 141-163)
9	Clark Hull: Physical Behaviorism (Part II)	Chapter 6 (Pp. 164-187)
10	Edward C. Tolman: Cognitive Behaviorism	Chapter 7
11	B. F. Skinner: Radical Behaviorism (Part I)	Chapter 8 (Pp. 221-247)
12	B. F. Skinner: Radical Behaviorism (Part II)	Chapter 8 (Pp. 247-275)
13	Modern Advances: Theories of Reinforcement	Chapter 9 (Pp. 277-300)
14	Modern Advances: The Rescorla-Wagner Model	Chapter 9 (Pp. 300-317)
“15”	Wednesday, December 16, last day of instruction, general review/Q&A session.	

\**Practice Quiz* results will appear in the online grade book for your information, but will not count toward grade.

**Final Exam:** The Final Exam is an online closed-book exam that must be taken on campus in the public computer lab in Elliott Hall at a prescheduled time under proctored conditions. Sign up for one (or two) of several online final sessions scheduled in the computer lab in Elliott Hall S121 between Thursday, December 17, and Wednesday, December 23. (Note: The centrally-scheduled time for this final, 1:30 pm-3:30 pm, Wednesday, December 23, will be one of the reserved times available.) **You may take this (proctored) online final exam twice, at your own discretion; the two exams will be different from one another, each being made up of a random 76 items drawn from a large item pool. If you take the Final Exam twice, the higher score will count.**

**Grading:** Final grades will be based on the total number of points earned over the 14 units of the course plus the Final Exam (max: 300). Although there is no hard-and-fast rule on grade cutoffs, the history of this course suggests that the final cutoffs will fall between natural clusters *in the vicinities of* 85-100% (255-300) for an A; 75-84% (225-254) for a B; 55-74% (165-224) for a C; 45-54% (135-164) for a D; with 0-44% (0-134) being an F.

Note: “plus” (+) gradations will be employed at instructor’s discretion.

**Please Note:**

The University Senate of the University of Minnesota requires that "every course syllabus shall include the grading standards set forth in the Uniform Grading Policy adopted by the University Senate and the Senate policy on amount of academic work expected per credit."

University Grading Standards

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- A achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- B achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- C achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
- D achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
- S achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.
- F (or N) Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.
- I (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

Academic Dishonesty

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Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course.

Credits and Workload Expectations

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For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. **Thus, a student taking a 3-credit course should expect to spend nine hours a week on coursework.**