

# Fall 2012

## 01:830:311:07 – Conditioning and Learning

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:10 – 9:30 PM, LSH AUD

Instructor

Dr. John Ackroff

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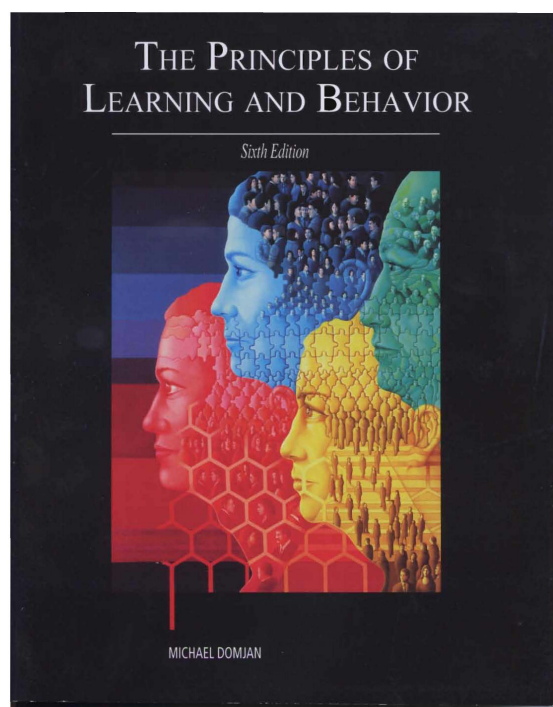
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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00 – 2:30, and by appointment.

### Textbook:



Domjian, M. (2009). *The Principles of Learning and Behavior*. (6th Edition). Cengage Learning. ISBN 1424086086.

Available at New Jersey Books, 37 Easton Avenue, New Brunswick. Copies may also be available at Barnes & Noble.

This is a "Custom Rutgers" softbound version, which is cheaper than the standard text. If you can find a used version of the hardbound version of the 6th Edition, you can use that. The contents are the same.

A copy of the book is on reserve at the Kilmer Area Library.

### About Conditioning and Learning – Course Goals:

In this course we will discuss the basic principles of how we influence behavior. We will cover the major paradigms, but will also spend time looking at some "niche" research showing how the classic methods can be refined to create more "real world" situations. This should help you see how you can apply the information discussed in the course to situations outside the classroom. You should also improve your critical thinking skills as a result of taking this course.

## Exams and Grading:

You are expected to comply with Rutgers' [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

There will be three non-cumulative exams based on the text and other materials presented in class. You are responsible for bringing pencils with erasers to each exam. You must also bring your Rutgers ID Card to the exam. Exam scores will be posted in the Gradebook 2 tab on sakai.

The first two exams will consist of 40 multiple choice questions, worth 2.5 points each. The third exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions worth 2 points each.

If you have questions about your score on a Multiple Choice exam, you can discuss them with Dr. Ackroff; you should do this before the next exam.

If you have a schedule conflict with an exam, you may be allowed to take a makeup exam at the discretion of the instructor. You must notify the instructor of your absence **before** the exam is given in order to be allowed to take a makeup. If you miss an exam, you will be allowed to take a makeup exam only if you provide documentation for a valid reason for missing the exam. For absences due to colds, etc., a note from your Health Center or doctor will be acceptable. For more serious issues such as a death in the family or serious health or personal issues, you may present a note from your Dean's office verifying that you missed the exam due to an excused absence. This note should also indicate a reasonable time frame in which you will be able to make up the exam. You should give this note to the instructor within 1 week of your return to class.

If an exam is cancelled or postponed on the day of the exam, there will be a member of the Psychology Department in the room at the scheduled time to make the announcement. Notices posted on doors or the blackboard are likely to be hoaxes.

Grading in this course works differently from most other courses. Final grades will be determined by the total number of questions you answer correctly on the exams and your scores on the essay questions. However, do not think that achieving 90% of the total possible points guarantees you an A.

At the end of the semester, points for all exams are totaled for each student. An absolute frequency distribution of all scores is made. Typically, scores cluster, and there are natural "cut points" in the distribution. The top 20% or so of the students usually do *very* well on everything, and receive an A in the course. The next 25% or so do *pretty* well on everything (or very well on some things and not so well on others), and receive B or B+ for their grade. The next 40% or so do OK, and earn C or C+ grades. The bottom 10 or 15% receive D or F grades.

Extra credit points (see below) are added to the total number of points you score after we determine the cutoffs.

## Practice Exams

will be made available on sakai.

## Extra Credit:

You will have an opportunity to earn extra credit points by taking special forms of the practice exams. This

will be explained when the first Practice Exam is made available.

Note that these are the only opportunities available for extra credit.

## Attendance and Correspondence Policies:

- **Attendance:** You should attend all meetings of all of your classes. My lectures are based on the material in the assigned readings, but may also cover material not discussed in the readings. You are responsible for all of this material.

If you arrive late or must leave before class is over, please sit near a door and try to be as inconspicuous as possible. It is distracting to everyone to have people walking in and out of the classroom during class.

Classes are held according to the schedule below as long as the University is open. If the weather appears to be threatening, you can check the [Campus Operating Status](#) here.

If a class is cancelled, postponed, or moved on the day of class, there will be a member of the Psychology Department in the room at the scheduled time to make the announcement. Notices posted on doors or the blackboard are likely to be hoaxes.

- **Classroom Etiquette:** Please turn off all cell phones, etc., before class begins.

If you wish to use a laptop computer to take notes, that is fine. If you wish to use a laptop computer to surf the web, play games, IM your friends, etc., I would suggest you go to the nearest Student Center. This advice also applies to having side discussions with your classmates, reading newspapers, doing puzzles, etc.

- **Online Etiquette:** The Chat Room on sakai is provided for you to exchange course-related information. Arranging study groups, asking (and answering) questions about the course material, asking for help with notes you may have missed are all legitimate uses of the Chat Room. Making comments about others or their posts is not. Violating this policy will result in your loss of access to ALL sakai resources.
- **Questions:** I encourage you to ask questions during class. If something is unclear, or if you have a question related to the material being discussed, please ask your question then. Chances are that some of your classmates would also like some additional discussion of the topic.
- **Email:** I try to answer email promptly. Having said that,
  - Please use a Subject that gives me some idea what you are writing about. This is especially important if you send mail from an account other than eden. Mail from sexgoddess@aol.com with a subject of "hello" is likely to be considered spam and deleted unread.
  - If you ask me a question whose answer is on the course web page or Syllabus, my reply is likely to say that.
  - If you ask me a question about your standing in the course, please include your name and which course and section you are enrolled in.

- Please re-read the section on "Questions" above. I realize that there are times when you are reviewing notes after class and/or before an exam when you will discover that you have a question. But it is in everyone's best interest for you to ask your questions in class, rather than after the fact, if you have a question while class is in session.
- You are responsible for any announcements, etc., I send to the class via email.

## Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
Tuesday, September 4	Course Introduction	
Thursday, September 6	Introduction	Chapter 1
Tuesday, September 11	Elicited Behavior, Habituation, and Sensitization	Chapter 2
Thursday, September 13	Classical Conditioning: Foundations	Chapter 3
Tuesday, September 18	Chapter 3 cont'd; Autonomic Conditioning	
Thursday, September 20	Classical Conditioning: Mechanisms	Chapter 4
Tuesday, September 25	(No Class)	
Thursday, September 27	Theories of Learning	
Tuesday, October 2	Review	
Thursday, October 4	<b>EXAM I</b>	Chapters 1 - 4 and supplementary material
Tuesday, October 9	Instrumental Conditioning: Foundations	Chapter 5
Thursday, October 11	Applications of Instrumental Conditioning	
Tuesday, October 16	Schedules of Reinforcement and Choice Behavior; Decision Making	Chapter 6
Thursday, October 18	Instrumental Conditioning: Motivational Mechanisms	Chapter 7
Tuesday, October 23	Stimulus Control of Behavior	Chapter 8
Thursday, October 25	Extinction of Conditioned Behavior	Chapter 9
Tuesday, October 30	Reminding and Forgetting	
Thursday, November 1	Optimal Foraging Theory	
Tuesday, November 6	Dietary Selection	
Thursday, November 8	Review	

Tuesday, November 13	<b>EXAM II</b>	Chapters 5 - 9 and supplementary material
Thursday, November 15	Aversive Control: Avoidance and Punishment	Chapter 10
Tuesday, November 20	Comparative Cognition I: Memory Mechanisms	Chapter 11
Thursday, November 22	Infant Learning	
Tuesday, November 27	Motor Learning	
Thursday, November 29	Comparative Cognition II: Special Topics	Chapter 12
Tuesday, December 4	Human Memory	
Thursday, December 6	Language	
Tuesday, December 11	Review	
Thursday, December 20	<b>EXAM III</b> 8:00 - 9:20 PM, LSH AUD	Chapters 10 - 12 and supplementary material

I consider the course materials used for lecture content and the course web page to be my personal intellectual property or the intellectual property of other parties, as identified. I view the sale or purchase of these materials as a violation of copyright laws. You may not record lectures and/or classroom discussion without my express written consent.

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