

Learning PSYC 3321



Connections

Instructor: Dr. Angela S. Kelling, kellinga@uhcl.edu, (281-283-3064)

Contacting Me: Email is **BY FAR** the best way to contact me. I will try to answer all professional/respectful emails within 24 hours, but there are no guarantees. Phone messages and blackboard posts/messages are less reliable ways and not recommended for anything time sensitive.

Class Info: TBD

Office Hours: TBD

Office is in Bayou, 3403

Please send an email to meet so I can reserve the time for you, and we could also meet via video chat or telephone.

Applied Critical Thinking Statement

This course has been authorized by UHCL as an Applied Critical Thinking (ACT) Course which means that in addition to learning about the specified course content, students will be engaged with some or all of the Elements of Thought and Universal Intellectual Standards of critical thinking. The objective of an ACT course is to develop the student's ability to become skilled at analysis and evaluation by applying a set of intellectual tools that may be effectively used across all disciplines (as well as to the student's personal life). Based on the Foundation for Critical Thinking model (<http://www.criticalthinking.org/>), one model of critical thinking involves thinking for a purpose, asking questions, using information, applying concepts, drawing inferences and conclusions, identifying assumptions, anticipating implications and consequences, and recognizing points of view. The Universal Intellectual Standards that are applied to these Elements of Thought of critical thinking in order to develop Intellectual Traits include clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, logic, significance, and fairness.

Using This Syllabus

This syllabus contains most of the information that you need for understanding how the course is organized. If you have a question, **first** check the material in the syllabus and if you still need help, by all means ask.

Required Texts

Powell, R. A., Honey, P.L., & Symbaluk, D. G. (2012). Introduction to Learning and Behavior (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Pryor, K. (2006). Don't Shoot the Dog!: The New Art of Teaching and Training. Any edition will be fine. You may need to buy through half.com or similar sources.

Other: You will be required to purchase a copy of Sniffy, the virtual rat.

Course Description, Objectives, and Expectations

Course Description

PSYC 3321 is an introduction to the historical antecedents and basic principles of contemporary learning theories. It includes an examination of research approaches, behavioral theories and the types of learning that help account for similarity and diversity in the behavior of human and non-human animals. This course focuses on the learning processes of habituation, classical conditioning, and operant conditioning, but will also investigate observational learning. A successful student will develop and utilize critical thinking and evaluation skills to engage with the information and concepts, and make meaningful connections. Additionally, he or she will use the nomenclature associated with learning theories and the research methods used to investigate learning processes and engage in self-reflection to explore how learning theory and the principles of conditioning are related to his or her behavior and the behaviors encountered in daily life.

Central Questions:

How does learning happen?

How can learning theories improve my life?

Central questions represent the purpose of a course. The subject-specific material in this course is organized to answer the two central questions listed above. As you read, listen, and write in this course, occasionally reflect on how the material answers or addresses these central questions.

Fundamental concepts of a course can be thought of as the foundations of a course. They are the scaffolding upon which all other ideas are constructed. If you understand these concepts in a deep, personal, and meaningful way, it will support your learning of all other topics. Ultimately, a thorough understanding of the fundamental concepts of a course should help you explore, in a meaningful way, the central questions of a course. Each reading, lecture, or discussion should be tied back to a fundamental concept. Approaching each presentation of material with a focus on fundamental concepts and central questions will allow you to think critically about learning. You demonstrate mastery of a topic when you think and speak in terms of that course's fundamental concepts. In the context of this course, you are thinking like an expert in learning when you focus on

1. **Past history of conditioning:** The past experiences of any organism will influence their current behavior. In an effort to avoid mentalism to explain current behavior, it is essential to examine the history of associations, reinforcements, and punishments. Exploring these topics with yourself will help you understand what motivates you, and perhaps illuminate a path for self-improvement if desired. You will also be able to explore how you reinforce and punish others, which may improve your relationships, pet ownership, and parenting. I have frequently been told that this class should be required before parenthood.
2. **Temporal relations:** So much of classical and operant conditioning are dependent on temporal relations. We will explore what are the necessary and sufficient conditions for conditioning to take place. Pavlovian time challenges the traditional ideas of contiguity.
3. **Frame of reference:** Frame of reference is an important consideration for explaining behavior. We will encounter this fundamental concept in both classical and operant conditioning. In order to avoid mentalism and circular reasoning, we must define concepts like similarity and reinforcement based on the behavior and not the properties of the object itself. Each organism has perceptual abilities and current states that may influence how the presentation of a stimulus affects their behavior.

Student Learning Objectives (SLO)

1. Demonstrate a *relevant* and *deep* analysis of Conditioning **concepts**.
2. Use *logic* and *clarity* to investigate how **point of view** impacts Learning.
3. Explore Learning **information** with *depth* and *breadth* (connections).
4. Apply analytical thinking to generate *logical* and *accurate* **conclusions** about how organisms Learn.

Assessment

Grade

The lectures and assigned readings as outlined below comprise the examinable material for the course. Much of the material in the assigned reading will not be covered in the lecture, but you are still responsible for such material. Likewise, there may be material covered in lecture that does not appear in the text. You are also responsible for this material unless otherwise noted. Your grade in this course will consist of an accumulation of points from quizzes and assignments.

The grade will consist of the following:

Exam 1= 100

Exam 2= 100

Exam 3= 100

CyberRat: 4 @ 25pts each = 100

Don't Shoot the Dog= 100

Participation= 50

Writing Assignment= 50

Total Possible Points = 600

A default plus/minus grading scale will be used (e.g., 90%+=A's, 80-89.9%=B's, 70-79.9%=C's, 60-69.9%=D's, 59.9% or lower=F). However, I reserve the right to adjust the grades up depending on the distribution of scores, but this adjustment is in no way guaranteed and is unlikely. Grades will never be adjusted downward. Grades will be rounded to nearest tenth at the end of the semester. You have ample opportunities to earn points in this class, so there is no reason why you should not be able to get the grade you want in this class. There is no extra credit or work at the end of or after the semester to bring your grade up.

EXAMS (100 points each):

Student Learning Objectives: 1, 3

There will be three exams, each worth 100 points. They will all be non-cumulative although some material does naturally build on earlier material and some material will be reviewed for comparison purposes. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay and will require applying critical thinking. The exams will be week 7, week 11, and finals week.

CYBER RAT (100 points total) via blackboard:

Student Learning Objectives: 2

There will be four CyberRat assignments described in the CyberRat section of the home page. These assignments involve observing your rat, training it to do a simple behavior, putting the behavior on an intermittent schedule, putting the behavior under stimulus control, and extinguishing the behavior. Each assignment is worth 25 points for a total of 100 points.

DON'T SHOOT THE DOG (100 points) via blackboard:

Student Learning Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4

You are to read Don't Shoot the dog **twice** and write an extensive summary of all major points and an extensive **response** paper (~5 pages). Response means discuss the material (e.g., what you found confusing, what you find applicable, what you found interesting, etc.).

PARTICIPATION (50 points):

You will be given time in class for discussion and activities. You must be present and active to receive points. Bonus points may be assigned based on active class participation (not texting, asking questions, answering questions, etc).

WRITING ASSIGNMENT (50 points total) via blackboard:

Student Learning Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4

- Write proposal for behavior change programs: These could be behavior changes for yourself or someone else (friend, family member, pet, etc.). Each program should incorporate and specify at least two basic principles of behavior discussed in this course. You may elect to increase/decrease the frequency of an existing behavior, establish a new behavior,

or some combination. It will also be important to incorporate the information discussed in the methods and design section of the course when designing your behavior change program. Proposals should be 2-4 pages, typed and double spaced. Each should include an introduction describing the behavior, the person/animal involved and a rationale for changing the behavior, response definitions, response measurement, and the behavior change strategies that would be used. References can and should be provided in cases when they can help develop the proposal. Each behavior change proposal is worth 25 points.

- Review journal articles: You can review articles published in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis or in the Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior. You can use the journals website (http://seab.envmed.rochester.edu/jaba/articles_selected/index.html or <http://seab.envmed.rochester.edu/jeab/toc/jeabTOC.php>) to search for articles on specific topics or to download selected articles. The articles must be full-length research articles (no reports, discussion papers, reviews, etc.). You will need to get the instructor's approval of the articles before beginning. Summaries should be 2-4 pages, typed and double spaced. You will need to include all relevant references, summarize the introduction, the method, the results, and the discussion, and include your reaction to the article. Each journal article is worth 25 points.
- WatchTED talk: You can watch one of the TED talks from the list of selected videos listed at the end of the syllabus, and write a 2-4 page paper. Your paper should, (1) provide a brief **summary** of the content of the video AND (2) discuss how the video **relates to material discussed in this class**. Each video review is worth 25 points.
- Combine options: You can do activities from any two of the options above to combine for a maximum of 50 points (e.g., one behavior change proposal and one journal article, two behavior change proposals, etc).

*******GRADE*******
REPLACEMENT ALTERNATIVE: If you are not happy with your grade, I will allow you to take a grade replacement final exam during final exam week in person. This will be a cumulative test worth 100 points and you will receive the corresponding percentage grade, even if it is lower than the grade you would have received otherwise. If you want to choose this option, you MUST inform me in writing by the 12th week of class. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Critical Thinking Assessment

Student Learning Objective	Excellent	Acceptable	Unacceptable
1: Relevant and Deep analysis of Concepts	Student includes all relevant concepts and provides a deep analysis	Student includes most of the relevant concepts and provides some depth in the analysis	Student leaves out some relevant concepts and lacks depth in the analysis
2: Logically and clearly explore Point of View	Student demonstrates a clear, logical, and accurate analysis of how POV impacts learning	Student demonstrates a mostly clear, logical, and accurate analysis of how POV impacts learning	Student artifact lacks clarity, logic, and accuracy
3: Connections; Information with depth and breadth	Student makes strong and/or numerous connections and demonstrates depth and breadth	Student makes a reasonable level of connections and demonstrates some depth and breadth	Student lacks connections, depth, and breadth in the discussion
4: Logical and accurate Conclusions	Student generates logical and accurate conclusions	Student generates mostly logical and accurate conclusions	Conclusions are not logical or accurate.

Scores for each grade element will be based on an aggregation of each relevant Student Learning Objectives. The following assessment levels will be used

Excellent: 90% and above

Acceptable: 70-89%

Unacceptable: 69% and below

Intellectual Property

Taping lectures or classroom discussions is permitted. However, it is expected that students will request authorization from the instructor to tape a class. Notes and/or tapes of class lectures and discussions cannot be sold.

Students with Special Needs (Disabilities)

If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact [Disability Services](#) at 281-283-2648 or disability@uhcl.edu as soon as possible and complete the registration process. To ensure your accommodations are in place for the entire semester, please request your accommodation letters from Disability Services and provide them to me at the beginning of the semester. The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them.

Writing Center

The UHCL Writing Center offers tutoring assistance on writing projects for students during any stage of the writing process. They offer face-to-face tutoring, along with online assistance through the Center for Online Tutoring (COLT). Students wishing to use the resources provided by the Writing Center may make an appointment by coming in person to SSCB 2105, by calling 281-283-2910, or by visiting our website www.uhcl.edu/writingcenter and clicking "Make an Appointment."

Dropping the Class

November x^h is the last day to drop a Fall 2017 course. Dropping the class must be done officially through the registrar's office. Students who simply stop doing the work and do not officially drop will fail the course.

6-Drop Rule: Students who entered college for the first time in Fall 2007 or later should be aware of the course drop limitation imposed by the Texas Legislature. Dropping this or any other course between the first day of class and the census date (September x, 2017) for the semester/session does not affect your 6-drop rule count. Dropping this or any other course between the census date and the last day to drop a class for the semester/session will count as one of your 6 permitted drops. You should take this into consideration before dropping any course. Visit www.uhcl.edu/records for more information on the 6-drop rule and the census date information for the semester/session.

Incompletes

A grade of Incomplete ('I') may be given at the discretion of the instructor to students who are making satisfactory progress in a course. Incompletes are typically given for emergency situations which occur after the withdrawal date but prior to the end of the semester, and which prevent the student from completing course requirements. When assigning the grade of 'I,' instructors provide students with an Incomplete Grade Contract that outlines the work to be accomplished before the 'I' can be converted to a final grade and specifies a deadline date.

Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make appropriate changes in the syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep updated on course information if he or she is absent.

Courtesy

Respect and be considerate of others in the class. Please be on time. It should go without saying, but turn off all ringers, cell phone, PDA, etc., before entering the class and refrain from talking and texting. Headphones will not be allowed unless medically necessary. If you disturb the class, you may be asked to leave or incur an in-class punishment. Students are expected to be aware of and abide by all rules, regulations, and guidelines of the university and within the Student Life Handbook including but not limited to academic honesty and sexual harassment.

Please keep all communications in a professional manner. Any non-professional communications will be ignored. Please allow for 24 hours for responses by email.

Use of Class Products in Assessment

The University of Houston–Clear Lake may use your artifacts in this class to generate assessment data. Any works used will be used only for educational purposes.

Academic Honesty

Please refer to the UHCL catalog and the Student Life Handbook for the University Academic Honesty Policy for standards of academic honesty. Exams and papers are expected to be your own work, in your own words. No cheating! It is your responsibility to understand what is meant by “academic honesty.” Plagiarism includes using research without citations, or using a created product without crediting the source. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a grade penalty, failure of the course, or possibly suspension from the university. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, be sure to ask. In addition to asking me, there is a really helpful tutorial on what constitutes plagiarism (<https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/choice.html>). I will check the paper using the “SafeAssign” plagiarism detection software, so you will get caught if you plagiarize (NOTE: I have already caught several students, and I WILL likely catch you, too). “I didn’t know I wasn’t supposed to do that,” or “I didn’t mean to” will NOT be legitimate excuses for violating UHCL’s Code of Conduct or the Department of Psychology’s Policies. It is YOUR responsibility to know and to understand the code and the policies.

No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give, or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work to be submitted for credit as part of a course including, but not limited to, examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, and term papers. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic-based information, or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a work product, the source should be duly acknowledged.

All faculty members have access to electronic resources that instantly identify papers containing unoriginal material. These programs are used to promote originality in student work and to deter students from plagiarizing.

Students may not turn in (or modify) a paper from a previous course or use the same paper for multiple courses. Students should meet with their course instructor(s) to clarify their individual policies regarding this matter as well as to ensure violations do not occur. Also, refer to the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for specific guidelines on APA format regarding citations and references.

Tentative Schedule

NOTE: The syllabus can be changed at any time at the discretion of the instructor.

(Any changes to the syllabus will be posted in Blackboard. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of changes.)

Week:	<u>Date:</u>	Chapter	<u>Topic and Assignment (all due start of class)</u>
1		1	Introduction to course and Critical Thinking
2		1	Historical Antecedents and Critical Thinking
3		2	Research Design
4		3	Classical Conditioning: Intro,
5		4	Classical Conditioning: Phenomena, Writing Assignment 1 due
6		5	Classical Conditioning: Applications
7			EXAM 1
8		6	Operant Conditioning: Intro, CR 1 and 2 due
9		7	Operant Conditioning: Schedules, DSTD Paper due
10		8	Extinction & Stimulus Control, CR 3 and 4 due
11			EXAM 2
12		9	Escape, Avoidance, & Punishment,
13		10	Choice, Matching, & Self-Control, Writing Assignment 2 due
14		11	Observational Learning,
15		12	Biological Dispositions,
16			FINAL (EXAM 3)

This syllabus signifies a contract. I, as the instructor, will abide by the guidelines listed above. This removes the possibility of surprise. In return, I ask for assurance that you have read the guidelines in this syllabus as well as abide by them.

PLEASE RETURN THIS TO ME BY THE FIRST EXAM OR YOUR GRADE WILL NOT BE POSTED.

By Signing Below, I acknowledge that I have read this syllabus and will abide by its guidelines.

Print Name and Date

Sign Name