

# Seminar in Learning Section 80

## PSYC 255

Spring 2024 3 Unit(s) 01/24/2024 to 05/13/2024 Modified 01/24/2024

### Contact Information

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Instructor: Susan Snyckerski, Ph.D.

Office Location: DMH 311 (I am not on campus this semester; all communications will be online)

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Please use email via Canvas for contacting me this semester.

Office Hours: Tuesdays 6:15-7:15 p.m. and by appointment (online via Zoom). Email request for zoom link.

Class Days/Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:45-6:00 p.m.

Classroom: Fully Online via Zoom

Prerequisites: Psyc 155 or equivalent

### Course Information

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This graduate seminar will examine contemporary behavior science/analysis and learning theory from a biobehavioral perspective. Topics addressed include the experimental analysis of behavior, research methods in behavior analysis, classical conditioning, operant conditioning, stimulus control, the biological context of conditioning, applied behavior analysis, cultural practices, and substance use and addiction, among others. Theoretical and basic research findings are discussed and demonstrated through real-world applications of behavior science/analysis.

Warning: At times, this class will discuss drug use in great detail in terms of respondent and operant conditioning and treatments for substance use. Those with previous or existing drug problems should be aware of this and consider whether or not exposure to these discussions may serve as triggers for cravings

for drug use and possible relapse. Your instructor is not responsible for any adverse reactions to the course material.

## Course Description and Requisites

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Current problems in learning with primary emphasis on learning theory.

Prerequisite: PSYC 155 (or equivalent).

Letter Graded

## \* Classroom Protocols

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Students should arrive on time and be logged onto Zoom at the start of class. Please mute your microphone unless engaged in class discussion.

All students are expected to attend class and maintain a level of professional and courteous behavior in the classroom. This means arriving to class on time, being prepared for class, and participating in class discussions. Respect for the rights and opinions of others is expected. The free and open exchange of ideas is the cornerstone of higher education, but we must always remain respectful of others, even if we disagree strongly with them. Disagreement is acceptable, but discourteousness is not. Behavior that creates a threatening or harassing environment will not be tolerated. Severe and pervasive disruptions of class activities are a violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. In short, let's all be kind to one another.

Class sessions are not recorded and recording of class sessions is not allowed. Therefore, attendance will be critical to doing well in the course. Many of the lectures are based on material outside of the textbook. Therefore, I will post all lecture slides after class sessions.

## Academic Integrity

### Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>. Students agree that all submitted writing assignments are their own work. Any text-generating software (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism. All work, unless otherwise noted, is expected to be the work of each individual student.

Cheating on exams or other assignments will result in a failing grade (F) *for the course*; a grade of F will be recorded and the student(s) will be reported to the Office of Student Code and Ethical Conduct. Plagiarism on written work will also result in a failing grade for the course.

Note: At the graduate level, violations of academic integrity are especially serious.

## Program Information

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**Program learning outcomes (PLOs)** are skills and knowledge that students will have achieved upon completion of the MA in Research and Experimental Psychology degree. Each course in our curriculum contributes to one or more of these PLOs. The PLOs for the degree are:

1. **Advanced Knowledge Base in Research and Experimental Psychology.** Students completing the Research and Experimental Psychology MA program will be able to demonstrate advanced knowledge of the major theoretical perspectives and research methods across areas of experimental psychology (e.g., Developmental, Social, Cognitive, and Physiological).
2. **Research Skills and Scholarship.** Graduates of our program will possess an advanced level of competence in research methods, statistical techniques, and technical writing skills. Students completing the Research and Experimental Psychology MA program are required to complete a thesis. The thesis will demonstrate:
  - 2.1 creative problem-solving in the design and implementation of empirical research.
  - 2.2 project management skills in the implementation of empirical research.
  - 2.3 advanced competency in the statistical analysis and interpretation of empirical research findings.
  - 2.4 communication (oral and written) of research findings at a professional level.
3. **Career Enhancement.** Students completing the Research and Experimental Psychology MA program will achieve career enhancement through placement in a doctoral program or acceptance of a position requiring a master's in psychology in the public or private sector.

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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### Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

#### Content Goals

- CLO1: Describe the science of behavior, its history, and assumptions.
- CLO2: Describe and explain the processes of reflexive and respondent conditioning
- CLO3: Describe and explain the processes of operant conditioning, including stimulus control, motivating operations, aversive control, and verbal behavior.
- CLO 4: Identify appropriate research method designs for both basic/fundamental research and applied research and the ethical limitations of such designs.
- CLO5: Describe the biological context of conditioning from an operant-respondent interrelationship perspective

#### Critical Thinking Goals

- CLO6: Describe the relationship between fundamental/basic research findings and their application to real-world problems across a variety of settings.
- CLO7: Discuss and describe the evolution of and behavior science approach to verbal behavior (language)
- CLO8: Discuss and describe the three levels of selection: biology, behavior, and culture from a behavior science perspective

### Communication Goals

- CLO9: Present, discuss, and answer questions related to student presentations on course reading materials effectively, efficiently, and at the graduate level.

All outcomes will be assessed via in-class, take-home, and/or online quizzes/activities/writing assignments, presentations, and exams.

## Course Materials

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Madden, G. J., Reed, D.K., & Digennaro Reed, F. D. (2021). An Introduction to Behavior Analysis

Text can be purchased online.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020046783 (print) | LCCN 2020046784 (ebook) | ISBN 9781119126539 (hardback) | ISBN 9781119126553 (pdf) | ISBN 9781119126546 (epub)

This textbook will be supplemented with detailed lecture notes, journal articles, and other topic-related publications and media presentations. All required outside readings will be posted in the Modules link under the relevant Unit.

Students will need reliable access to a computer and to the internet. Writing assignments may require access to the SJSU/King Library PsychInfo databases. More information will be provided in class.

Our Zoom link opens at 4:30 p.m. and class begins at 4:45 p.m. Please mute your microphone during class when we are not engaged in class discussions. Zoom links are posted in the Discussion link, which is pinned to the top of the page.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

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This is a graduate seminar, so I expect you to be attentive in class, participate in discussions, and be fully present during our time together. Preparation is key to success, as such all students are expected to read all course material prior to class and be prepared for class discussions and assignments. The quality of the class will depend, in part, on how well each participant contributes to the work we do in the classroom. If we all are to gain from our efforts, it is very important that everyone comes to class prepared to participate actively in discussion of the issues at hand. Students are particularly encouraged to discover how learning theory relates to their own areas of interest. In-class activities are only for those students present; that is,

there are no make-up opportunities for specific in-class activities except in cases of *documented emergencies*. Thus, be sure to obtain a doctor's note, court notice, accident/police report, and so forth if you must miss class. Inform me as soon as you can of the incident.

If you have to miss a class, please let me know beforehand; if you cannot, inform me as your earliest opportunity to do so. If I have to miss a class, I will post it on Canvas. Therefore, please check our class website prior to each session.

"Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

Assignments for this course are provided below, and additional details will be elaborated upon in class and posted on Canvas.

**Exams:** You will have three exams. Exams may comprise multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions.

**Writing assignments and student-led discussions:** There will be weekly activities. Some of these will be submitted to Canvas prior to the scheduled class period and others will occur in class. Writing assignments and student discussions will consist of thought-provoking questions and critical analysis regarding the material presented in the textbook and posted journal articles.

**Self-Management Project (SMP):** This semester-long project consists of four written reports and a final class oral presentation. Details are provided in class and on Canvas.

Part 1: Proposal

Part 2: Baseline

Part 3: Intervention

Part 4: Final SMP report

Part 5: Oral presentation (Powerpoint or equivalent software)

**Reaction and Critical Response papers:** Prior to selected class sessions, which are noted in this syllabus, students will submit in writing a response to the reading for that class period. These response papers will consist of topics addressed in the reading that students will present to the class for discussion/elaboration/critique. These response papers are fundamental to our class discussions, facilitate dialog, and will count as participation points. In order to earn these points, the papers must be submitted on Monday or Wednesday prior to class by 11:00 p.m. on Canvas and presented in class on Tuesdays or Thursdays. Students may read from their papers in class (i.e., this material does not need to be memorized). In addition, during presentations, each student should be prepared to ask or answer questions posed by their classmates. Additional details are provided in class and on Canvas.

Use of any AI-generated content is prohibited in this course. All written work should be composed independently by each student. Papers will be evaluated by turnitin.com for originality reporting. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

## ✓ Grading Information

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### Grading Information

Your grade will be determined by the total number of points you earn throughout the semester.

#### Grading

3 Exams @ 50 points each	= 150 (33%)
Self-Management Project 3 Reports @25 points each	= 75 (17%)
Final SMP Report @50 points	= 50 (11%)
Oral Presentation of SMP Report	= 25 (6%)
Reaction & Critical Response papers (discussion/participation) 4@25 points each	= 100 (22%)
Article Summary and Critique 1@20	= 20 (4%)
In-class and take-home activities (announced & unannounced)	= 30 (7%)
Total points available	= 450

#### Grading scale:

Points earned	Percent	Letter Grade	Points earned	Percent	Letter Grade
≥ 98	≥ 98	A+	73	73	C
93	93	A	70	70	C-
90	90	A-	68	68	D+
88	88	B+	63	63	D

83	83	B	60	60	D-
80	80	B-	< 60	< 60	F
78	78	C+			

## University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

## Course Schedule

# Psyc 255 / Seminar in Learning, Spring, 2024 Course Schedule

Note that the textbook chapters and other assigned readings should be read by the date listed.

This course will follow the schedule below, but it subject to change with fair notice. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class and posted on Canvas under the “Announcements” link. In the event class has to be cancelled, I will post a notice on Canvas as soon as possible. Please check Canvas every day before class. Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/25	Introduction to the course.
2	1/30  2/1	Self-Management Project (SMP) overview.  Chapter 1: An Introduction to Behavior Analysis

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
3	2/6  2/8	Chapter 2: Understanding Behavioral Research
4	2/13  2/15	Lehman & Geller (2004) <i>Discussion</i>  Chapter 3: Experimental Design in Behavior Analysis  Snyckerski et al. Basic Research with Humans
5	2/20  2/22	Chapter 4: Phylogenetic Behavior and Pavlovian Learning  Classical Conditioning and Drug Use
6	2/27  2/29	<b>Exam 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 from textbook. Chapter: Basic Research with Humans</b>  Chapter 5: Operant Learning I: Reinforcement
7	3/5  3/7	Maple & Segura (2014). Advancing Behavior Analysis in Zoos <i>Discussion</i>  Chapter 6: Operant Learning II: Positive and Negative  Chapter 12: Antecedent Stimulus Control



Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
8	3/12  3/14	Motivating Operations (MOs)  Laraway, Snyckerski, Michael, and Poling (2003)
9	3/19  3/21	A tutorial on the Concept of Motivating operation and its Importance to Application ( <a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2859803/">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2859803/</a> )  Chapter 9: Motivation, Reinforcer Efficacy, and Habit Formation
10	3/26  3/28	Higgins et al. (1991). A Behavioral Approach to Achieving Initial Cocaine Abstinence <i>Discussion</i>  Exam 2: MOs, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, and 12 from textbook
11	4/2  4/4	Spring break
12	4/9  4/11	Chapter 7: Extinction and Differential Reinforcement  Behavioral Treatment for Self-Abuse (The Story of Harry)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
13	4/16 4/18	Chapter 10: Punishment Chapter 11: Complex Contingencies of Reinforcement
14	4/23 4/25	Chapter 14: Verbal Behavior, Rule-Following, and Clinical Behavior Analysis Snycerski et al. (2018). Implications of Behavioral Narratology for Psychotherapy, Help-Seeking Behavior, and Substance Use <i>Discussion</i>
15	4/30 5/2	SMP Presentations
16	5/7 5/9	SMP Presentations

Final Exam: Chapters 7, 8 10, 11, & 13

May 20 Canvas 2:45-5:00 p.m.

Reaction and Critical Responses Papers due by 11:00 p.m. on the following days:

1. Lehman & Geller (2004). Behavior Analysis and Environmental Protection: Accomplishments and Potential for More due February 12 at 11:00 p.m. *Class discussion on February 13*
2. Maple & Segura (2014). Advancing Behavior Analysis in Zoos *Due March 4 Class discussion March 5*

3. Higgins, S. T., Delaney, D. D., Budney, A. J., Bickel, W.K., Hughes, J. R., Goerg, F., & Fenwick, J.W. (1991). A Behavioral Approach to Achieving Initial Cocaine Abstinence *Due March 25 Class discussion March 26*
  
4. Laraway, S., Snyckerski, S., Pradhan, S., & Huitema, B. E. (2019). An Overview of Scientific Reproducibility: Consideration of Relevant Issues for Behavior Science/Analysis *Due April 11*
  
5. Snyckerski, S., Laraway, S., Gregg, J., Capriotto, M., & Callaghan, G. M. (2018). Implications of Behavioral Narratology for Psychotherapy, Help-Seeking Behavior, and Substance Use *Due April 24 Class discussion on April 25*

#### Self-Management Project (SMP)

Proposal: February 15

Baseline: Report March 7

Intervention: Report April 18

Final SMP Report: May 13

Oral Presentation: April 30 and May 2, 7, and 9