

# **ONLINE Psychology 2730**

## **Biological Psychology**

Spring 2009

**Professor's Name:** Dr. Matthew Schmolesky

**Professor's e-mail:** WebCT email via the course website (*or* MSCHMOLESKY@WEBER.EDU) **\*\*This is BY FAR the best way to contact me**

**Professor's Office Phone:** 801-626-8745

**Class Web Site:** <http://www.online.weber.edu/>

**I. Textbook:** Kalat, James. BIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY, 9th Ed., Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2007.

### **II. Web CT – the Course Website**

You are required to become intimately familiar with and use the course website via WebCT: <https://www.online.weber.edu/> I will post all relevant files on this site (e.g. powerpoint files, weblinks, etc.), will host chats and discussions on this site, and you will use this site to access and complete all homework assignments and exams. I will also occasionally email students with announcements. Note that I do not have answers to questions on WebCT technical issues. For technical issues (e.g. having difficulties accessing WebCT or downloading a document) contact computer support by: a) calling 626-7777, *or* b) emailing [csupport@weber.edu](mailto:csupport@weber.edu), *or* (if possible and you prefer it), c) go to Lampros Hall on the Ogden campus. Computer support is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. **NOTE:** Computer difficulty or failure is NOT an excuse for missing deadlines! Test your computer in advance, and work ahead of the deadlines.

### **III. Course Objectives**

- A. To explore the biological basis of human (and animal) behavior from the perspective of scientific psychology and neuroscience.
- B. To introduce students to the field of biological psychology, its different specializations and sub-areas, and methods used in research, teaching and practice. This class covers a wide range of topics including: neuronal signaling, synaptic anatomy and physiology, function and dysfunction of the central nervous system, the biology of sensation and movement, cognitive functions and psychological disorders.
- C. To integrate theories and research with real-life applications so as to make the study of Biological Psychology both interesting and meaningful to the students.
- D. To encourage students to prepare themselves for the real-life application of their degree if they focus upon the biological and physiological aspects of psychology by educating them about different career paths (e.g. clinical, research, industry, etc.).
- E. To appreciate the depth of knowledge currently available concerning the biological basis of behavior and the societal advantages provided by such knowledge in terms of understanding, prediction, and intervention (e.g. through medical and psychological treatment of diseases and disorders).

## IV. Course Grade

### A. Examinations

1. Five exams will be taken during the course of this semester. Each exam is non-comprehensive and your lowest exam score will be dropped. Each of the four exam scores that are counted towards your final course grade will constitute 16% of this grade. Anything in the supplied online materials or assigned textbook materials may be included on an exam. You are **strongly encouraged** to read through all of the supplied materials, think about the issues, discuss them with myself and each other (via the 'discussion' and 'chat' tools) and ask questions as the course continues (not just the day before a homework or exam is due).
2. The fifth and final exam will be taken between April 25 – April 30.
3. All exams will be taken via WebCT. You may NOT make-up any exam that is missed. You have 4 days to take each exam, so please schedule your time wisely. If you have a scheduling conflict, you may schedule to take an exam early at no penalty (you must notify me in advance and in writing to do this). **NO EXAMINATIONS WILL BE GIVEN AFTER THE EXAMINATION PERIOD IS OVER.** Your lowest exam grade will be dropped. If after the 4 preliminary exams you have an A average, you do NOT have to take the last exam. Do well during the semester and you will be rewarded.
4. You may take your exams from nearly ANY computer (not a WSU computer lab). However, you are strongly encouraged to test out your computer in advance to ensure it can load files and images appropriately. Each exam will be TIMED (the amount of time will be listed with the exam, but will typically be 45-60 minutes). All exams are to be taken with no external help (book, notes, other people, etc.). **You are on your honor to make sure each exam represents YOUR knowledge. You will be asked to indicate that you received no outside help for each exam. Violation of this rule will result in a failing class grade and may result in expulsion.** All exams must be completed no later than 11:58PM on the due date. At 11:59 PM, you will not be able to submit your exam and will receive a zero. I will not make exceptions to this rule so be sure to take the exam and submit the exam early.

### B. Homework

Complete the "Practice Homework" as soon as possible to learn how homework assignments and exams are done via WebCT. You will not be able to begin Homework 1 until you have achieved a minimum of 90% on the Practice Homework.

Five homework assignments will be administered throughout the semester; your

lowest scoring homework will be dropped. You have 1 assignment for each exam during the semester. Each homework assignment will be made available on a Monday and you will have until that Saturday to complete it. See homework availability and due dates on the course outline. **YOU MAY TAKE EACH HOMEWORK TWICE, AND ONLY TWICE** (the higher of the two scores will be recorded as your grade for the assignment). I recommend you study in advance and use your first attempt to see how you do without your book or notes. Then work through the questions offline and use your second attempt to get the highest score possible, using all materials and resources. Homework assignments are not timed: you may take as long as necessary to complete it once you begin. However, be sure to save each answer as you go since it is always possible you may be kicked offline by accident. All assignments together count 20% of your final grade. Note that the purpose of the homework assignments is NOT to quiz you on the exact same set of concepts and facts that will be tested on in the exams. While there will certainly be overlap, the exams will draw from additional content and concepts found in your assigned readings and supplementary materials (e.g. powerpoints). Regarding the homework assignments;

**YOU MAY:**

- Use your textbook, notes, and all online resources to help you answer the questions
- Copy and paste the questions into a text file so that you can work through the problems offline
- Help each other regarding the content via discussion or chat postings
- Give pointers regarding where to find answers (e.g. powerpoints, textbook pages, etc.)

**YOU MAY NOT:**

- Simply ask for, or give, an answer to one of your classmates for a specific question.

**C. Writing Assignment**

One writing assignment will be given during the semester. Assignments are due by 11:58PM on March 25 and should be provided as a .doc or .rtf (i.e. rich text format) file attached to an email sent to me on WebCT. The assignment is worth 10 % of your final course grade. Late assignments will be graded as follows: One day late = 10 point deduction; two days late = 20 point deduction. Three or more days late = zero. Plan to turn your assignment in **the day prior to the due date**, just in case you have any problems with computer connections. The assignment is posted on WebCT and you may begin work on it at any time. This is an individual assignment – you may have a friend or colleague read your work to help you spot errors but the work must be your own.

### D. Grading Scale

The course grade will be assigned according to the scale indicated below:

<u>Numeric Score</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
60-66	D
Below 60	E

### V. Course Outline:

<u>CLASS DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READING (pgs)</u>
January 5-24	The Major Issues Nerve Cells and Impulses	Chap. 1 (27) Chap. 2 (21)
January 5 at 12:01am	Practice Homework available	
<b>January 12 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>Practice Homework due</b>	<b>Not graded, but required in order to continue the course and access Homework 1</b>
January 12 at 12:01am	Homework 1 available	
<b>January 17 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>Homework 1 due</b>	<b>WORTH 5% of grade</b>
<b>JAN 21 at 12:01am to JAN 24 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>EXAM 1 (Chaps. 1, 2)</b>	<b>WORTH 16% of grade</b>
January 26 – February 14	Synapses; Anatomy of the Nervous System	Chap. 3 (30) Chap. 4 (40)
February 2 at 12:01am	Homework 2 available	
<b>February 7 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>Homework 2 due</b>	<b>WORTH 5% of grade</b>
<b>FEB 11 at 12:01am to FEB 14 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>EXAM 2 (Chaps. 3, 4)</b>	<b>WORTH 16% of grade</b>
February 17 – March 7	Vision The Other Sensory Systems	Chap. 6 (44) Chap. 7 (35)
February 23 at 12:01am	Homework 3 available	
<b>February 28 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>Homework 3 due</b>	<b>WORTH 5% of grade</b>
<b>MARCH 4 at 12:01am to MARCH 7 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>EXAM 3 (Chaps. 6, 7)</b>	<b>WORTH 16% of grade</b>
March 16 – April 4	Development and Plasticity of the Brain; The Biology of Learning and Memory	Chap. 5 (30) Chap. 13 (32)

March 23 at 12:01am	Homework 4 available	
<b>March 25</b>	<b>Writing Assignment Due</b>	<b>WORTH 10% of grade</b>
<b>March 28 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>Homework 4 due</b>	<b>WORTH 5% of grade</b>
<b>APRIL 1 at 12:01am to APRIL 4 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>EXAM 4 (Chaps. 5, 13)</b>	<b>WORTH 16% of grade</b>
April 6-24	Cognitive Functions Psychological Disorders	Chap. 14 (36) Chap. 15 (32)
April 13 at 12:01am	Homework 5 available	
<b>April 18 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>Homework 5 due</b>	<b>WORTH 5% of grade</b>
<b>APRIL 25 at 12:01am to APRIL 30 at 11:58pm</b>	<b>EXAM 5 (Chaps. 14, 15)</b>	<b>WORTH 16% of grade</b>

**NO CLASSES: January 19, February 16, March 9-13**

## **VI. Additional Information**

### **A. Discussion and Chat Sessions**

Participation in discussion and chat sessions online is not required for this class but is **STRONGLY** encouraged and will be monitored. Each of you may have questions that other students, or I, can answer and other students can benefit from. Thus, it is in everyone's best interest to post questions and answers using the 'discussion' and 'chat' tools.

### **B. Have a Question?**

**\*\*IF** you are confused or unsure about any technical details (i.e. pop-up blockers, cookies, Java, getting a file to load, etc etc) you should: contact computer support by: a) calling 626-7777, *or* b) emailing [csupport@weber.edu](mailto:csupport@weber.edu), *or* (if possible and you prefer it), c) go to Lampros Hall on the Ogden campus. Computer support is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You might also try posting a chat or discussion question to see if one of your classmates has a quick fix.

**\*\*IF** you are confused or unsure about any of the Biopsych materials or concepts in the course, you should:

- Read and think about it first. Problem-solving on your own is the best way to learn material and develop confidence.
- Then use the chat tool or discussion tool to see if another student knows the answer. I also read the chats and discussions and will respond if needed.
- If you still have a question, email me through WebCT or call me at my office.

### **C. Class Courtesy**

Please be courteous in any email, discussion, or chat postings you make. Any disruptive behavior will be addressed immediately. **Students repeatedly engaging in rude behavior will be counseled to drop the course.**

#### **D. Grade Appeals**

If, after receiving an homework or exam grade, you think a mistake has been made in the grading of **your** exam, please do not ask about this during a general discussion or chat session. Email me directly regarding your specific questions and provide reference to the online materials or specific pages from the book. You will receive a response, and any grade adjustment necessary, within one week. **THIS IS THE ONLY WAY** that your concerns will be addressed. **ONLY** written questions and comments **THAT YOU SUPPORT** will be evaluated.

#### **E. Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism/Cheating**

I encourage students to work and study together whenever possible. **However, students must hand in their own work.** Whenever you try to pass off someone's work that is not your own, that is cheating. If you cheat on ANY assignment, you will receive a grade of **E (Failing) for the course**. Plagiarism is when you represent someone else's ideas or words as your own. For a very detailed description of plagiarism, please go to the web site and review the PLAGIARISM description. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Please refer to the following web site for a complete listing of infringements that constitute cheating:  
<http://documents.weber.edu/ppm/6-22.htm>.

#### **F. Students with Disabilities**

Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Contact information may be found at: <http://departments.weber.edu/ssd/>

#### **G. Students' Rights and Responsibilities**

Please refer to the following web site for a complete listing of all WSU student rights and responsibilities: <http://documents.weber.edu/ppm/6-22.htm>

### **VII. Grade Record**

Please keep a record of the grades you receive on each assignment. You may access your grades using the MY GRADES tool on WebCT. Your grades will be posted immediately after you submit a homework or exam.

**NOTE: The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course.** I am committed to following the syllabus but there is no guarantee that I will. Altering the syllabus may also mean changing the nature or timing of exams/assignments. **By continuing in the course after reading the syllabus, you are indicating that you accept the terms of the syllabus.** March 6 is the last day to drop with a W.