PSYC 7140. LEARNING AND CONDITIONING

COURSE SYLLABUS
Christopher Newland, Ph.D.
(Fall, 2007)

Course: PSYCH 7140. Learning and Conditioning
Prerequisites: Graduate Standing or permission of instructor.
Meeting Times: Room 202 Thach Hall
              MW 1500 – 1615.
The fourth edition (1998), which is available as a used text, is also
acceptable, but get "addenda" from classmates.
Additional Readings.
Instructor: M. Christopher Newland, Ph.D.
GTA: Josh Johnson. 844-3295. johnsj8@auburn.edu
Office Hours: M W 1:00-3:00 or by appointment.
Phone: 844-6479 (office), 844-3295 (lab)
E-mail: Chris.Newland@auburn.edu

Overview and Course Objectives. We will examine the roles that the consequences of
behavior, and the context in which behavior occurs, play in its acquisition, maintenance, and
structure. We will cover basic principles of operant and respondent conditioning and how they
play out in forming the behavior of human and non-human species. Topics will include response
differentiation and induction, discrimination, generalization, the formation of complex response
units, stimulus equivalence, choice, molecular determinants of behavior, the dynamics of
behavior during transition states, some mathematical models of behavior, and verbal behavior.
By the end of the course I expect you to have an understanding of the fundamentals of operant
and respondent behavior, to appreciate how basic research in the laboratory contributes to this
understanding, and to identify these processes in behavior.

Course Structure. We will cover Chapters 1-15 and Chapter 21 of Cantania's text. In addition
there will be readings drawn from the primary and secondary literature to supplement and
update the material in the in the text. These readings will be available on Blackboard.

Course Correspondence: The best way to contact me is through e-mail. From time to time, I
will correspond with the class via e-mail. Auburn University recognizes e-mail as an official
communication tool within the university. Therefore, students are responsible for checking their
university e-mail accounts on a regular basis and for any information communicated through this
medium.

Evaluation. Course grade will be a simple average of all the exams. The final exam will not be
comprehensive, but will cover the last portion of the course. cipation. Up to three points on the
final grade.

--submit examples. This will be done on an ad-hoc basis. Each example will count as 0.25
points toward your final grade.

Class Attendance: You are expected to attend class, participate, and ask questions.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes,
but is not limited to, copying answers from someone else's work. All incidents of academic
dishonesty will be dealt with according to the rules outlined in the Tiger Cub (see http://web6.duc.auburn.edu/tigercub/rules/section4.pdf). **If you have any question as to** whether an activity constitutes academic dishonesty, please discuss it with me immediately.

**Make-Up Policy:** Make-up work will be administered according to the policy outlined in the Tiger Cub and articulated below. Contact Erin Pesek for arrangements. This policy pertains to exams and any other work missed due to a university-approved absence:

“Arrangement to make up missed major examinations (e.g. hour exams, mid-term exams) due to properly authorized excused absences shall be initiated by the student within one week from the end of the period of the excused absence. Normally, a make-up exam shall occur within two weeks from the time that the student initiates arrangements for it. Instructors are encouraged to refrain from giving make-up examinations during the last three days prior to the first day of final examinations. The format of make-up exams and opportunities for students to make up work other than major examinations are at the discretion of the instructor whose make-up policies should be stated in writing at the beginning of the term.”

This policy, along with a list of university-approved absences, is provided in the online version of the Tiger Cub at http://web6.duc.auburn.edu/tigercub/rules/section1.pdf.

Make-ups for non-university-approved absences will be given at the discretion of the instructor. Work made up under these circumstances will automatically lose 20% of the total number of points available for the activity. If you fail to show up for ANY scheduled make-up activity without notifying me in advance (including make-ups due to university-approved absences), you will receive zero points for that assignment.

You must provide a written, signed excuse for missing class if you want to make up missed work for full credit. This excuse must be turned in to Erin Pesek before you will be allowed to make up any missed assignments.

**Students with Disabilities.** Students with a disability documented by Auburn's Program for Students with Disabilities should schedule a meeting with me early in the term. I will work with the student to meet the accommodations recommended by the Program for Students with Disabilities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Week Number</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Additional Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 Aug 07</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Learning and behavior</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>(submit examples)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>A behavior Taxonomy</td>
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<td>27 Aug 07</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Evolution and behavior</td>
<td>3, 4, 5</td>
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<td>Elicited and emitted behavior</td>
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<td>Consequences of responding: Reinforcement</td>
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<td>3 Sep 07</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No class on Monday. Labor Day. Consequences of responding: Aversive</td>
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<td>control.</td>
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<td>10 Sep 07</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Aversive control, con't.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 Sep 07</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Operants, continued</td>
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<td>[5, 6]</td>
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<td>1 Oct 07</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Discriminated operants, Stimulus control. Conditional discrimination,</td>
<td>8, 9</td>
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<td>stimulus equivalence.</td>
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<td>8 Oct 07</td>
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<td>Discriminated operants, con't</td>
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<td>Exam 2.</td>
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<td>15 Oct 07</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Schedules of reinforcement</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[10, 11]</td>
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<td>Schedule combinations.</td>
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<td>22 Oct 07</td>
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<td>Behavioral momentum</td>
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<td>[12, 13]</td>
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<td>Matching and choice</td>
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Matching and choice (Con’t)  

Behavioral economics. Respondent conditioning

5 Nov 07  12  [16]  [17]  [18]

Respondent conditioning (con’t)

EXAM

Neurotox conference.

12 Nov 07  13  [19]  [20]

19 Nov 07  14

Thanksgiving.

26 Nov 07  15  14, 15

Verbal behavior

3 Dec 07  16  [21]  [22]  [23]

Acquisition of choice.

Ideal Free distribution.

Time permitting.

12 Dec 07  Final Exam, 11:00.


