Psychology 623 Experimental Analysis of Behavior

Course: Psychology 623 (Lecture) and 651 (Laboratory/Prepracticum)
Instructor: James T. Todd, Ph.D.
Course Time: 651 (5:30-6:30 pm) Monday
623 (6:30-9:10 pm) Monday
Room Number: 519 Mark Jefferson Hall
Final Exam: Monday, April 19, 2005, regular class time
Office: 532 Mark Jefferson
E-mail: james.todd@emich.edu
Websites: http://people.emich.edu/jtodd
Phone: 734-487-0376
Office Hours: To be announced.

Course Objectives

This pair of courses comprise an introduction to the basic assumptions, techniques, practices, and findings associated with the experimental analysis of behavior. Through readings, class discussion, and laboratory exercises, the student will become conversant in the basic features of the experimental analysis of behavior as it is currently practiced. The topics covered will range from simple behavioral phenomena, such as reflex habituation, to complex human verbal behavior and cognition. Although certain advanced topics in conditioning and learning will be covered, the instructor will emphasize basic processes such as classical conditioning, operant conditioning, stimulus control, escape, avoidance, response shaping, and recall. Special emphasis will be placed on experimental design, interpretation of the results of experiments, and on experimental findings and techniques that have direct relevance to contemporary applied behavior analysis and behavior therapy. For successful completion of the course student will be expected to participate constructively in class discussions, correctly answer questions on quizzes and examinations, successfully compete all laboratory exercises, and provide input for further discussion.

Lecture

The lecture section (Psychology 623) is officially designated an independent course, but it will be conducted in concert with the laboratory section (Psychology 651). It will consist of a series of lectures designed to emphasize the fundamental principles and methods of the experimental analysis of behavior. The lectures will reinforce, and sometimes reproduce, material in the textbooks. However, unless instructed specifically otherwise, the student will be responsible for all material in the textbooks, even if that material is not covered in lecture.

Laboratory

The laboratory/prepracticum section (Psychology 651) is officially designated an independent course and may be taught by a different instructor. It will consist of a series of graded laboratory exercises in which the student will employ reinforcement contingencies to reproduce a variety of standard behavioral phenomena in laboratory rats. Specific information and handouts about laboratory exercises will be given during the course. Students who have objections to the use of laboratory animals for the purposes described above and are not enrolled in the Clinical Behavioral Psychology Program need not enroll in the laboratory section. This option is not available to students in the Clinical Behavioral Program for whom this course is a long-standing, published program requirement.

Assignments

Each week, unless announced otherwise, the student will complete an assignment over the material covered up to day the assignment is due. If a grade of at least 65% is earned, the student will have one (and only one) opportunity to correct the incorrect answers by the next class period.
Examinations

Unless announced otherwise, a weekly quiz will be conducted. These quizzes will consist of approximately ten essay, short answer, or multiple-choice questions and take approximately 15 minutes to complete. These quizzes will be offered online. Students who miss no more than three questions may have one (and only one) opportunity to correct the incorrect answers by the next class period.

Project

Each student will conduct a psychological experiment to be used as the basis of their final paper. The project may be an original experiment or a replication of previously established study and it must demonstrate or replicate a substantive behavioral principle. The experiment may involve human or animal behavior. Additional information on this project will be given in class.

Papers

A final paper in the form of a psychological research report, based on the project described above will be due on the day scheduled for the final examination. This paper must be in current APA style, with an appropriate data presentation. (This is a minimum requirement, not the criterion for a passing grade.) Additional details on this paper will be given in class.

Grading

Each section of this course is graded separately. Thus, the grade earned in Psychology 651 will have no direct effect on the grade earned in 623. It is possible, therefore, to fail one section, but pass the other.

623 Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly assignments</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>(lowest 1 score dropped)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly quizzes</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>(lowest 1 score dropped)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project/Paper</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>of total grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Scales

Test and Assignment Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100.0-93.0%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93.0-90.0%</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89.9-86.6%</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86.5-83.0%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.0-80.0%</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Lower grades by same scale.)

Enrollment Policy

Concurrent enrollment in Psychology 651 is not required of students who are not enrolled in the Clinical Behavioral Psychology program, but because most laboratory exercises are designed to correspond with and reinforce the material being covered at the same time in Psychology 623, concurrent enrollment is strongly recommended. Students who enroll in Psychology 623 without also taking 651 are advised that their performance in 623 will be assessed by the same criteria as the performance of students enrolled in both courses.

Animal Care

Although the instructor has primary responsibility for the care of the animals used in this course, the students will be required to provide care for the animal assigned to them as specified by the instructor. This care will include, but may not be limited to, feeding, weighing, and record keeping. Students will be responsible for immediately reporting to the instructor or his assistant any problems they notice with the health or well being of the animal.
assigned to them. Students who expose their rat to any mistreatment including, but limited to, aversive stimuli, injury, potentially injurious conditions, severe food deprivation, neglect, or improper handling, will, at the discretion of the instructor, be subject to such disciplinary action as provided for by Department and University Policy.

Make-ups

Make-up quizzes, tests, and assignments will be arranged only for those students who provide valid, overriding medical or personal reasons for missing a scheduled requirement. If you know beforehand you will miss a scheduled requirement, inform the instructor as soon as possible. Documentation verifying a valid reason for the absence from the test may be required in any case a make-up is arranged. Make-ups will be conducted at a time convenient for the instructor.

Attendance

Attendance in this course will not be recorded or graded. However, since the examinations will cover lecture material and important announcements may be made at any time regarding issues such as reading assignment changes, class cancellations, and examination coverage, attendance at every class meeting is encouraged. Furthermore, unless you provide an overriding medical or personal reason for missing a scheduled course meeting (see make-ups), you will receive a grade of 0 (zero) for any in class exercises and quizzes conducted that day. The examinations and quizzes missed as the result of unexcused absence will be counted against the two grade drops allowed for quizzes and assignments.

Websites

Readings and other course materials may be posted on the instructor’s websites. Downloadable materials will typically be available in .pdf (Portable Document Format) or as HTML text which can be copied directly from the website. The instructor can create files in most popular wordprocessing formats including Microsoft Word, Clarisworks, Corel WordPerfect, Microsoft Works, and WordStar. Some large items may be compressed as StuffIt (.sit) files or Zip (.zip). If your computer does not automatically decompress files, contact the instructor for assistance.

Communicating with the Instructor

E-mail is a good way to communicate with the instructor. Assignments may be sent to the instructor by e-mail. The assignment may be in text form within the body of the e-mail message or incorporated as an attachment. The instructor can accept e-mail attachments in most standard word processing formats including Microsoft Word, ClarisWorks, AppleWorks, Corel WordPerfect, Microsoft Works, and even WordStar.

Final Exam

This course has a final examination scheduled for Monday, April 19, 2005 at the regular class time.

Cheating

University and Department policies with respect to academic dishonesty and cheating will be followed and enforced.

Student Requests

Requests for make-up tests, grade changes, extensions, special grades, etc. should be made in a timely manner directly to the instructor. The instructor may require supporting documentation consistent with Department and University policies.

Syllabus Changes
Unforeseen events may occasion changes in any aspect of this course. The instructor may make changes in the course schedule, requirements, test dates, readings, and any other aspect of the course. These changes will be announced in class or posted at a location accessible to students.

Class Cancellations

Class meetings may be cancelled by university authorities or by the instructor. Cancellations will be announced in as timely a manner as possible. Assignments due on the day of the canceled class may be turned in at the next scheduled class meeting.

Special Needs

Students who have a disability and require an interpreter or other forms of assistance should inform the instructor of their needs in a timely manner and include necessary supporting documentation. The instructor and university will attempt to make any necessary and reasonable accommodations. Neither the instructor nor university can anticipate all special needs or make accommodations if not informed of their necessity in a timely manner.

Other policies

Please refer to official university publications, especially the class schedule and graduate catalog, for questions regarding enrollment, registration, schedules, adds, drops, grading options, and other policies.
Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

(1/10): No reading

Week 2: Martin Luther King Holiday Recess

(1/17) University open, but no classes.

Week 3: Basics of Experimental Science--Terms and Concepts

(1/24): Experimental Analysis of Behavior (Ch. 2, pp. 27-51)
Additional Readings to be announced.

Week 4: Reflexive and Respondent Behavior.

(1/31): Reflexive Behavior and Respondent Conditioning (Ch. 3, pp. 53-81)

Week 5: Psychophysics and Scaling

(2/7): Reading to be supplied.

Week 5: Basics of Operant Behavior

(2/14): Reinforcement and Extinction of Operant Behavior (Ch. 4, pp. 83-115)

Week 6: Schedules of Reinforcement

(2/21): Schedules of Reinforcement (Ch. 5, pp. 118-148)

Week 7: Winter Recess

(2/28) No classes

Week 8: Aversive Control of Behavior

(3/7): Aversive Control of Behavior (Ch. 6, pp. 153-181)

Week 9: Operant/Respondent Interactions

(3/14): Operant-Respondent Interrelationships (Ch. 7, pp. 183-207)
Week 10: Stimulus Control
(3/21): Stimulus Control (Ch. 8, pp. 208-234)

Week 11: Choice and Preference
(3/28): Choice and Preference (Ch. 9, pp. 235-269)

Week 12: Conditioned Reinforcement
(3/28): Conditioned Reinforcement (Ch. 10, pp. 270-294)

Week 13: Imitation and Rule-Governed Behavior
(4/4) Correspondence Relations… (Ch. 11, pp. 295-323)

Week 14: Verbal Behavior
(4/11): Verbal Behavior (Ch. 12, pp. 324-357)

Week 15 The application of EAB principles to behavior problems (continued)
(4/18): Applied Behavior Analysis (Ch. 13 pp. 358-390)

Week 16: Final Examination Period
(4/25) Applied Behavior Analysis (Continued)