

Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 2240 3.0 Section M: BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF BEHAVIOUR
Friday | 11:30am-2:30pm | Curtis Lecture Hall E
Winter/2024

Instructor and T.A. Information

Instructor: Achala H. Rodrigo, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Prerequisite: Course prerequisites are strictly enforced.

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology).

Course Credit Exclusions

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

Course website: [eClass](#)

eClass will be your central access point for course materials, including the electronic textbook and related activities (i.e., Achieve). All course materials will be available on the course site on eClass, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the biological determinants of behavior, drawing upon classic and cutting-edge research in neuroscience. An overview of the human nervous system and its components will be provided, as well as how it relates to sensation, perception, movement, emotion, and neurocognitive functions. Clinically relevant research and case examples will be integrated with the material throughout the course to better illustrate brain-behavior relationships in healthy states and in the context of illness and injury.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a foundational understanding of the human nervous system.
2. Demonstrate broad knowledge of biological determinants of behaviour.
3. Describe and evaluate current theory and research in biological psychology.
4. Understand and interpret principles of biological psychology in everyday life.

Required Text

- Kolb, Wishaw, & Teskey. (2023). *Introduction to Brain and Behavior* (7th edition)

The electronic version of the textbook and access to the accompanying Achieve platform will be available via Day1Digital. The bookstore will carry the loose-leaf version of the printed textbook, which can be purchased as an add-on at an additional (nominal) fee.

A few copies of the textbook will also be made available for short-term loan through the library.

eClass will serve as the primary hub through which students can access their e-textbook and the Achieve platform (which contains the LearningCurve assignments).

Course Structure

This is primarily a lecture-based course, but students will also be required to complete interactive online activities. Videos, podcasts, and/or internet resources may be used by the instructor to facilitate learning and in-class discussion. Short breaks will be provided over the course of the 3-hour lecture, as determined by the instructor.

All course communication will take place through eClass. This includes posting of all course information, access to the textbook/electronic resources, and any necessary changes or announcements. Therefore, please monitor eClass regularly. (Please note that, in the unlikely scenario where eClass is unavailable, the instructor or TAs will communicate via email.)

A portion of class activities will take place through Achieve – the textbook publisher’s (MacMillan’s) online learning platform that is associated with the required course textbook.

You are encouraged to email their TAs and/or visit the TAs during their office hours for any and all course related questions. TAs will be your primary resource for working through course challenges. Students may also contact the instructor by e-mail with questions or to schedule a meeting. Please note that email responses may take at least two business days.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Mid-Term Exam 1	October 5th	30%
Mid-Term Exam 2	November 9th	30%
LearningCurve Assignments	(Please see lecture schedule below)	10%
Final Exam	TBD (during final exam period)	30%
Total		100%

Exams grades will consist of approximately 80% multiple choice questions and 20% short-answer questions. Mid-term exams and the final exam are weighted equally and are non-cumulative. Exam questions will incorporate textbook material as well as material that is discussed in class. Therefore, **regular attendance will be important for excelling in this course.**

Mid-Term Exam 1 – 30%

Chapters 2-6 will be covered, as well as any additional materials presented in lectures 2a-4 (Week 2-4). The exam will be in class for 2.5 hours.

Mid-Term Exam 2 – 30%

Chapters 7-11 will be covered, as well as any additional materials presented in lectures 5a-7 (Week 7-9). The exam will be in class for 2.5 hours.

Final Exam – 30%

Chapters 12-16 will be covered, as well as any additional materials presented in lectures 8a-10 (Week 11-13). The final exam will be held during the scheduled exam period (December 7-20, 2023). Date, time, and location of the final exam TBD.

Weekly LearningCurve Activities – 10%

LearningCurve is designed to be a fun, interactive learning tool with an adaptive quiz component. The goal is to help students self-evaluate their knowledge, and achieve a richer and more in-depth learning experience.

This will be a weekly activity (Starting in Week 2) that is required to be completed after the lecture. LearningCurve assignments for each chapter will become available the day of the lecture and will be open until the day of the respective exam. For example, LearningCurve assignments for Chapter 2 will become available on September 14, 2023 and will be open till October 5, 2023 (the day of Mid-Term Test 1).

A total of 30 LearningCurve assignments will become available as we progress through the weekly lectures. Students are required to complete at least **25** of the 30 LearningCurve assignments (students may choose to skip 5). Each completed LearningCurve activity will be awarded 0.25 marks (for a total of 10% of the final grade, when 25 LearningCurves assignments are completed). Given that 5 LearningCurve assignments can be missed without penalty, there will be no make-ups for this activity.

Missed Mid-Term Exams

For any missed exam, students **MUST** complete the following online form **within 48 hours** of the missed exam. which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office. At this time, due to COVID-19 an Attending Physician's Statement (APS) is not required, however, a reason for missing an exam in the course must be provided.

Link to the online form: [HH PSYC: Missed Tests/Exams Form](#)

Once the above form has been completed within the aforementioned timeframe, students will be provided with information regarding a make-up exam in the context of the missed test. Please note that the make-up exam will be similar in structure to the original exam, but not in content.

Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the missed quiz or late assignment.

Missed LearningCurves

As previously mentioned, given that 5 LearningCurve assignments can be missed without penalty, there will be no "make-ups" for this activity.

Class Format and Attendance Policy

Classes will be conducted in person on **Thursdays** from **11:30AM to 2:30PM in Curtis Lecture Hall E**. While there is no formal attendance policy, please note that regular attendance will be important for excelling in this course.

Grading as per Senate Policy

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 89, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar – [Grading Scheme for 2023-24](#)

Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to [Undergraduate Fall/Winter 2023-2024 Important Dates](#)

	Fall (Term F)	Year (Term Y)	Winter (Term W)
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	September 20	September 20	January 22
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	September 28	September 28	January 31
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	November 8	February 8	March 11
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)	November 9 – December 5	February 9-April 8	March 12-April 8

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

You may [withdraw from a course](#) using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as 'W'. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.

Electronic Device Policy

Electronic devices (e.g., tablets, laptops) are permitted during class time for course-related purposes. Please be responsible when using your devices so as to not disrupt the learning experience of others.

No devices are allowed during examinations (unless authorized by the instructor prior to the exam).

Academic Integrity for Students

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#)

Test Banks

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as “Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation” (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or “encouraging, enabling or causing others” (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The university encourages students with disabilities to register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors as necessary. Please let me know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course.

<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

Excerpt from Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

- Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.

All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs. For further information please refer to: [York University Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC2240 course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted

materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

Lecture Schedule and Deadlines

12-Jan	Week 1	Course overview Introductory Lecture	(Ch 1)
19-Jan	Week 2	Lecture 2a Lecture 2b	Ch 2 Ch 3
26-Jan	Week 3	Lecture 3a Lecture 3b	Ch 4 Ch 5
2-Feb	Week 4	Lecture 4 Review (Lecture 2a - Lecture 4)	Ch 6 Ch 2 - Ch 6
9-Feb	Week 5	Mid-Term Exam 1 **LearningCurves for Ch2 - Ch6 due!**	Ch 2 - Ch 6
16-Feb	Week 6	Lecture 5a Lecture 5b	Ch 7 Ch 8
23-Feb	Week 7	Reading week (No Class)	N/A N/A
1-Mar	Week 6	Lecture 6a Lecture 6b	Ch 9 Ch 10
8-Mar	Week 9	Lecture 7 Review (Lecture 5a - Lecture 7)	Ch 11 Ch 7 - Ch 11
15-Mar	Week 10	Mid-Term Exam 2 **LearningCurves for Ch 7 - Ch 11 due!**	Ch 7 - Ch 11
22-Mar	Week 11	Lecture 8a Lecture 8b	Ch 12 Ch 13
29-Mar	Week 12	Lecture 9a Lecture 9b	Ch 14 Ch 15
5-Apr	Week 13	Lecture 10 Review (Lecture 8a - Lecture 10)	Ch 16 Ch 12 - Ch 16
05-Apr		**LearningCurves for Ch 12 - Ch 16 due!**	
TBD (final exam period)		Final Exam	Ch 12- Ch 16