

BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF BEHAVIOUR

Psyc 2240, Section A
Fall Term, 2015
Tuesdays, 8:30-11:30
Curtis Lecture Hall F

Instructor

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Prerequisites: AK/AS/HH/SC/PSYC1010 6.0 or AK/PSYC2410 6.0 with a minimum grade of C

Textbook: Biological Psychology, 12th Edition

James W. Kalat

ISBN-10: 1305105400 | ISBN-13: 9781305105409

Course Objectives:

This course will explore the physiological, developmental, and evolutionary mechanisms of behaviour. The course will begin by exploring how the brain works at the neuronal and synaptic level and will continue with the biological basis of behaviours related to vision, audition, movement, and reproduction in typical and atypical populations.

Course Format:

This course has one three hour lecture per week that will include lecture material, audio-visual demonstrations, and videos.

There will be four TA office hours per week. The TAs and instructor are available to help you with the course material. Please make use of the TA office hours whenever possible, particularly for detailed questions that cannot be answered easily by email. You may email your questions to

either TA and attend the office hours of either TA. If the TAs are unable to help you with a particular question, please contact the course instructor.

There will be three exams that will be based on textbook readings and lecture material.

Grading:

The grading scheme conforms to York University’s 9-point grading system (see below). For a full description of York’s grading system, please see the York University Undergraduate Calendar.

| <u>Percentage</u> | <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>Percentage</u> | <u>Letter Grade</u> |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 90+ | A+ | 60-64.9 | C |
| 80-89.9 | A | 55-59.9 | D+ |
| 75-79.9 | B+ | 50-54.9 | D |
| 70-74.9 | B | 40-49.9 | E |
| 65-69.9 | C+ | 0-39.9 | F |

Grades will be based on three exams.

| Test | Date | Value | Format | Content* |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|--|-------------------|
| Exam 1 | Oct 13 | 40% | Multiple choice & short answer questions | Topics 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| Exam 2 | Nov 10 | 40% | Multiple choice & short answer questions | Topics 5, 6, 7 |
| Exam 3 | Dec 1 | 20% | Multiple choice & short answer questions | All topics |

**The exams will comprise information from lectures and the textbook readings. Please see the schedule of lectures and readings on the last page of this syllabus for the chapters that correspond to each topic.*

Because of class size, it may not be possible to hand back exams in class. If you wish to receive your exam, please visit the TA responsible for your last name (see page one of syllabus for alphabetical division) during office hours.

Missed Exam Procedure:

To be fair to all students, there will be no makeup exams except under unavoidable, extraordinary circumstances. Allowable circumstances include sickness, an accident, or family misfortune that requires an urgent response. Vacation, work, other scheduled tests, or community obligations are not acceptable reasons to miss or defer an exam.

If you miss an exam because of extenuating circumstances as described above, you must contact your TA within 24 hours. Please email the TA who oversees your last name (see first page of the syllabus for the alphabetical divisions). In your email, please include the course code, your full name, and your student number. Please outline the reason for your absence, and confirm that

you have or will have the appropriate documentation to support it. If you are unable to contact your TA within 24 hrs, please contact him/her as soon as possible and provide the reason for the delay.

Documentation for Missed Exams

You will need to bring documentation that corroborates your reason for missing the exam to the makeup exam. If you do not bring documentation to the makeup, you will not be allowed to re-write and will receive a zero. By submitting documentation, you consent to its verification with the individual or organization providing it. False claims of illness and/or the submission of false supporting documentation is an academic offence. Personal emails or notes (e.g., from a parent) are not acceptable documentation.

For medical circumstances, your physician, psychologist, or counsellor must complete a form providing the necessary details and dates. This individual must be willing to state that you were medically unable to take the test. The attending physician's statement linked below is preferred but any letter that includes the same information is sufficient.

For non-medical reasons, supporting third-party documentation is still mandatory in whatever form is requested (e.g., death certificate, accident report, airline ticket for emergency travel). If you are unsure about what type of documentation might be acceptable, check with the TA or instructor before the makeup exam.

Important forms: <http://psyc.info.yorku.ca/forms/>

Makeup Exams

For students with approved absences, there will be **one** date set for each makeup exam, which will be approximately a week after the original date, outside of class time. You must be available for this session regardless of when it is scheduled. There will be no individual makeup sessions, except for students registered with Learning Disability Services. These students may arrange to write a makeup at the alternative exam centre on or before the designated makeup date, in keeping with the centre's regulations.

All makeup dates will be posted in advance on the course website and it is your responsibility to check Moodle so that you are prepared and present to write the makeup exam. Makeup exams will cover the same course topics but, to prevent cheating, the specific questions and format of the makeup may or may not follow that of the original test.

NOTE: Students who miss an exam must make all possible efforts to attend its makeup. Only extremely unusual circumstances would warrant further accommodation. That is, the standard for an acceptable excuse will be more stringent than for when missing an exam. If accommodation is granted, it will likely be an alternative assignment in the form of a research paper on one of the topics covered by that exam (approximately 8-10 pages). These arrangements are at the instructor's discretion. These procedures are in place to ensure that all students are fairly evaluated on all course content.

If you miss an exam before the official drop date for any reason, you waive the right to receive the requisite feedback on your course work to determine if you need to drop the course or not. As a result, it is in your best interest to write the exams on the scheduled dates.

Academic Integrity:

York University takes academic integrity very seriously.

Please view the university policy on academic honesty:

http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69#_Toc89156096

Please complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial:

http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

| Week | Date | Topic | Reading |
|---|-------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1 | Sept 15 | 1: Neurons | Intro p5, Ch 1 |
| 2 | Sept 22 | 2: Synapses | Ch 2 |
| 3 | Sept 29 | 3: Structure of the Nervous System | Ch 3 |
| 4 | Oct 6 | 4: Evolution, Development, & Plasticity | Ch 4 |
| 5 | Oct 13 | EXAM 1 (40%) | Topics 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| 6 | Oct 20 | 5: Other Sensory Systems, Cognition | Ch 6, Ch 13 |
| 7 | Oct 27 | 6: Vision | Ch 5 |
| <i>Oct 29 – Nov 1 Fall Reading Days</i> | | | |
| 8 | Nov 3 | 7: Movement, Sleep | Ch 7, Ch 8 |
| <i>Nov 9 Last date to drop course without receiving a grade</i> | | | |
| 9 | Nov 10 | EXAM 2 (40%) | Topics 5, 6, 7 |
| 10 | Nov 17 | 8: Reproductive Behaviours, Emotional Behaviours | Ch 10 ps 325-343, Ch 11 |
| 11 | Nov 24 | 9: Psychological Disorders | Ch 14 |
| 12 | Dec 1 | EXAM 3 (20%) | All topics |