

Grand Valley State University
Behavior Modification (PSY-310)
Sections: 02, 05, & 07
Winter 2024

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Courtney Kowalczyk, PhD

Preferred Name: Dr./Professor Kowalczyk or Dr./Professor K (pronouns: she/her/hers)

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Office: 2142 Au Sable Hall

Student Hours/Appointments: Student hours will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:30pm - 2:00pm in my office or via Zoom. If you would prefer to meet over Zoom, please send me a quick email to let me know so I can send a link. Additional meeting/appointment times will be available on Fridays for Zoom sessions upon request. Please email me to set-up a time if you would like to meet on a Friday. If you cannot meet during these times, please contact me to discuss other possibilities. I'm always happy to find a time that works for both of us!

Ask Me About: Anything related to our class, real world applications of psychology, majoring or minoring in psychology, getting involved in psychology research, graduate school and psychology based careers, working in the field as a psychologist, working with children and adolescent clients, horses, scuba diving, cooking for individuals with food allergies, etc.

COURSE BASICS

Meeting Time and Place: This class does not have designated meeting times each week. It will run in an asynchronous manner online, which means that you can watch the lecture videos and do the course work at a time that is convenient for you. However, you must submit your class assignments and activities by the due dates outlined in this syllabus.

Textbook:

Martin, G. & Pear, J. (2019). *Behavior Modification: What it is and How to Do it*. (11th Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge. ISBN: 9780815366546

Note: *The textbook is required and will be delivered to you electronically via GVSU SAVE unless you opt out before the deadline. You do not need to purchase the physical copy of the textbook unless you prefer to do so.*

Course Overview: This course will provide an overview of behavior modification and applied behavior analysis techniques for advanced undergraduate students. This course takes an empirical approach to behavioral psychology and will examine the relevant theoretical underpinnings of behavioral techniques, strategies to design effective interventions, and various applications. This course will expose students to the study and the application of learning principles, techniques, and

procedures to the understanding and treatment of human behavioral and psychological problems in a wide range of settings. Some areas of application include developmental disabilities, special education, clinical psychology, business and industry, self-management, child management, and preventative behaviors.

Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to...

- Differentiate between various principles of operant conditioning, including but not limited to reinforcement, punishment, extinction, shaping, chaining, and verbal and rule-governed behavior.
- Evaluate a behavior modification program and use the theoretical principles to understand, modify, and shape programs to modify behavior in a variety of settings and service organizations.
- Describe behavioral problems and the underlying principles used to explain such aberrant behavior, as well as possible consequences of maladaptive behavior.

Prerequisite: PSY 101 (Introductory Psychology)

Technology Requirements: Since this course will be completed online, students will need to have a computer that is capable of the following: plays videos/sound appropriately, has a built in or external microphone, has a built in or external computer camera, and has word processing capabilities. Reliable high speed internet will also be essential for this course. Connection with the Blackboard Learning Management System will be required to access course materials and submit assignments. If you do not have access to a computer or reliable internet, please talk with your professor and/or review the resources available to you on Blackboard.

Class Format: This class will utilize a variety of methods to foster active participation and engagement. The course material will be delivered via lectures which will include questions, video clips, and activities. Because class recordings highlight important concepts within the text, students are strongly encouraged to complete assigned readings PRIOR to watching the corresponding lecture. Material will be posted Monday morning of each week, and there will be two consistent due dates for assignments throughout the semester (Fridays and Sundays—see course schedule for more information). Please note that the recorded class sessions and the text supplement each other – both cover material that will not (and cannot) be covered in the other format, so it is in your best interest to review all assigned materials each week.

Active Engagement with the Course Material: To understand the material covered in ANY course, active engagement is necessary. To help you be successful in this course, I have taken special care in designing it and am committed to facilitating your learning throughout the semester. My hope is that you are also intentional and effortful in your engagement with the course.

You can expect your professor to...

- 1) Present interesting information clearly and in an organized fashion.
- 2) Facilitate your efforts to learn the material. For example, Blackboard will contain in-depth assignment instructions and various supplemental resources. Your professor will also be readily available via email and during student hours/appointments. Although I encourage students to take the initiative to approach me if they have questions, I will also reach out to students that are doing fabulous work or who appear to need assistance.

- 3) Be responsive to questions and concerns. This includes posting announcements regularly, responding to emails promptly (within 24 hours on weekdays), and providing feedback and prompt grading. Consistent communication is essential to a smooth semester!
- 4) Facilitate a safe, respectful, and curiosity-driven learning environment. When basic needs – physical safety, psychological stability – are met, it is easier to focus attention on our self-improvement goals, like our academic studies. Please reach out if you need assistance.

Your professor expects you to...

- Basic expectations:
- 1) Read the syllabus and consult it throughout the semester
 - 2) Read assigned readings completely and in a timely manner
 - 3) Complete all assignments on time
 - 4) Review all class recorded lectures
 - 5) Take notes during lectures and when reading/studying
 - 6) Study regularly throughout the week
 - 7) Communicate your questions and concerns
 - 8) Be respectful and curious

- Going a step further:
- 1) Complete readings before viewing the recorded lectures
 - 2) Meet with your professor to discuss your understanding of the material
 - 3) Review concepts that you missed on assignments, quizzes, etc.
 - 4) Engage in study strategies that test your amount and depth of knowledge on the material

A significant amount of educational research suggests that students should devote around 2-4 hours per credit hour they take. PSY 310 is a 3-credit course, so this equates to spending around 6-9 hours a week on this class, which includes time spent reading, reviewing video lectures, and completing weekly activities. If you are taking a full course load (i.e., 15 credits), this equates to spending around 45 hours a week on your coursework, which is equivalent to a full-time job. Each week, you will have a variety of activities to complete, so please consider how you are spending your time on this course. I am happy to discuss study tips and strategies if you have any difficulties in this area.

GRADING POLICY

Course grades will be based on total points earned from the following sources:

COURSE ACTIVITY		POINT VALUE
Pre-Course Knowledge Quiz	1 Total	5 pts
Syllabus Quiz	1 Total	10 pts
Learning Assessments	13 Total (1 Dropped) x 15 pts	180 pts
Learning Extension Activities	14 Total x 10 pts	140 pts
Behavior Modification Project	3 Components x 20 pts	60 pts
Post-Course Knowledge Quiz	1 Total	5 pts

Total of 400 points, not including extra credit

Pre/Post Course Knowledge Assessment Quizzes (5 pts each): You will complete a pre-course knowledge quiz at the beginning of the semester and a post-course knowledge quiz at the end of the

semester worth 5 points each. You will receive full points on both quizzes if they are completed fully and on time regardless of your score. These quizzes are merely to gauge how much you already know and then how much you learn over the course of the semester. Due dates are outlined in the course schedule.

Syllabus Quiz (10 pts): You will complete an online multiple-choice quiz that will assess your understanding of the content in the syllabus. This will be graded on a pass/fail basis (full points if completed on time). Please read the entire syllabus carefully and answer all questions on the quiz. Although the quiz will give you a grade, you do not need to answer every question correctly in order to pass. However, if you answer ALL questions correctly, you will earn 2 points of extra credit. The due date for the syllabus quiz is outlined in the course schedule.

Learning Assessments (15 pts each): At the end of each week you will complete a learning assessment which will evaluate your understanding of the week's material. Each learning assessment will consist of 15 questions worth 1 point each. The questions will consist of multiple choice and true and false questions, and it will be completed on Blackboard. You will have 15 minutes to complete each learning assessment and you can only take them once. Learning Assessments will always be due on Sunday by 11:59pm.

Learning Extension Activities (10 pts each): To encourage active learning, peer to peer engagement, and application of the materials covered throughout the semester, students will complete learning extension activities (LEA's) each week. These will assess understanding of the content covered in class, and they provide students an opportunity to engage in scholarship with peers consistently. We will use the discussion board forum in Blackboard for LEA's. Students will be graded based upon the thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and accuracy of their initial response to the LEA weekly topic. Students will also be graded based upon their 2 additional response posts to peers that will be required each week. A grading rubric can be found within each weekly LEA. Student responses to the weekly LEA are due by Friday at 11:59pm of each week, and 2 additional response posts to peers will be due by Sunday at 11:59pm of each week.

Behavior Modification Project (3 components, each worth 20 pts): You will be asked to design a project in which you could apply the principles of behavior modification learned in this course to a hypothetical individual's behavioral symptoms. You will decide on a behavior you would like to change, operationally define that behavior, design a program of behavior modification, and address possible results/recommendations that could arise from your plan. This project will be completed in 3 parts over the course of the semester. The project topic will be due 2/11/24, the project proposal will be due 3/17/24, and the project reflection will be due on 4/14/24. The behavior modification project will be outlined in detail in an accompaniment to the syllabus.

Extra Credit Opportunities: Students will have opportunities throughout the semester to earn extra credit points. Extra credit opportunities will be outlined on Blackboard when they become available.

Final grades will be as follows:

Grade	% Earned	Grade	% Earned
A	94 and above	C	73 – 76.9
A-	90 – 93.9	C-	70 – 72.9
B+	87 – 89.9	D+	67 – 69.9

B	83 – 86.9	D	63 – 66.9
B-	80 – 82.9	F	62.9 and below
C+	77 – 79.9		

These are firm cut-offs. I only round up if a grade is $> .95\%$ (i.e., 82.96% will be rounded up to an 83%, but an 82.94% would not be rounded up). Yes, this means that it is possible that 1 or 2 more points would mean the difference between an A or an A-, or a D or an F. So don't let it come down to that! It is your responsibility to ensure your grade is where you want it to be at the end of the semester. This includes reaching out to your professor to discuss strategies for improving your mastery of the course material and ensuring your efforts translate into mastery.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>Week/Date</u>	<u>Topic/Readings</u>	<u>Due Dates</u>
Week 1 1/8 – 1/14/24	Welcome & Introduction	~Learning Extension Activity Introduction (<i>Due Friday/Sunday</i>) ~Pre-Course Knowledge Assessment Quiz (<i>Due Sunday</i>) ~Syllabus Quiz (<i>Due Sunday</i>)
Week 2 1/15 – 1/21/24	Chapters 1 & 2	~Learning Extension Activity #1 (<i>Due Friday/Sunday</i>) ~Learning Assessment #1 (<i>Due Sunday</i>)
Week 3 1/22 – 1/28/24	Chapters 28 & 29	~Learning Extension Activity #2 (<i>Due Friday/Sunday</i>) ~Learning Assessment #2 (<i>Due Sunday</i>)
Week 4 1/29 – 2/4/24	Chapter 3	~Learning Extension Activity #3 (<i>Due Friday/Sunday</i>) ~Learning Assessment #3 (<i>Due Sunday</i>)
Week 5 2/5 – 2/11/24	Chapters 4 and 22	~Learning Extension Activity #4 (<i>Due Friday/Sunday</i>) ~Learning Assessment #4 (<i>Due Sunday</i>) ~Project Topic (<i>Due Sunday</i>)
Week 6 2/12 – 2/18/24	Chapters 6, 7, & 10	~Learning Extension Activity #5 (<i>Due Friday/Sunday</i>) ~Learning Assessment #5 (<i>Due Sunday</i>)
Week 7 2/19 – 2/25/24	Chapter 16	~Learning Extension Activity #6 (<i>Due Friday/Sunday</i>) ~Learning Assessment #6 (<i>Due Sunday</i>)
Week 8 2/26 – 3/3/24	Chapter 15	~Learning Extension Activity #7 (<i>Due Friday/Sunday</i>) ~Learning Assessment #7 (<i>Due Sunday</i>)

Week 9 3/4 – 3/10/24	<i>Spring Break</i>	NA
Week 10 3/11 – 3/17/24	Chapters 11 & 19	~Learning Extension Activity #8 (Due Friday/Sunday) ~Learning Assessment #8 (Due Sunday) ~Project Proposal Due (Due Sunday)
Week 11 3/18 – 3/24/24	Chapters 8 & 14	~Learning Extension Activity #9 (Due Friday/Sunday) ~Learning Assessment #9 (Due Sunday)
Week 12 3/25 – 3/31/24	Chapters 9 & 13	~Learning Extension Activity #10 (Due Friday/Sunday) ~Learning Assessment #10 (Due Sunday)
Week 13 4/1 – 4/7/24	Chapters 18, 23, & 25	~Learning Extension Activity #11 (Due Friday/Sunday) ~Learning Assessment #11 (Due Sunday)
Week 14 4/8 – 4/14/24	Chapter 24	~Learning Extension Activity #12 (Due Friday/Sunday) ~Learning Assessment #12 (Due Sunday) ~Project Reflection (Due Sunday)
Week 15 4/15 – 4/21/24	Chapters 26 & 27	~Learning Extension Activity #13 (Due Friday/Sunday) ~Learning Assessment #13 (Due Sunday)
Final Course Activity: Post-Course Knowledge Assessment Quiz Due 4/24/24 by 11:59pm		

*This schedule (including assigned readings) is subject to change. Students are responsible for any changes announced on Blackboard.

COURSE POLICIES AND RESOURCES

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>.

Withdrawing from a Course: The ultimate deadline for withdrawing from this course (or any course at GVSU) is Friday, March 22nd at 5pm.

Mask Policy: GVSU is currently under an Alert Level 0, which means that students and professors can choose to wear masks in classrooms if they wish, and are required to wear masks if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Students and faculty members may be required to wear a mask at all times during class if the alert level rises. Masks are available at campus offices. [GVSU's policy on face coverings](#) is posted on the Lakers Together website. Students unable to wear a face

covering due to a medical condition should contact Disability Support Services (DSR) to discuss their situation.

Attendance/Participation Policy: Engagement and participation in weekly course activities is required. If you have extenuating circumstances and will be unable to complete assignment(s) by the deadline, please communicate with your instructor as soon as possible. Late work will be subject to the policy outlined below.

1. Pre/Post Course Knowledge Assessment Quizzes—no late assignments will be accepted.
2. There will be no late assignments accepted for the syllabus quiz.
3. Late weekly learning assessments will be subject to a 50% point deduction. If it is submitted more than 3 days late, the grade will be an automatic zero.
4. Late weekly learning extension activities will be subject to a 50% point deduction. If it is submitted more than 3 days late, the grade will be an automatic zero.
5. Late submission of the project topic, project proposal, or project reflection will be subject to 50% point deduction (10 pts). If it is submitted more than 3 days late, the grade will be an automatic zero.

Accommodations for Late Work/Make-Ups: Consistent participation in weekly activities is required for this course and your professor is required to monitor missed deadlines and determine standards and a process by which students can make-up missed work. Importantly, if a student misses the deadline for an assignment and they are seeking an accommodation (i.e., permission to turn it in late), they must **contact the professor via email within 48 hours of the deadline with an explanation**. From there, **the professor will grant accommodations based upon: 1) the cause for the missed deadline, and 2) the extent to which the student’s ability to complete the assignment was impaired**.

Specifically, the reason for the missed deadline is key. The University makes a distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences, and although we aren’t keeping track of absences, this language is useful for characterizing the types of missed deadlines – we can miss deadlines for “excused” reasons (due to something unexpected or beyond our control, despite our best efforts) or “unexcused” reasons. Consistent with University policy, missed deadlines are excused and eligible for accommodations for the following reasons:

- 1) Active participation in an intercollegiate event
- 2) Observance of religious holidays
- 3) Military duty
- 4) Jury duty, or appearance in court or other government hearings
- 5) Student medical conditions that limit time or ability to engage with the course material
- 6) Birth or adoption of child
- 7) Attendance at an academic and/or professional conference
- 8) Medical or professional appointments (e.g., job interviews)
- 9) Medical conditions of a loved one if the student is serving as a caretaker
- 10) Funerals or memorial services
- 11) Previously scheduled family celebrations (e.g., weddings, etc.)

As you might guess, unexcused reasons are things like forgetting or mixing up deadlines, failure to properly upload the assignment on Blackboard, leaving campus early for the weekend, etc. Ideally, documentation should be provided and is easily available for most of the reasons listed above, but if documentation is not available, we can discuss that. In general, if you are unsure whether you are

eligible for an accommodation or need to provide documentation, just ask! Academic life continues to be challenging and constantly changing. We all know that the pandemic has had both physical AND psychological impacts on individuals. Please reach out if you are struggling.

Blackboard Access: The course Blackboard (BB) website is essential to your success. It is the student's responsibility to visit BB regularly and stay up to date with the material posted. BB will be used in the following ways:

- 1) **Grades:** All grades will be posted in the BB Gradebook in a timely manner.
- 2) **Knowledge Assessments/Learning Assessments/LEA's/Weekly Course Materials/Project Components:** All course materials will be posted in a weekly folder for students to access and navigate with ease.
- 3) **Announcements:** All major announcements and reminders will be posted on BB. Announcements posted on BB are also sent to students via email.

Classroom Conduct: We are all capable of conducting ourselves in a civil and respectable manner. In the spirit of academic discourse, you are encouraged to comment, question, and critique ideas from your professor or classmates, but you should not attack an individual or otherwise express disrespect. Think about what you want to say, edit if necessary, then speak (or type). Similarly, please be mindful of how your behavior may impact others, and limit distracting behavior. Let's maintain the social contract of mutual respect. Disrespectful or distracting students will be called out and warned; persistent issues can result in grade deductions.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have special needs because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact your professor as well as Disability Support Resources (DSR) at (616) 331-2490 for assistance as soon as possible. Even if you have already documented your disability with DSR, please connect with your faculty member to discuss your specific needs. Furthermore, if you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating the classroom and/or building in an emergency during in-person meetings, please make your professor aware so that the university can develop a plan to assist you. You may also access resources at: <http://www.gvsu.edu/dsr>. The university is eager to work with you to meet your learning goals. All discussions related to disabilities will remain confidential.

Statement on Academic Dishonesty: The following is adapted from the Student Code, Sections 223.00 and 223.01: The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid of any kind.

- a. No student shall knowingly procure, provide, or accept any materials which contain questions or answers to any examination or assignment.
- b. No student shall complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person.
- c. No student shall allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, by another person.
- d. No student shall submit work that has been previously graded or is being submitted concurrently to more than one course, without specific authorization from the instructor(s) of the class(es) to which the student wishes to submit it.
- e. No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his/her own. Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated

formulas, sentences, or paragraphs, to entire articles copied from the internet, books, periodicals, speeches, or from the writings of other students. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgement also is considered plagiarism. In short, any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.

Students can (and are encouraged to) study together, but all academic work should be the sole work of the individual student, unless otherwise stated. Also, students should strive to avoid the *appearance* of dishonesty; these are behaviors associated with academic dishonesty (i.e., checking phone during quiz, completing quizzes together, etc.) that raise concerns that you may be potentially dishonest in your work. Any violation of academic integrity, even on a small scale, can result in a failing grade in the course. The University is implementing a new oversight process for cases of academic dishonesty – this process requires all professors to report all cases to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, which then investigates each case and makes a determination. Doesn't this sound like an anxiety-provoking time suck? Just don't cheat.

Psych Friends Resource: If you feel you could use some extra help/guidance/support in any academic domain or for your well-being, please consider scheduling an appointment with a mentor through Psych Friends. Psych Friends mentors are upper-level undergraduate peer mentors who are trained to provide support in many areas including: effective study and time management techniques, exam preparation and reflection skills, psychology and behavioral neuroscience major requirements, tips for engaging in the field, strategies for education continuation, methods for maintaining physical and mental health. Schedule an appointment here: <https://www.gvsu.edu/navigate>. Questions? Email psychfriends@gvsu.edu.