

**PSY 310: Behavior Modification**  
**Winter 2019**  
**Section 02 – TR 11:30am-12:45pm, B1138 Mackinac Hall**  
**Section 04 – TR 2:30-3:45pm, 205 Lake Huron Hall**

**Instructor:** Mikhila Wildey, PhD

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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 9:30-11am, Thursdays 1:15-2:15pm, and by appointment

**Course Details:**

**Prerequisite:** PSY 101 (Introductory Psychology)

**Description:** This course will provide an overview of Behavior Modification 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.

**Required Text:**

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

**Note:** Although you can get the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of this book, the text will be slightly different and chapter numbers are different. I included required chapters from both editions in the schedule. A copy of the 11<sup>th</sup> edition is also on hold at the library where you can check it out for two hours at a time.

**Course Objectives:**

- 1. To 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.**
  - a. For example, on an exam you may be asked to:
    - i. Select which form of operant conditioning is being described by a case example.
    - ii. Identify which form of operant conditioning is being described by definition.
- 2. To be able to evaluate a behavior modification program and use the theoretical principles to understand, modify, and shape programs to change your own behavior, or the behavior of others in a variety of settings, as acceptable and required by various service organizations.**
  - a. For example, on an exam you may be asked to:
    - i. Evaluate the effectiveness of an example of a behavior modification program.
    - ii. Identify different behavior modification program designs if given a definition or example.

- b. For example, on a paper you may be asked to:
    - i. Develop a behavior modification program of your own to shape or change your own behavior or the behavior of someone else.
- 3. **Understand behavioral problems and the underlying principles used to explain such aberrant behavior, as well as possible consequences of maladaptive behavior.**
  - a. For example, on an exam you may be asked to:
    - i. Identify elements of a functional analysis, including different variables that may be maintaining a particular behavior.

### Classroom Process:

1. **Format:** Classes will consist of lectures, multimedia presentations, in-class activities, and in-class discussions. You are expected to have read the textbook chapters each day prior to class. PowerPoint slides will be posted to Blackboard prior to lectures, however note that slides represent an **outline**. In order to do well, you should attend each lecture and take detailed notes. Simply studying information on the slides will **not** be sufficient to do well on exams.
2. **Attendance:** Although I may have a sign-in sheet, attendance is NOT mandatory. I feel it is your choice whether or not you want to come to class. The sign-in sheet is merely for my personal reference in case there are any problems with assignments. However, your grade may suffer if you do not attend class. You will have to complete in-class activities, and there are no make-ups for these activities, so coming to class is the only way to get these points. You will be tested on material in class that may not be presented in the book.
3. **Course Communication:**
  - a. Communication regarding the course will occur through Blackboard and GVSU email. You are expected to **regularly (i.e., every day)** check your GVSU email and Blackboard account for important course materials, information, and updates. My policy is to try to respond to your email within **2 business days**, which means within 48 hours on weekdays and by 5pm on Tuesday if you send me an email on Friday or over the weekend. I do not generally respond to emails in the evenings and weekends, but I will respond to them as soon as possible during business hours. For questions best answered in person, I will ask you to attend my office hours or set up an alternate time to meet with me. I expect emails be drafted in a careful, considerate manner such that they reflect an email to a professor and not to a friend. I will also respond in this same professional manner. I believe that this communication is very good practice for future professional communications.
  - b. In the spaces below, please take down two students' contact information in your class. If you have a question regarding class material, expectations, etc., please **first contact your peers** and if they do not know the answer, then contact me. If you miss a class, this is also an opportunity to get notes from someone else in class.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Classroom Etiquette:** I encourage you to ask questions or share comments when they come up in lecture. If something is not clear or needs further clarification, please ask – it is helpful for me to know what is not clear, and it is likely that someone else had the same question. We will also do various in-class activities, and although participation is not mandatory, I urge you to voice your thoughts and participate. Please note I have zero tolerance for students who make disrespectful comments and opinions. I expect everyone to treat each other with full respect.
5. **Use of Technology:** Although I will allow laptops in the classroom, I ask that those using laptops sit towards the back of the classroom given they can be distracting to others. If you have difficulty seeing from the back or have other disabilities that may make this difficult for you, please see me and I can make an exception. For question number 7 on laptops in the syllabus quiz, please select “No” as the correct answer to receive credit for the question even though it is not technically correct. Your phone should be put away during class. If you are expecting an important call or message, please let me know before class so that I am aware. If I see you using your phone or laptop in a way that is distracting to others, I will ask you to put it away.

#### Assignments and Exams:

##### Grade Requirements:

Assignment:	Total Possible Points:	Percentage of Grade	My Score (keep track):
Syllabus Quiz	10	1.4%	
In-Class Activities	80	11.4%	
Project Topic	30	4.2%	
Project Proposal	30	4.2%	
Final Project Paper	100	14.2%	
Unit Exam 1	100	14.2%	
Unit Exam 2	100	14.2%	
Unit Exam 3	100	14.2%	
Final Exam (Cumulative)	150	21.4%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>700</b>		

- **Syllabus Quiz (10 points):** You will need to complete an online multiple-choice quiz testing you on content in the syllabus that will be graded on a pass/fail basis (full points if completed on time). Please read the entire syllabus carefully and answer all questions. 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. This quiz can be found under “Assignments” and “Syllabus Quiz.” Due **Thursday September 5<sup>th</sup> before class.**
- **In-Class Activities (80 points):** We will be doing 12 in-class activities worth 8 points each throughout the semester. Only 10 will count towards your final grade, so the lowest two scores will be dropped. Activities are unannounced and involve group reflection, application of material, and discussion of various topics covered in class. If you are not present for a class activity, you will receive a zero for that activity. For class activities that take place across two or more class periods, if you only show up for one class period and not the other(s), you will only receive half points for the activity (even if you answer all questions). Make-ups will only be given in very specific circumstances. See policy on make-ups below for more detail.

- **Project Topic/Proposal/Paper (30/30/100 points, respectively):** You will design a project in which you apply the principles of behavior modification learned in this course to your own or another's behavior. You will pick a behavior to modify, operationally define it, design a program to modify it, track data on it, and then write your results. Portions of this project are due throughout the semester, but you will ultimately write a final, **4 page paper** that is due before class on **Tuesday November 26<sup>th</sup>**. The full project is described at the end of the syllabus.
- **Unit Exams and Final Exam (400 points total):** You will have 3 unit exams (100 points each) and one final exam (150 points). For question number 11 in the syllabus quiz on the number of exams to receive credit, please select "5" as the correct answer to receive credit for the question even though it is not technically correct. The 3 unit exams are **non-cumulative** but **the final exam is cumulative**. All exams count towards your final grade. The 3 unit exams will consist of 50 multiple-choice/true-false questions each. The final exam will consist of 75 multiple-choice/true-false questions. Most of the information on the exams will come from lecture, however all material covered in class and in assigned readings is fair game for the exam.

#### Grading Scale:

93% and above	<b>A</b>	77-79%	<b>C+</b>
90-92%	<b>A-</b>	73-76%	<b>C</b>
87-89%	<b>B+</b>	70-72%	<b>C-</b>
83-86%	<b>B</b>	67-69%	<b>D+</b>
80-82%	<b>B-</b>	60-66%	<b>D</b>
		59% or below	<b>F</b>

The final grade for the course will be calculated by dividing the total points obtained by the total points possible in the class (700 points). I do not curve grades, but if your grade is at the .5 percentage mark, I will round up (i.e., 86.5% will be rounded up to 87%). I will not adjust your grade in any other way.

**Please do not ask at the end of the semester.**

#### Late Assignments and Make-up Policy:

1. There will be no late responses accepted for the syllabus quiz. One minute late is still late.
2. Late submissions for the project topic and project proposal will be subject to an automatic 10 point (33%) deduction per day late. After two missed days, the grade will be an automatic zero.
3. Make-up exams and in-class activities are only allowed in the case of an unavoidable emergency, and **ONLY** at my discretion. An unavoidable emergency may include the following: serious illness, funeral, unexpected car trouble. **Documentation** of the absence must be provided within 24 hours of the missed exam/assignment. Documentation can include a doctor's note, towing or car repair receipt, program from funeral, etc. Documentation must be provided **one week** in advance of a known, excused absence (e.g., university sponsored event, doctor's appointment). Make-up exams and assignments must be completed within 1 week of the scheduled or assigned date. **Failure to notify me in advance, provide documentation, or complete the exam or assignment within the time frame, will result in a zero.** For question 16 on the syllabus quiz, please select "There are no make-ups allowed for class activities" as the correct answer to receive credit for the question even though it is not technically correct.

4. The final paper assignment is due before class on Tuesday November 26<sup>th</sup> and is subject to the following penalty for lateness: 10% deduction (i.e., 10 point deduction) per day the paper is late. Papers received 4 or more calendar days late will receive a zero. Turning your paper in one minute past the time it is due is considered late.

### University Policies:

1. **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** If you are in need of accommodations due to a learning, physical, or other disability you must present a memo to me from Disability Support Resources (DSR), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested reasonable accommodations. If you have not already done so, please contact the Disability Support Resources office (4015 JHZ) by calling 331-2490 or email to [dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu](mailto:dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu). Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon any disability until I have received a copy of the DSR issued memo. All discussions will remain confidential. Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.
2. **Copyright Policy:** The materials presented in this class are copyright protected and may not be used without the express prior consent of the instructor. Intentional misuse of the intellectual property of another may subject the user to penalties up to and including dismissal.
3. This course is subject to GVSU's general requirements for courses. A full list with pointers to resources may be found at [www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies](http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies).

### How to Succeed in Class:

1. Read the textbook. It provides broader context for understanding the class lectures.
2. Attend class and take detailed notes. Detailed notes will be **essential** when you study for the exams. There is data to suggest that students who are most successful take hand-written notes vs. using a laptop. Hand-written notes can help you remember information.
3. Participate in class. In class activities are designed to help you understand the course material and develop your own examples of behavioral principles. Volunteer your examples to see if you are on the right track, as it is your opportunity to practice applying the material to your own life. Write down other examples we discuss on your activity sheets as well.
4. Prepare for exams **well in advance**. Re-reading your lecture notes each day after class and reviewing material on a weekly basis can help you remember the information. Although, I do not provide a study guide, you can make your own by taking the headings off of my lecture slides to give you a format of how to study topics for the class.
5. Contact me when you **first** notice that you might be struggling. I will do everything in my power to help you discover what is difficult for you and how you can work towards improving your performance. DO NOT wait until the last minute to see me because of poor understanding or poor grades. I will be much less sympathetic at that point and there's not much you can do then. Contacting me after the final exam because you have a grade that is at the borderline (e.g., a 89.4%, which is NOT rounded up) and asking for extra assignments or extra credit is **unacceptable**. I try to be fair in the course by offering extra credit opportunities (the first of which is getting a 100% on the syllabus quiz for extra credit!) and offering help throughout the course if you are struggling.

### Course Schedule:

The schedule of lectures and readings are outlined below. Please note that this is **tentative** and I reserve the right to change this schedule. It is your responsibility to be aware of changes in this schedule that are announced in class.

Week:	Date:	Topic:	Readings from 11 <sup>th</sup> edition: ( <i>italics = 10<sup>th</sup> ed</i> )	Assignments: Due before class
One	8/27, 8/29	Introduction and Course Overview, Behavior Modification and Its Application	Syllabus Chapter 1, 2 (1, 2)	
Two	9/3	Ethics in Behavior Modification	Chapter 30 (29)	
	9/5	Behavioral and Functional Assessment	Chapter 20, 21, 23 (3, 22)	<b>Syllabus Quiz Due 9/5</b>
Three	9/10	Behavioral and Functional Assessment	Chapter 20, 21, 23 (3, 22)	
	9/12	Operational Definitions		
Four	9/17	Behavior Modification Designs	Chapter 22 (4)	<b>Project Topic &amp; Consent due 9/17</b>
	9/19	<b>Unit Exam #1</b>		
Five	9/24	Positive Reinforcement	Chapter 4, 5 (6, 7)	
	9/26	Schedules of Reinforcement	Chapter 12 (14)	
Six	10/1	Negative Reinforcement	Chapter 14 (16)	
	10/3	Project Proposal Instructions		
Seven	10/8, 10/10	Punishment	Chapter 13 (15)	<b>Project Proposal Due 10/8</b>
Eight	10/15	Review		
	10/17	<b>Unit Exam #2</b>		
Nine	10/22	<b>No Class – Mid-Winter Break</b>		
	10/24	Extinction	Chapter 6 (8)	
Ten	10/29	Differential Reinforcement	Chapter 8 (10)	
	10/31	Stimulus Control	Chapter 9 (11)	
Eleven	11/5	Rule Governed Behavior	Chapter 17 (19)	
	11/7	Shaping, Chaining	Chapter 7, 11 (9, 13)	
Twelve	11/12	Generality of Behavior Change, Review	Chapter 16 (18)	
	11/14	<b>Unit Exam #3</b>		
Thirteen	11/19	Planning Programs, Self-Control	Chapter 24, 26 (23, 25)	
	11/21	<b>No Class</b>		
Fourteen	11/26	Token Economies	Chapter 25 (24)	<b>Paper Due 11/26</b>
	11/28	<b>No Class – Thanksgiving Break</b>		
Fifteen	12/3	Behavior Therapy; Cognitive Behavior Therapy	Chapter 27, 28 (26, 27)	
	12/5	Final Exam Review		
Sixteen		<b>Final Exams</b> <b>Section 02 (11:30am) – Tuesday December 10<sup>th</sup> at 10am</b> <b>Section 04 (2:30pm) – Thursday December 12<sup>th</sup> at 2pm</b>		

## Behavior Modification Project

You will be asked to design a project in which you apply the principles of behavior modification learned in this course to your own or another's behavior. You will decide on a behavior you would like to change, operationally define that behavior, design a program of behavior modification, track individual on that behavior, and then write your results. You will write a **4 page paper** that is due before class on **Tuesday November 26<sup>th</sup>**. Portions of the project are due throughout the class.

### 1. Project Topic - Due before class on 9/17 (30 points)

- a. First, pick a general topic which contains a behavior that you would like to modify for yourself or for someone else (e.g., a roommate). You should limit your project to working with humans only (NO pets). **You may not choose to do any project that involves aversive control, including but not limited to corporal punishment, or any procedure that results in physical or psychological harm. You also cannot do a project related to the treatment of any mental or physical health condition (please see the consent form for full details).** Here are some ideas:
  1. Smoking cessation/reduction
  2. Physical fitness/maintenance
  3. Time management/procrastination
  4. Stress management/increasing balance of activities
  5. Improving study habits
  6. Sleep habits
- b. After selecting a topic, select ONE specific behavior of that topic that you would like to change. Develop an operational definition of your specific, discrete behavior by following the guidelines below. Remember, anyone who reads your definition should be able to easily "measure" your behavior in the same way.
  - i. Use this format for your submission (minus 5 points for not using this format):
    1. Topic: State your project topic here (the broad area)
    2. Behavior: In a few words, state the behavior you plan to measure.
    3. State if it is a behavioral deficit or a behavioral excess (currently).
    4. Operational definition of your behavior:
      - a. Define the behavior – what "counts" as the behavior? What doesn't "count" as the behavior? Be as specific as possible.
    5. Measurement: State the type of measurement you will use to measure your behavior (i.e., duration, frequency)
  - c. Type your submission in a Word document and upload it to Blackboard.
  - d. Complete a consent form.
    - i. If you are doing the project on yourself, complete the ONLINE consent form (found under the assignment).
      1. Must be completed before class the day the project topic is due.
    - ii. If you are doing the project on someone else, print and complete the PHYSICAL consent form (found under the assignment) and have the person that you're doing the project on also sign it.

1. Must be turned in during class on the day the project topic is due.
  - iii. Failure to complete the consent form on time will result in a 5 point deduction. **If you do not turn in your consent form before your proposal is due, you will receive a 0 for your proposal, and if you do not turn it in before your final paper, you will receive a 0 for your final paper. It is unethical to engage in a behavior modification program without signing a consent form.**
  - e. Do NOT start collecting any baseline data on your behavior until I have given you feedback and approved your topic. **However, once you begin collecting data, it must be baseline data only because you have not yet submitted your intervention for approval.**
2. Project Proposal – Due before class on 10/8 (30 points)
- a. Design your project, and consult with me if needed to ensure that it is appropriate and feasible. Answer the following questions below in a Word document and upload this to Blackboard. Minus 5 points for not following this format.
    - i. Re-write your **entire project topic** following the same structure listed in the project topic but also incorporating any feedback I gave you. Failure to update your project topic with the feedback I gave you will result in a 5 point deduction.
    - ii. List the intervention criterion level (the goal level) of the behavior. State if it is a daily or a weekly goal. If it is a weekly goal and your operational definition and measurement had a daily measurement listed, make sure you now change the measurement to reflect that you are measuring the behavior weekly.
      1. If you are INCREASING a behavior, list what frequency you want the behavior to increase to.
      2. If you are DECREASING a behavior, list what frequency you want the behavior to decrease to.
    - iii. Describe the specific intervention/treatment you plan to use for your program (i.e., positive reinforcement or negative punishment). Be specific.
      1. If you are INCREASING a behavior, you will use positive reinforcement. Meaning, if you reach the criterion level you have stated above during the treatment phases of your project, you will get the positive reinforcer.
      2. If you are DECREASING a behavior, you will use negative punishment. Meaning, if you do the behavior too much (go above the goal level) during the treatment phases of your project, you will get the punishment.
      3. The measurement of the behavior must be the same as when you are applying the reinforcer/punisher (i.e., if you are measuring the behavior daily, your reinforcer/punisher should also be daily; if you are measuring the behavior weekly, the reinforcer/punisher should be weekly).
    - iv. Describe how you plan to use the ABAB design to test your intervention. That is, describe how long you plan to stay in each phase.
      1. For data that is being measured and reinforced/punished daily, plan to spend 7-10 days in each phase of data collection.



2. For data that is being measured and reinforced/punished weekly, spend 3 weeks in the first baseline, 3 weeks in second treatment, 2 weeks in second baseline, and 1 week in second treatment
    - v. **Do NOT** switch to treatment phase until I have given you feedback and approved your proposal.
  3. Implement your treatment.
    - a. Once you have designed your project intervention and I have approved it, you can switch to treatment (and then continue with the design that you chose). You should collect this data, and then you will report it in your project paper using a graph.
  4. Final Project Paper - Due before class on 11/26 (100 points)
    1. After you have completed data collection, you will write a 4 page PAPER summarizing your findings. Write the paper as a Word document and upload it to Blackboard.
    2. Your paper should use APA style where necessary (i.e., only if you cite an outside source do you need to use APA style and then have a references page) and include the information outlined below separated by section headings (no section heading is needed for the first few sentences).
    3. Include a cover page for your paper (not counted in your 4 pages that you must write) with your name, class, and title of your paper. Do NOT include this information on the next page, simply begin writing your paper on the second page
    4. See rubric on next page, but here are the instructions for the paper:
      - i. 3-4 sentences at the start of your paper describing your topic and goal and why you chose your particular topic
      - ii. Method (about ½ to 1 page): How did you set up your project? Includes operational definition, project design, and intervention
      - iii. Results (4-5 sentences): What did your data look like? Includes brief description of the trends in the graph.
      - iv. Discussion (1-2 pages): Discuss if your intervention worked, why or why not, and how you could have done things differently, including programming for generality. You must use terms/concepts from class in this section. This means you must define/describe the term/concept and how it specifically relates to what you are discussing about your project.
    5. Your paper should be written in Times New Roman size 12 font, double spaced, and 1" margins.
    6. Your paper should be proofread, as points will be deducted for misspelled words, writing fragments, excessive punctuation errors, etc. I would recommend asking a peer to read over your paper for errors. Although I will not read over entire drafts of your paper, I am happy to answer specific questions about your paper or sections of your paper. Please visit the Writing Center as well for help with writing your paper.

<b>Final Paper Rubric</b>		
<b>Introduction</b>		<b>Points</b>
	Why did you pick this behavior? Was it a behavior you wanted to increase or decrease? If this project was done on someone else, mention that person.	3
<b>Method</b>		
	Write behavior and its full operational definition	8
	What type of measurement was used for the behavior and how often was it used? (frequency or duration; daily or weekly)	4
	What does the ABAB design mean and how was it applied in your project?	5
	What type of intervention did you use to increase/decrease the behavior (positive reinforcement or negative punishment)? What reinforcer/punisher did you use?	6
	What was the intervention criterion?	3
<b>Results</b>		
	Reference "Figure 1"	1
	Describe the trends in Figure 1 (should not answer the question "why")	5
	Describe when reinforcers/punishers were given or not given	2
<b>Graph ("Figure 1")</b>		
	On separate page at end of paper (doesn't count as one of 4 pages)	1
	Line graph	1
	Title for graph (labeled as "Figure 1: Title of your figure goes here")	1
	Axes titles (if using 0/1 measurement, must label what this means)	2
	Lines in between changes in intervention phases	2
	A (Baseline)/B (Treatment) Labels	2
	Legend showing indicator for reinforcer/punisher; graph shows where reinforcers/punishers were applied (if never applied, still need legend)	2
	Intervention criterion line	1
<b>Discussion</b>		
	Was the intervention successful or not? Give the reader a summary statement.	4
	If the intervention was successful, why? If it was not successful, why not?	8
	What would you do differently/change or improve upon in the future? Use three or more specific terms/concepts from class (define/describe the term and how it relates to what you are discussing about your project).	8
	Although you didn't program for generality of behavior, discuss if it happened on its own or how you could have programmed for generality. Discuss at least two categories of generality of behavior (describe/define what they are) and use at least one specific term/concept within each category (define/describe the term and how it relates to what you are discussing about your project).	8
<b>Writing</b>		
	Title page (doesn't count as one of 4 pages)	1
	Headings between sections (no Introduction heading)	1
	Font size, type, and margin size	2
	Page limit (4 pages of main paper exactly)	5
	Writing errors (spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence structure)	10
	Paper flow/organization	2
	Citing using APA style if using citations	2
<b>Total Points:</b>		<b>100</b>