

Grand Valley State University

Psychology 310

Behavior Modification

Fall 2021

COURSE SYLLABUS

<u>Instructor:</u>	Tara Cornelius, Ph.D. (Pronouns: She/Her/Hers)		
<u>Office:</u>	1321 Au Sable Hall		
<u>Office Hours:</u>	T and TH 9:00am-10:00am, and by appointment		
<u>Phone:</u>	(616) 331-8702		
<u>Email:</u>	cornelta@gvsu.edu		
<u>Course Sections/Locations:</u>	Section 01:	TTH 8:30-9:45am	174 LOH
	Section 07:	TTH 10:00-11:15am	174 LOH

Required Text:

Martin, G. & Pear, J. (2019). *Behavior Modification: What it is and How to Do it*. (11th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Additional readings, provided on Blackboard.

Course Description:

- This course is designed as an overview of Behavior Modification for advanced undergraduate students. The prerequisite for this course is PSY 101, Introductory Psychology. This course assumes that you have a thorough understanding of the theories of learning, including operant and respondent (classical) conditioning, as well as sound research methods. If that is not the case, please inform the instructor promptly to arrange for remedial education.
- 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. Please note that you will be asked to critically examine empirical data and the rationale for behavioral interventions.
- 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:

- 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, as acceptable and required by various service organizations.
- Describe behavioral problems and the underlying principles used to explain such aberrant behavior, as well as possible consequences of maladaptive behavior.

University Policies and Policy on Academic Integrity:

- Please refer to this website for all relevant University policies for this course: www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies
- Students will be held accountable for violations of the policies regarding cheating, academic misconduct, plagiarism, and fabrication that are outlined in the Grand Valley State University Student Code. To avoid any appearance of academic dishonesty, please scrupulously attend to the importance of citing the ideas and works of other authors. Any student who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in an act of academic dishonesty will be subject to discipline as outlined in the Student Code.

“Flipped Class” Design:

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.

- For this course, we will be using a “flipped class” design. This means that BEFORE class each week, you should make sure that you have watched the pre-recorded video and read the chapter(s) for the week. During in-person class, we will spend our time expanding, developing, synthesizing, applying and thinking critically about the material.
- Therefore, you should NOT expect a traditional lecture during in-person class, but rather an interactive experience in which we build on the material in the pre-recorded lecture and the readings. The empirical literature strongly supports this teaching modality as effective in encouraging mastery of the material, so please trust the process even though it is different from a traditional “lecture” style!

Course Organization and Communication:

- Blackboard will be our online learning forum for this course. It is the student’s responsibility to use Blackboard daily and to complete all coursework and submit assignments through this platform. Please be sure that you review the online resources on www.gvsu.edu related to interacting with Blackboard to be sure you have the basic technological skills to complete this online course.
- **READ EVERYTHING!** Everything that you need to know for the class will be in the syllabus posted on the Announcements, or sent via email in Blackboard. Please make sure that you are checking your GVSU email frequently to stay up to date on the course. There is a Discussion Board that is available for any questions you may have that may pertain to the entire class. For more personal concerns, please email me directly through Blackboard.

Computing Policies:

- Please attend to the Netiquette guidelines posted on our Blackboard site. Please be aware that all writing in this course should include proper grammar, spelling, and citations.
- Laptops and tablets are welcome for the purposes of note taking, research on topics under discussion, and review of PowerPoints in class. Please silence and put away your cell phones during all class periods. If I see your phone out during class, I will publicly ask you to put it away. Please refrain from sending text messages, chatting online, or using social networking sites during class. If you would prefer to spend your time doing these things, please do not come to class. If you urgently need to send a message or answer a call, please leave the classroom.
- You will need to be able to open PDF files for this course. You can find links to download this from the “Online Orientation” from the GVSU IT website. You will also find information on the self-directed Blackboard Orientation and links to additional Help documents. For technology related questions, please contact the Help Desk at helpdesk@gvsu.edu, or 616.331.2101.
- The standard GVSU word processing program is Word, and that is what I will use. Word documents in the course site are posted as .docx. Please submit your documents as Word files. I will not accept incompatible programs. As a GVSU student, you have access to Microsoft Office for free.
- All official GVSU email goes to your student (Gmail) account, including email sent from Blackboard. I will send email through Blackboard, so it is very important that you check your GVSU Gmail account on a regular basis. Many times, I will send reminders, tips and general FYI information as an email message.
- My policy is to try to respond to your email within **1 business day**, which means within 24 hours on weekdays and by 5pm on Monday if you send me an email on Friday or over the weekend. I expect that 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.
- Please consider the **Three Before Me** rule, where before emailing me concerning technical questions or other class logistics, try learning your answer through other means first:
 - For technical support, contact the Help Desk by phone (616.331.2101) or email: helpdesk@gvsu.edu. You can also review the support documents in our Blackboard course site or by clicking the “Help” button at the top of your Blackboard window.
 - Refer to course resources such as the syllabus, calendar, assignment details, etc. You can also consult the Discussion Board that is devoted to general questions about the class.
 - Email another student in the class and/or post your question on the question forum on the Discussion Board.
- Please be advised that use of university technology, including email, for commercial use is prohibited. Resources should be used for GVSU purposes or academic work.

Reading Assignments:

- It is to your advantage to read each assignment before the class in which it will be addressed in lecture/discussion. During your initial reading of the text, you should begin to formulate thoughts and questions that will form the basis of class discussion. Please bring these to class to discuss!

In-Class Activities:

- Students are expected and are strongly encouraged to attend each class for the full class period. Material will be covered in classes and videos that is not in your text, and knowing this material will be essential for you to do well on the exams. Your thoughtful and informed participation during class will be factored into your final grade. Therefore, attendance is considered required and you will likely have difficulty on the exams if your absence is a regular practice.
- In-class assignments include announced and unannounced activities that will involve group reflection and discussion on various issues from your assigned readings. If you are not present for a class activity, you will not receive any points for that activity. If you are absent because of a university-sponsored event or medical emergency, please contact me before leaving for a makeup activity. Other unexcused absences will not be eligible for makeup.
- Class participation is a crucial component of clearly understanding the course material. Group and discussion activities are a critical part of the educational process, and you should expect to participate fully in these activities. In-Class activities are worth *eighty points*, and this will contribute to your final grade.

Behavior Modification Group Project/Paper:

- As part of this course, you will be asked to design a project in which you apply the principles of behavior modification to your own or another's behavior. As a group, you will decide on a general topic of behavior that all in the group will target, will track individual data on that behavior, and will use a behavior modification treatment to change that behavior. You will be required to work on your project from the beginning of the course by putting into practice what you are learning in class and in your reading. As part of this project, you will search the relevant literature, design a program of behavior modification, collect and document data on the frequency, duration, rate, and/or latency of the behavior, and write a 15-20 page group paper integrating these components. **All individuals should work on ALL aspects of the paper. Failure to do this will result in point reduction on the paper.** You may NOT complete this as an individual assignment. If you turn in an individual assignment, you will not have completed the assignment and will earn a zero. All papers will be turned into SafeAssign on Blackboard. You are required to upload your paper to Blackboard before 5pm on the class in which it is due. *Each group will turn in one paper, and, with very few exceptions, all group members will earn the same grade on the project.* This paper is described in greater detail later in another document. This paper is worth 70 points, and is due on **November 23, 2021.**

Late Project Paper Policy:

- If you fail to turn in the document on time, your grade will be penalized 10% for every 24 hours (or portion of 24 hours) that it is late. **DO NOT RELY ON YOUR GROUP MEMBERS TO TURN IT IN, because if it is late, ALL group members will be penalized as outlined above.** I will not accept any final papers more than one week late. I do not accept emailed assignments. It is your responsibility to allow yourself sufficient time to write your paper and address any computer or drive problems you may encounter.

Examinations:

- **All unit exams and the final exam will be ONLINE and administered on Blackboard.** These online exams are timed, and you are expected to complete the test without consulting your class notes or your textbook. You will NOT need a special browser or any additional software to complete the exams, although you will be asked to attest to your academic integrity at the conclusion of each exam.
- Exams will have a deadline that is specified in the Learning Module and will automatically deactivate after that due deadline has expired. Make-up exams will be given in the event of extreme, unavoidable circumstances (e.g. death in family, illness) and ONLY at my discretion. In addition, I reserve the right to request and obtain written documentation verifying the reported circumstance. Students who must miss a test deadline due to an extreme circumstance must contact me at least 24 hours prior to the deadline to be considered for a make-up exam.
- Three unit exams worth a possible 100 points each will be given throughout the semester. Each exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer essay questions designed to assess your understanding of the material, rather than rote memorization. In other words, you should expect to apply material from the text and class to novel situations. Exams may include material covered for the present chapters as well as from preceding chapters.
- In addition, a final exam worth 100 points will be given, and will be due before **5pm on Thursday of Finals Week**. The final exam will be comprehensive and cumulative in nature and will cover the general material presented throughout the semester. Students should use the unit exams to identify areas of difficulty, so they can seek assistance in these areas and study the material before the final exam.
- If you find yourself having difficulty on the exams, please seek assistance from the instructor. I am always willing to help students identify areas of difficulty and assist in identifying improved ways of studying. Please seek help earlier rather than later!

Severe Weather/Fire Policy:

- In the event that GVSU classes are canceled because of severe weather, activities for the canceled class will be converted to an online modality or cancelled, per an email from the professor.
- In the case of fire, please proceed to the nearest exit. Do not use elevators. For more information please consult www.gvsu.edu/emergency

Accommodations for Disabilities:

- Any student who requires accommodation because of a physical or learning disability must contact Disability Support Resources at 616-331-2490 as soon as possible. After you have documented your disability, please make an appointment or see me to discuss your specific needs.

Grading:

- The final grade for the course will be based upon scores obtained on the three unit examinations (300 points), one final exam (100 points), the behavior modification project paper (70 points), in-class activities (80 points), and online assignments (100 points). Percentages are calculated by dividing the total points obtained by the total points possible in the class.
- The following grading system will be used:

<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Grade</i>
93 – 100%	A
90 – 92%	A-
87 – 89%	B+
83 – 86%	B
80 – 82%	B-
77 – 79%	C+
73 – 76%	C
70 – 72%	C-
66 – 69%	D+
61 – 65%	D
60% or less	F

Schedule of Topics and Examination Dates:

8-31	Syllabus/Ch. 1	Syllabus; What is Behavior Modification?
9-2	Ch. 1, 2	Behavior Modification and its Application
9-7	Ch. 3	Behavioral Assessment
9-9	Ch. 3, 22	Behavioral and Functional Assessment
9-14	Ch. 29	Ethics in Behavior Modification
9-16	ONLINE	Video and Assignment
9-21	Ch. 4	Behavior Modification Designs
9-23	Ch. 4	Behavior Modification Designs
9-28	Exam #1 ONLINE	Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 22, 29 ONLINE
9-30	Ch. 6, 7	Positive Reinforcement
10-5	Ch. 16	Negative Reinforcement
10-7	Work Day for Project	Work Day for Project
10-12	Ch. 15	Punishment
10-14	Ch. 8	Extinction
10-19	Ch. 14; Ch. 10	Differential Reinforcement; Schedules
10-21	Ch. 10	Reinforcement Schedules
10-26	FALL BREAK	No Class
10-28	Exam #2 ONLINE	Chapters 6, 7, 16, 15, 8, 14, 10 ONLINE
11-2	Ch. 11	Stimulus Control
11-4	Ch. 11	Stimulus Control
11-9	Ch. 19; Sundberg & Michael article	Rule Governed Behavior; Verbal Behavior
11-11	Ch. 9, 13	Shaping, Chaining
11-16	Ch. 18	Generality of Behavior change
11-18	Exam #3 ONLINE	Chapters 11, 19, 9, 13, 18, ONLINE
11-23	B-Mod Group Paper Due!!!	Turn in paper on Blackboard
11-25	Thanksgiving	No Class
11-30	Ch. 25, 24	Self-Control, Token Economies
12-2	Ch. 27, 26	Behavior Therapy; Cognitive Behavior Therapy
12-7	Ch. 27, 26	Behavior Therapy; Cognitive Behavior Therapy
12-9	Review Day; Time Out article	Review for final/catch up
Finals Week	Final Exam ONLINE	Due by Thursday at 5pm ONLINE