Advanced Learning  
(PSY 6341) 
Spring 2018 (Online)

Instructor:  Steve T. Brewer, Ph.D.  
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Office Hours:  M & W 12 to 2 pm  
               T & R    11 to 1 pm  


Course Description:  Learning can be defined as "the acquisition of information, based on successful or unsuccessful experiences, that results in a relatively permanent change in behavior potential". Thus, learning may be conceived of as the process by which we acquire knowledge; in contrast, memory involves the subsequent use of that knowledge. Memory on the other hand, is an aspect of “cognition” which includes not only memory but such topics as problem solving, concept formation, language, attentional processes, and decision making. This course will review theories of classical and instrumental conditioning, biological constraints on learning and memory, memory formation, and thinking and language. 

Course Objectives:  
1. Gain factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)  
2. Learn fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories  
3. Learn to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions) 

Student Learning Outcomes:  
By the end of this course, you should:  
   1. Be able to articulate the major psychological and theoretical perspectives on learning and memory.  
   2. Be able to apply the information learned in this course to daily life.  
   3. Be able to utilize the information learned in this course not only to explain current behavior patterns but to predict future behavior patterns.  
   4. Be able to articulate the basic biology underlying learning and memory.
Class Sessions
1. This is an online class and as such is largely self-paced.
2. “Lectures” will be posted by chapter as it is assigned and placed in a folder entitled lecture material. “Lectures” will be designed to supplement the reading of assigned chapters.
3. Questions and comments are always welcome!
4. This course is broken into four (4) sections, corresponding to roughly one chapter every week and a quarter or one section a month. All material for a section will be posted at the beginning of the month and you can work through the material as you see fit. This is a graduate class so it is not a good idea to procrastinate, keep a steady pace and you should have no trouble.

Student Evaluation:
1) There will be twelve 15 item online quizzes (Bb) covering each chapter assigned and worth 30 points (360 total points). Students may take the quizzes three times with the higher score counting toward the course grade. There will be a 30-minute time limit. Quizzes are open book and open note. Be aware that the quizzes are randomly generated from a test bank so no two quizzes will be identical. The quizzes will be available until the end of the section in which they are posted. (see schedule) The quizzes are found in the folder, oddly enough named “quizzes”.

2) Four times during the semester, three or four discussion or thought questions involving topics covered during the previous weeks will be presented as a forum in the discussions folder. You are to answer ONE of the questions with a logically constructed essay of at least 500 words but not to exceed 750 words. Answers must be supported by empirical evidence from either the book or other reputable sources. Personal (anecdotal) experience is not evidence. You may use personal experience only to highlight or emphasize a point but remember your experience is not everyone’s experience so it cannot be the main point of your essay. Answers are to be submitted as a thread in the discussion forum (you will be able to see other student answers and plagiarism will be considered a serious academic violation that will likely result in course failure) by 5 pm Sunday in the week in which it is posted. The instructor reserves the right to use plagiarism prevention software. Each answer will be graded based on a total possible point value of 100 (400 possible points). You must also comment on one (1) other students’ answer to a different question (not the one you chose) by 11:59 pm Sunday – failure to do so will result in an automatic loss of 20 points. Comments are to be civil and professional in nature and address the substance of the answer (e.g., NOT “I really liked your answer” or “I agree with everything you say”).
3) In the video links folder is a list of links to videos (With each section there will be a new list of links) For each section you are to choose ONE of the videos to briefly summarize the main points, then you are to briefly relate the concept in the video to an experience in your life (e.g. describing how you operantly conditioned your dog). Each summary is worth 35 (140 total) points and must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the Sunday the links are posted. To submit the summaries, send it to me as a single email ATTACHMENT using .doc, .docx, .pdf or .rtf (word 2003, 2007, 2010, rich text format). Make sure you put your name on the attachment. Title the email “VIDEO section 1” or “VIDEO section 2” etc... The email MUST be sent using your ASU email account. If you find a link that no longer functions, please inform me.

Final grades will be based on total points earned (900 pts total)
810-900=A, 720-809=B, 630-719=C, 540-629=D and below 539=F.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Late assignments will not be accepted and will be assigned a grade of 0.

Communication
1. Email is the best way to contact your instructor.
2. All emails should include “PSY 6341” in the subject line.
3. All emails should include your first and last name.
4. Emails will typically be answered within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays), if an email is not answered within 24 hours please verify the email address and speak with your instructor during office hours or the next class period.

Tentative Schedule*

Section 1
Jan 16 - Introduction to Learning
Feb 11 Traditional Learning Theories
The Modification of Instinctive Behavior
Chapters 1-3
Quizzes 1-3
(Due 2-11 by 11:59 pm)
Discussions 1-2-3
(Due 2-11 by 5 pm)
Section 1 Video summary
(Due 2-11 by 11:59 pm)

Section 2
Feb 12- Principles and Applications of Pavlovian Conditioning
Mar 11 Theories of Pavlovian Conditioning
Principles and Applications of Appetitive Conditioning
Chapters 4-6
Quizzes 4-6
(Due 3-11 by 11:59)
Discussions 4-5-6
(Due 3-11 by 5 pm)
Section 2 Video summary
(Due 3-11 by 11:59 pm)
March 12-18 **Spring break, no assignments**

**Section 3**
March 19 - Principles and Applications of Aversive Conditioning
April 15 - Theories of Appetitive and Aversive Conditioning
Biological Influences on Learning

Chapters 7-9
Quizzes 7-9
*(Due 4-15 by 11:59)*
Discussions 7-8-9
*(Due 4-15 by 5 pm)*
Section 3 Video summary
*(Due 4-15 by 11:59 pm)*

**Section 4**
April 15 - Stimulus Control of Behavior
May 6 - Cognitive Control of Behavior
Memory Processes

Chapters 10-12
Quizzes 10-12
*(Due 5-6 by 11:59)*
Discussions 10-11-12
*(Due 5-6 by 5 pm)*
Section 4 Video summary
*(Due 5-6 by 11:59 pm)*

* Syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor*

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is available on the web at http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf. Any violation of academic honesty may result in course failure.

**Tutoring:**
The ASU Tutor Center is located in the Library C301 (3rd floor). Tutoring is free to all ASU students.

**Disabilities:**
Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center (325-942-2191), in order to request such accommodations prior to any accommodations being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made.