Course and Contact Information
Instructor(s): Susan Snycerski, Ph.D.
Office Location: DMH 311
Telephone: (408) 924-5662
Email: susan.snycerski@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:00-4:30 p.m. (online via Zoom)
Class Days/Time: Thursdays 4:30-7:15 p.m.
Classroom: DMH 308
Prerequisites: Psyc 155 or equivalent

Course Description
This graduate seminar will examine contemporary behavior science/analysis and learning theory from a biobehavioral perspective. Topics addressed include the experimental analysis of behavior, research methods in behavior analysis, classical conditioning, operant conditioning, stimulus control, the biological context of conditioning, applied behavior analysis, cultural practices, and substance use and addiction, among others. Theoretical and basic research findings are discussed and demonstrated through real-world applications of behavior science/analysis.

Warning: At times, this class will discuss drug use in great detail in terms of respondent and operant conditioning and treatments for substance use. Those with previous or existing drug problems should be aware of this and consider whether or not exposure to these discussions may serve as triggers for cravings for drug use and possible relapse. Your instructor is not responsible for any adverse reactions to the course material.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging
Canvas Login URL: https://sjsu.instructure.com. You are required to check Canvas regularly for announcements. You must first set up a SJSUOne account before accessing Canvas. To do so, go to http://its.sjsu.edu/services/sjsuone/ The Username for Canvas is your 9 digit SID and your password is the one you chose when you established your SJSUOne account. You will see the courses you are taking (assuming the instructor is using Canvas).

Further Assistance with Canvas- Students should go first to http://guides.instructure.com/m/4212 with problems and then to the University Help Desk for Canvas problems, including logging in (http://www.sjsu.edu/helpdesk/).

Course Goals
Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Content Goals
• CLO1: Describe the science of behavior, its history, and assumptions.
• CLO2: Describe and explain the processes of reflexive and respondent conditioning
• CLO3: Describe and explain the processes of operant conditioning, including stimulus control, motivating operations, aversive control, and verbal behavior.
• CLO 4: Identify appropriate research method designs for both basic/fundamental research and applied research and the ethical limitations of such designs.
• CLO5: Describe the biological context of conditioning from an operant-respondent interrelationship perspective

Critical Thinking Goals
• CLO6: Describe the relationship between fundamental/basic research findings and their application to real-world problems across a variety of settings.
• CLO7: Discuss and describe the evolution of and behavior science approach to verbal behavior (language)
• CLO8: Discuss and describe the three levels of selection: biology, behavior, and culture from a behavior science perspective

Communication Goals
• CLO9: Present, discuss, and answer questions related to student presentations on course reading materials effectively, efficiently, and at the graduate level.

All outcomes will be assessed via in-class, take-home, and/or online quizzes/activities/writing assignments, presentations, and exams.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Knowledge Base of Psychology
• PLO1: Students completing the MA in the Research and Experimental Psychology program will understand the major theoretical perspectives and research methods across areas of experimental psychology.

Research Methods and Scholarship: Graduates of our program will possess an advanced level of competence in research methods, statistical techniques, and technical writing skills. Students completing the MA in Research and Experimental Psychology program are required to complete a thesis. The thesis will demonstrate:

• PLO2.1: creative problem-solving in the design of and implementation of empirical research.

• PLO2.2: –project management skills in the implementation of empirical research

• PLO2.3 –advanced competency in the statistical analysis and interpretation of empirical research findings.

• PLO2.4 – communication (oral and written) of research findings at a professional level.

Career Enhancement: Graduates of our program will experience career enhancement through placement in a doctoral program or acceptance of a position requiring a master’s in psychology in the public or private sector. Students completing the MA in the Research and Experimental Psychology program will:

• PLO3: Achieve career enhancement through placement in a doctoral program or acceptance of a position requiring a master’s in psychology in the public or private sector.
Required Texts/Readings

Textbook: The textbook is required. Students will be responsible for writing assignments based on the textbook and posted articles on Canvas.

Text can be purchased at the Spartan Bookstore or online.

Other Readings

Additional course reading material will be posted throughout the semester on our course management website, Canvas http://sjsu.instructure.com

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

Students will need reliable access to a computer and to the internet. Writing assignments may require access to the SJSU/King Library PsychInfo databases. More information will be provided in class.

Library Liaison (Delete if not applicable)

Christa Bailey
Email: christa.bailey@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

This is a graduate seminar, so I expect you to be attentive in class, participate in discussions, and be fully present during our time together. Preparation is key to success, as such all students are expected to read all course material prior to class and be prepared for class discussions and assignments. The quality of the class will depend, in part, on how well each participant contributes to the work we do in the classroom. If we all are to gain from our efforts, it is very important that everyone comes to class prepared to participate actively in discussion of the issues at hand. Students are particularly encouraged to discover how learning theory relates to their own areas of interest. In-class activities are only for those students present; that is, there are no make-up opportunities for specific in-class activities except in cases of documented emergencies. Thus, be sure to obtain a doctor’s note, court notice, accident/police report, and so forth if you must miss class. Inform me as soon as you can of the incident.

If you have to miss a class, please let me know beforehand; if you cannot, inform me as your earliest opportunity to do so. If I have to miss a class, I will post it on Canvas. Therefore, please check our class website prior to each session.

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Dr. Susan Snyerski, Psyc 255, Seminar in Learning, Spring, 2022
Assignments for this course are provided below, and additional details will be elaborated upon in class and posted on Canvas.

**Exams:** You will have three exams. Exams may comprise multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions.

**Writing assignments and student-led discussions:** There will be weekly activities. Some of these will be submitted to Canvas prior to the scheduled class period and others will occur in class. Writing assignments and student discussions will consist of thought-provoking questions and critical analysis regarding the material presented in the textbook and posted journal articles.

**Writing Assignments**

**Self-Management Project (SMP):** This semester-long project consists of four written reports and a final class oral presentation. Details are provided in class and on Canvas.

- Part 1: Proposal
- Part 2: Baseline
- Part 3: Intervention
- Part 4: Final SMP report
- Part 5: Oral presentation (Powerpoint or equivalent software)

**Literature review:** Students shall write a literature review on an approved topic related to the material presented in class and how it relates to an area of research for which they are interested (e.g., behavioral pharmacology, behavioral treatments for various conditions, stimulus control in the workplace, behavior-based safety, etc.). The paper should include at least five peer-reviewed journal articles and should be between six and eight pages, double-spaced. You will summarize and critique the articles using effective transitions. Students will provide an oral summary of their main findings via Powerpoint presentation (or similar software). Additional details on the paper are provided in class and on Canvas.

**Participation via Response Papers:** Prior to each class session, students will submit in writing a response to the reading for that class period. These short response papers will consist of at least three topics addressed in the reading that the student will present to the class for discussion/elaboration/critique. These response papers are fundamental to our class discussions, facilitate dialog, and will count as participation points. In order to earn these points, the papers must be submitted on Wednesdays prior to class by 11:00 p.m. on Canvas and presented in class on Thursdays. Students may read from their papers in class (i.e., this material does not need to be memorized). In addition, during presentations, each student be prepared to ask or answer questions posed by their classmates. Additional details are provided in class and on Canvas.

**Final Examination or Evaluation**

May 19 from 7:45-10:00 p.m.

“Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.”

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Dr. Susan Snyderski, Psyc 255, Seminar in Learning, Spring, 2022
Grading Information

Your grade will be determined by the total number of points you earn throughout the semester.

Grading

- 3 Exams @ 50 points each = 150 (30%)
- Self-Management Project 3 Reports @25 points each = 75 (15%)
- Final SMP Report @50 points = 50 (10%)
- Oral Presentation of SMP Report = 25 (5%)
- Literature Review = 100 (20%)
- Presentation of Literature Review = 25 (5%)
- Response papers (participation) 12@6.25 points each = 75 (15%)
- Total points available = 500

Grading scale:

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<tr>
<th>Points earned</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Points earned</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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Classroom Protocol

Classroom behavior: Students should arrive on time; arriving late is distracting so please plan to be in your seat at the beginning of class. Please let me know if you need to leave early.

Students are expected to attend class and maintain a level of professional and courteous behavior in the classroom. Respect for the rights and opinions of others is expected. The free and open exchange of ideas is the cornerstone of higher education, but we must always remain respectful of others, even if we disagree strongly with them. Disagreement is acceptable, but discourtesy is not. Behavior that creates a threatening or harassing environment (either online or in class) will not be tolerated. Severe and pervasive disruptions of class activities are a violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. In short, let’s all be kind to one another.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on Syllabus Information web page (https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.
Additional Information

Cell phones and other electronic devices
Please be certain to turn off or put in silent mode (not vibrate mode as that is still audible and is distracting) all cell phones, pagers, and any other devices that produce distraction prior to the start of class. Phones should not appear on the desktop; rather, they should be stored during class sessions in pockets, book bags, purses, and the like. We will dedicate our time in the classroom to scholarly discussions on course materials.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material
Recording of lectures is not allowed.

Psyc 255 / Seminar in Learning, Spring, 2022 Course Schedule

Note that the textbook chapters and other assigned readings should be read by the date listed.

This course will follow the schedule below, but it subject to change with fair notice. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class and posted on Canvas under the “Announcements” link. In the event class has to be cancelled, I will post a notice on Canvas as soon as possible. Please check Canvas every day before class.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/27</td>
<td>Introduction to the course. Self-Management Project (SMP) overview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Lehman &amp; Geller (2004); Higgins et al. (1991); Scherrer &amp; Wilder (on Canvas)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>Chapter 1: A Science of Behavior: Perspective, History, and Assumptions Chapter 2: The Experimental Analysis of Behavior</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2/17</td>
<td>Basic Research with Humans (on Canvas)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2/24</td>
<td>Chapter 3: Reflexive Behavior and Respondent Conditioning</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>Exam 1: Chapters 1, 2, and 3 from textbook. Chapter: Basic Research with Humans from Canvas</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>Chapter 4: Reinforcement and Extinction of Operant Behavior</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3/24</td>
<td>Chapter 5: Schedules of Reinforcement Chapter 6: Aversive Control of Behavior</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3/31</td>
<td>Spring break</td>
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Dr. Susan Snycerski, Psyc 255, Seminar in Learning, Spring, 2022
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<th>Week</th>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4/7</td>
<td>Chapter 7: Operant-Respondent Interrelationships: The Biological Contrast</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4/14</td>
<td>Exam 2: MOs, Chapters 5, 6, and 7 from textbook</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4/21</td>
<td>Chapter 8: Stimulus Control</td>
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<td>Chapter 10: Conditioned Reinforcement</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>Chapter 11: Correspondence Relations: Imitation and Rule-Governed Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5/12</td>
<td>Chapter 13. Applied Behavior Analysis</td>
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**Final Exam: Chapters 8, 10, 11, and 13**  
May 19 current classroom 7:45-10:00 p.m.

Due dates by assignment type:

Participation Response Papers due by 11:00 p.m. on the following days:  
February 2, 9, 16, and 23  
March 9, 16, and 23  
April 6, 20, and 27  
May 4 and 13  

Self-Management Project (SMP)  
Proposal: February 20  
Baseline: Report March 13  
Intervention: Report April 24  
Final SMP Report: May 11  
Oral Presentation: May 11  

Literature Review: April 7  
Oral Presentation: April 7