

**San José State University
Department of Psychology
PSYC 155.1 (81), Human Learning
Winter 2024**

Instructor:	Dr. Steven Del Chiaro
Office Location:	Zoom
Email:	Through Canvas (Please indicate on the subject line of the email: class date and time)
Office Hours:	By appointment on Zoom (request through Canvas) 8:00 am – 9:00 am Class Meeting Days
Class Modality	Online Hybrid
Class Days/Time:	Monday-Friday 9:00am– 11:55 am . Class meeting dates – See Syllabus and Zoom section of Canvas
Classroom:	Zoom

Course Web Page

Class Websites:

Canvas – ALL assignments are assigned and turned into Canvas. You must be able to upload .doc or pdf. documents.

Logging Into Canvas

Canvas Login URL: <https://sjsu.instructure.com/> . Please note that it should NOT have the "www" at the start of the URL like many other websites. All students must first set up their SJSUOne account before accessing Canvas. To do so, go to <http://its.sjsu.edu/services/sjsuone/> . The **Username for Canvas** then is your 9 digit SID or Employee ID and your PW is the one you chose when you established your SJSUOne account. You will see the courses you 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 Description

Through learning, humans and animals share a capacity to adapt to ever changing demands in the environment. Attempts to understand these processes form a cornerstone of experimental psychology. Theories from this basic research have contributed to applications and further theory development in many other areas of psychology (e.g. clinical, social and education). PSYC 155 is an introduction to the study of learning and behavior and focuses on the Behavioral Perspective as a way of improving our understanding of human behavior and how it is shaped.

The course will focus on two types of learning: Classical and Operant conditioning. Students can have a life-changing experience in this course, because it provides the basis for new ways of approaching common life challenges such as disciplining children, maintaining positive marriages and other relationships, and procrastination (to name just a few). The material is intellectually challenging at times, but well worth the effort required to learn to think like a Behaviorist!

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook – Must purchase LMS, E-Book comes with LMS. We will cover first day of class
Powell, R. A., Symbaluk, D. G., & MacDonald, S. E. (2017). Introduction to Learning & Behavior. 5th Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

Other Readings

As assigned by instructors on an as needed basis.

Learning Outcomes

The primary goal of this course will be to help you develop an understanding of the major themes, issues, and methods recognized within the psychology of learning. The aim of this course is to provide an understanding of the basic principles of the learning process. You will discover the learning processes that allow us to know how and when to act in order to obtain desired pleasurable aspects of our environment and to avoid unwanted unpleasant ones.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

The primary goal of this course will be to help you develop an understanding of the major themes, issues, and methods recognized within the psychology of learning. The aim of this course is to provide an understanding of the basic principles of the learning process. You will discover the learning processes that allow us to know how and when to act in order to obtain desired pleasurable aspects of our environment and to avoid unwanted unpleasant ones.

Competencies and Performance Indicators

The competencies listed below shall be demonstrated and assessed through class discussion, exams (comprised of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions) and simulation lab reports.

1. Understand the science of learning.
 - a. Demonstrate an appreciation of the empirical foundation of the study of learning.
 - b. Be familiar with research techniques and findings that illustrate fundamental learning concepts.
2. Differentiate between various theories of learning and memory.
 - a. Be able to understand and differentiate between theories.
 - b. Be able to cite evidence supporting the views of major theorists.
3. Demonstrate the ability to apply the concepts learned in the course to concrete examples:
 - a. Be able to differentiate and explain learning concepts using your self-change project.
 - b. Be able to apply learning principles to real world phenomena.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

PLO1 – Knowledge Base of Psychology – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology. (test, quizzes, paper)

PLO2 – Research Methods in Psychology – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations. (paper)

PLO3 – Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes. (paper)

PLO4 – Application of Psychology – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues. (tests, paper)

PLO5 – Values in Psychology – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society. (paper)

Library Liaison

Bailey, Christa

Phone: 408-808-2422

Email: christa.bailey@sjsu.edu

Classroom Protocol

Syllabus Policy:

The course syllabus presented in this document will be followed as closely as possible. However, the course syllabus, schedule, policies, and procedures are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor or in the event of extenuating circumstances. This includes the tentative dates listed. The instructor will announce possible changes of the syllabus in advance. Since such announcements are typically made during class, it is the student's responsibility to clarify any of these changes that may have been made when the student is absent.

Although you will be responsible for all of the material in the assigned readings, some of the information may not be covered in class. Therefore, if there is material that is unclear to you it is highly recommended that you discuss this material with me at an appropriate time (e.g., during office hours). It is your responsibility to read the syllabus and ask questions about it so that you have a clear understanding of the expectations. If you are unclear about any of the requirements/expectations, then please set up a time to speak with me. I will be grading as though you have a clear understanding of the course requirements and material.

Attendance:

I will not be taking attendance. You are adults and need to make your own decisions. Please realize that your decisions have consequences (If this makes no sense to you then this is the course for you, as you will understand through operant conditioning that behaviors have

consequences!). Students are responsible for everything that is said and done in class. I strive to make my classes not only educational but also enjoyable. It is important to note that it is the student's responsibility to withdraw from a course they do not wish to take. If you simply stop coming to the class and do not withdraw from the course, then you will still receive a grade that will be based on the completed work. Additionally, I encourage students to arrive on time for the class. However, I understand that extenuating circumstances do arise that can prevent your diligent efforts toward punctuality. I do have a small portion of your grade based on participation, tardiness can affect your grade. Many important pieces of information are discussed in class, and students are responsible for knowing and complying with this information including changes in assignments. Please make appropriate adjustments to your schedule to allow for arrival to the class on time.

Classroom courtesy and disruptions:

Class disruptions are not tolerated. Students will be removed from class if they are being disruptive to fellow students or the professor. Disruptions include but are not limited to not paying attention (e.g., reading the newspaper, sleeping), tuning off video, etc. In accordance with university policies on student conduct, it is expected that you will treat other students and the instructor with courtesy and respect. Being distracting on Zoom ARE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE NOT RESPECTFUL!

Recording of Class Lectures

Common courtesy and professional behavior dictates that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. This permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.

Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor-generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the [current academic calendar](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/) web page located at http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes. Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

EXAMS:

Exams will be multiple-choice. The tests will have questions from the text, lectures and videos. Each exam will be given on canvas and you will have 60 minutes to complete the exam.

**** Make-up exams will be given ONLY when there is a documented excuse that must be approved by the professor (medical notes, etc.). A make-up exam will not be the same multiple-choice exam that is given in class. The make-up exam will consist of 5 to 8 essay questions on topics covered in the textbook and lecture, and it will be worth the same point value as the original exam. ****

LMS Completion: Complete the assigned LMS (Learning Management System) assignments through Canvas. From there click the Cengage tab under the class, this will link you to the appropriate website to complete the LMS. There is no time-limit. The assignments are graded based on completion and mastery of the chapter. You must complete an assignment for each of the assigned chapters on the syllabus. There are NO MAKE-UPS on LMS assignments (NO EXCEPTIONS). You must do them during the time period they are assigned. You will complete 10 assignments throughout the session. Each assignment is worth 10 points for a total of 100 points.

WRITING PROJECTS:

Assignments are listed on Canvas.

This semester there will be one project:

- Self-Change Project (Edited)

ALL of these assignments will be turned in with the self-change paper. **I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE WORK.**

Please do not email an assignment, it will NOT be accepted, nor will hardcopies in class.

Self- Change Project

Nobody is perfect. Some of us drive too fast, or too carelessly. Some of us want to recycle our newspapers, but never get around to it. We want to eat less and exercise more, but it just does not happen for us. We know some of our habits are bad for us (smoking, drinking) but we cannot cut back.

Principles of learning offer a solution. B. F. Skinner's behaviorism, although developed through carefully controlled scientific laboratory research, can be used to help people increase behaviors that they desire and decrease behaviors they wish to avoid. Use self-change principles to change some aspect of your behavior. Focus on some specific type of behavior that you would like to perform more (exercise, studying, being polite) or a behavior you would like to do less (partying, eating, drinking, being rude). Some other examples of things students have tried to change are listed at the bottom of this handout. Record the behavior on the provided behavioral checklist for one week, without attempting any change. Please note:

Please know that self-monitoring your behavior is difficult, but a task that can (and will) be completed.

Step 1: Behavior Decision.

- Decide on the behavior you will increase or decrease
- Write a paragraph description of the behavior, being as behaviorally specific as possible; express the goal of your project in observable, quantifiable terms.
- These goals must be very specific, and include both long and short range (daily) goals--but most important, they must be measurable;
- You can select those behaviors which you wish to do away with, non-desired goals as well as desired behaviors--but it would be best if you described behaviors that you want to increase (focus on creating behaviors that are incompatible with the behaviors you want to remove)

Step 2: Baseline 1.

- Establish the baseline, the operant level: measure the frequency of both the good and the bad behavior before you try to create any changes:

*Measurement is critical in self-change projects, so begin by recording your behavior on the checklist. Please note what is happening before during and after the selected behavior.

*Include the information about baseline in your report (If, for example, you were trying to study more you should say something like "On day one the participant spent 2.3 hours studying, on day two the participant did not study at all, and on day three the participant spent 1 hour studying).

- The length of your baseline recording will be over a one-week period.
- You also need to indicate where the behavior occurs; for example, you might say "The researcher decided to modify smoking behavior but needed to know the situations which elicited smoking --so for 7 days the researcher kept track of how many cigarettes were smoked, when, and where."

Step 3: Design Behavioral Change

- Select SR (Reinforcing Stimulus) and design the contingencies.
- Make a list of the reinforcers that you have decided are potent and controllable for and by you.
- List these reinforcers in your report and note which one you plan to use to control the behavior.
- You can also identify punishers: aversive stimuli that you would rather avoid. You will be using these to reduce behavior.

Types of reinforcers to consider:

- Physical rewards: such as candy, food, drinks, etc.: things you want;
- Social rewards: arrange for someone else to give you praise, attention, and so on if you perform the target behavior;
- Activities: things you like to do (such as watching TV, socializing, etc.) that you cannot do if you don't perform the behavior;
- Note: It is often advisable to use a variety of reinforcers, so you will not "burn out" on one.

Name the Contingencies:

- State the exact conditions under which these consequences are applied (e.g., If I study for 1 hour I will get 5 M&M candies).
- If you plan to use punishment, then state those criteria as well (e.g., I did not meet my goal of studying for 3 hours and so the following day I did not permit myself to listen to any music).

Step 4: Intervention Stage.

- Institute the Program of Behavior Modification. Begin controlling the behavior through judicious use of reinforcers and punishment. This period should last one week (use another self-monitoring check list for recording behavior).
- Keep good records: record the behavior and the reinforcers/punishments constantly.
- Control the "stimulus environment". It is essential that you can administer the reinforcers immediately after the behavior, and that you can reduce interference from reinforcers that you do not control. That means you should make changes in your routine to avoid temptations (e.g., tell other people about the project and ask them not to interfere).
- If appropriate, post cues in your environment that will trigger your response: if you are supposed to be exercising more, then put up a sign in bedroom that says "Today you must exercise for 1 hour." (Describe your use of such a sign in your report).

Step 5: Follow up.

Because of time constraints, this step is optional, but would be used in any professional behavior modification project. Once the behavior has been created, you would return to baseline by stopping the rewards or punishments. This step is not necessary for this report. However, should you decide to complete this step, record your behavior on the checklist for one week.

Step 6: Write up the report

- Please type the report. There are no length restrictions. Use the length that you feel is appropriate to exactly specify what you did. The paper will have five sections:
 1. Introduction. (1-2 pages)
 2. Methodology. (1 page)
 3. Results. (1 page)
 4. Discussion. (4-6 pages)
- The report will include charts and graphs of the behavior rates, but it should be a well-written narrative (with sentences and paragraphs).
- **Add a final paragraph that draws conclusions about the project.**
- Use appropriate terms from the lectures and text.

Weaknesses or omissions or something incorrect with the following areas will result in a loss of points:

Step 1: Behavior Decision.

- Define the problem in a situation in a paragraph.
- Clearly state, "target behavior is..."

Step 2: Baseline.

- Collect baseline data.

- Describe what is found.
- Graph the baseline data.

Step 3: Design Behavioral Change

- Self-reinforcements listed, explained.
- Self-punishments clearly indicated
- Reinforcement and/or punishments contingencies described (state contingencies, e.g., "If I exercise, then I will get a cookie).

Step 4: Intervention Phase.

- Behavior modification process described.
- Data are provided describing the behavior modification results
- Attempts at stimulus control are noted
- Final conclusion paragraph describing results

In Addition:

- All checklists turned in (must be legible).
- Project Not as Well Organized as it Could Have Been.
- Project Not as Well Written as it Could Have Been.

Helpful Information:

Some sample behaviors that you can modify are listed at the end of this page. Also, if you would like more information on the psychology of self-control--especially the science side of self-control based on verified principles of behaviorism instead of that "pop" psychology stuff that is not really helpful at all--begin with Dr. Clay Tucker-Ladd page. He is the author of Psychological Self-help, which is available on the web at the following site:

<http://mentalhelp.net/psyhelp/>

Dr. Tucker reviews, in detailed, dozens of self-change methods, including:

- Change the environment to change your behavior
- Learn new behavior (using models, self-instructions)
- Controlling/Conditioned response
- Relapse prevention
- Motivation training--increasing our drive level
- Avoid self-deception--recognize your motives and defenses
- Record behavior--self-monitor and check your progress
- Record antecedents & consequences; behavioral analysis
- Disrupt the unwanted habit; thought stopping
- Substitute new behavior to break a bad habit
- Satiate behavior or flooding; paradoxical intention
- Change defeatist attitude; quieting the internal critic; flow
- Develop positive expectations; building self-efficacy
- Increase intrinsic satisfactions
- Reward the desired behavior--a powerful method
- Negative reinforcement--an important concept for insight
- Self-punishment

Structure for Assignments

1. ALL OF YOUR WORK NEEDS TO BE UPLOADED ON CANVAS. NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED IN ANY OTHER MEDIUM.
2. Your papers need be organized - you should be developing a central idea in each section and the reader should be able to follow the logic of your argument. Each paragraph should have a coherent theme and paragraphs should follow each other in an organized manner. Read over your papers to be sure that there is a logical order to them.
3. Watch for grammatical errors, particularly sentence fragments and run-on sentences. **You will be marked down for these errors.**
4. Your papers will be typewritten, double-spaced, one-inch margins, using Times New Roman font. (APA Format) <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/18/>
5. References included in your paper are to be done according to APA style as described in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition, which is available in the library, the campus bookstore, and on-line. You should have at least 2 references for every paper and they will be listed on a separate page on the back of your assignment.

Grading will be based on the sum of the following:

1. Two (2) exams covering lectures, films, guest speakers, outside readings and the text are worth 100 points each (200).
2. 9 quizzes will be worth 5 points each (45).
3. Participation Quizzes totaling 30 points (30).
4. Self-Change project will be worth 100 points (100): See Rubrics for Assignment.

Total Points = 375

The grade scale is as follows:

A	=	94 – 100%	C+	=	77 – 79%
A-	=	90 – 93%	C	=	73 – 76%
B+	=	87 – 89%	C-	=	70 – 72%
B	=	83 – 86%	D	=	60 – 69%
B-	=	80 – 82%	F	=	< 59 %

Late Work: No Late Work Will Be Accepted – NO EXCEPTIONS!

As the session concludes, do not email the instructor or TA asking for “extra points” to raise your grade. The result of such actions will result in a 5% overall grade reduction.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires

you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook. (Note: You need to have a



QR Reader to scan this code.)

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

University Resources

SJSU offers many recourses to students for basic needs. Talk to me, or visit the website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/sjsucares/>

Reading Topics, Exams and Dates: Psych155.

Note: This course will follow this syllabus to the extent possible. You are responsible for keeping informed of any changes made to the class syllabus. You are responsible for checking the class web site before each class. Therefore, it is extremely important to **check the website before each class.**

Table 1 Course Schedule

Day	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan 3*	Class Business/Syllabus Classical and Operant Video
2	Jan 4	Classical and Operant Video
3	Jan 5*	Introduction, Chapter 1 Quiz Ch1 due on Canvas at 9:00AM
4	Jan 8*	Research Methods, Chapter 2 Quiz Ch2 due on Canvas at 9:00AM
5	Jan 9	Elicited Behaviors and Classical Conditioning, Chapter 3 Quiz Ch3 due on Canvas at 9:00AM Behavioral Checklist Baseline Chart Due (Bring to zoom class)
6	Jan 10*	Classical Conditioning: Basic Phenomena and Various Complexities, Chapter 4 Quiz #4 due on Canvas at 9:00AM
7	Jan 11	Classical Conditioning: Underlying Processes and Practical Applications, Chapter 5 Quiz #5 due on Canvas at 9:00AM
8	Jan 12*	Operant Conditioning: Introduction, Chapter 6 Quiz #6 due on Canvas at 9:00AM Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5) due at 11:59 PM
9	Jan 15	No Class MLK Holiday
10	Jan 16	Schedules and Theories of Reinforcement, Chapter 7 Quiz #7 due on Canvas at 9:00AM
11	Jan 17*	Extinction and Stimulus Control, Chapter 8 Quiz #8 due on Canvas at 9:00AM
12	Jan 18	
13	Jan 19*	Escape, Avoidance, and Punishment, Chapter 9: Quiz #9 due on Canvas at 9:00AM Self-Change Paper Draft – Peer Review Submit by 9 AM. Paper must be complete. Complete Peer reviews by Jan 19 at 3:00PM
14	Jan 20	Self-Change Paper Due at 11:59 PM Exam 2 (Chapters 6-9)

***Bold Dates are zoom meeting dates**