

**San José State University  
Department of Psychology  
PSYC 155.1 (81), Human Learning  
Winter 2025**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Steven Del Chiaro
<b>Office Location:</b>	Virtual (Zoom)
<b>Email:</b>	Through Canvas (Please indicate on the subject line of the email: class date and time)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment via Zoom (message through Canvas to schedule)
<b>Class Modality</b>	<b>Online Asynchronous</b> Because this is an asynchronous course, there are no live meetings. Your progress depends on consistent engagement with Canvas, timely completion of assignments, and reviewing all posted instructions and announcements.
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Dec 22, 2025 - Dec 23, 2025 Jan 2, 2026 - Jan 16, 2026

### **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/> . Log into Canvas using your SJSUOne credentials. Visit <https://one.sjsu.edu> if you need assistance. 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. Watch the how to get the book video or come to optional office hours the first day of instruction (see canvas announcement for day/time/zoom address).**

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.

### **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 written assignments.
  - 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, LMS, writing assignments)

*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. (writing assignments)

*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. (writing assignments)

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

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

## **Library Liaison**

Bailey, Christa

Phone: 408-808-2422

Email: [christa.bailey@sjsu.edu](mailto:christa.bailey@sjsu.edu)

## **Course Protocol**

### **Syllabus and Course Expectations:**

The syllabus, schedule, policies, and procedures presented in this document will be followed as closely as possible. However, they are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor or in the event of extenuating circumstances. This includes the tentative dates listed. Any updates or changes will be announced in Canvas. It is the student's responsibility to review all Canvas announcements and module updates to stay informed.

You are responsible for all material in the assigned readings. Some content may not be highlighted in recorded lectures, notes, or activities. If any material is unclear, you are encouraged to reach out during office hours or send a message through Canvas. It is your responsibility to read the syllabus carefully and ask questions so that you have a clear understanding of expectations. If you are unsure about any requirement, please arrange a time to speak with me. I will be grading with the expectation that you have reviewed the syllabus and are familiar with all course requirements and materials.

### **Attendance and Participation Expectations (Asynchronous Format):**

Because this course is asynchronous, there are no scheduled class meetings and I will not be taking attendance. You are adults and need to make your own decisions about how to manage your time and responsibilities. Please recognize that your choices have consequences. If this statement feels unfamiliar, then you are in the right course, because we will explore how operant conditioning teaches that behaviors have consequences.

Students are responsible for all course content, announcements, instructions, and deadlines posted in Canvas. It is your responsibility to keep up with weekly modules, complete required

activities, and stay informed about any changes to assignments. Although there is no live attendance, participation still matters. Your participation grade will be based on timely engagement with the assigned work, discussion activities, and submissions.

If you decide not to remain in the course, it is your responsibility to withdraw through the college. If you stop completing work but do not officially withdraw, you will still receive a grade based on the assignments you have completed.

I strive to make this course both educational and enjoyable. To benefit fully, plan your schedule so you can consistently participate and engage with the material throughout the session.

### **Course Conduct and Online Courtesy**

Even in an asynchronous course, professionalism and respect matter. All interactions in discussion boards, messages, and submitted work should reflect courtesy, clarity, and respect for others. Disruptive or inappropriate behavior in any online space will not be tolerated and may result in removal from activities or referral to the college's student conduct process.

Examples of disruptive behavior in an asynchronous environment include: posting disrespectful comments, derailing or dominating discussions, submitting irrelevant or intentionally provocative material, or interfering with another student's ability to participate. You are expected to engage thoughtfully, follow the prompts, and contribute in a way that supports a productive learning environment.

Treat your classmates and your instructor with the same level of respect you expect in return. Professional conduct is a core expectation of this course.

### **Recording and Use of Course Materials**

All course content provided in this asynchronous class, including video lectures, audio segments, slides, notes, assignments, and any instructional materials, is the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials are for your personal learning only and may not be shared, posted, reproduced, or distributed without explicit written permission.

Students may not record, copy, download for distribution, or upload any instructor-generated content to external sites. This includes but is not limited to video lectures, recorded explanations, exam questions, assignment prompts, slides, and answer keys. Sharing or posting course materials without permission violates academic integrity and university policy.

If you have accessibility needs that require recorded or alternative formats, please coordinate through the appropriate college services so that accommodations can be handled properly.

### **Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the university's policies and deadlines related to adding and dropping courses, grade forgiveness, and other registration procedures. Please review the current semester's Catalog Policies at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add and drop deadlines are listed on the academic calendar at [http://www.sjsu.edu/academic\\_programs/calendars/academic\\_calendar/](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/). Information on the Late Drop Policy is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>.

It is your responsibility to be aware of all deadlines, requirements, and potential penalties for adding or dropping a class. Updated information and additional guidance can be found at the Advising Hub: <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY**

### **Exams**

There will be two online exams administered through Canvas. Each exam will be completed using Respondus LockDown Browser. You may use your own notes during the exam, but the use of AI tools or external assistance of any kind is not permitted. Exam questions will cover material from the textbook, recorded lectures, and assigned videos. You will have 60 minutes to complete each exam.

Make-up exams will be offered only with documented, instructor-approved excuses such as medical documentation. Make-up exams will differ from the standard version and will consist of 5 to 8 essay questions covering the same content. They will carry the same point value as the original exam.

Please refer to Canvas for specific exam dates, times, and additional instructions.

### **LMS Completion**

You are required to complete all assigned LMS (Learning Management System) activities through Canvas. Access the assignments by selecting the Cengage link within our Canvas course, which will take you to the correct platform. There is no time limit for individual LMS assignments, and each activity is graded on completion and mastery of the chapter content.

**You must complete one LMS assignment for each chapter listed on the syllabus. LMS assignments will not be reopened and late submissions are not accepted under any circumstances. All LMS work must be completed by the posted due dates.**

Across the session, you will complete 10 LMS assignments. Each assignment is worth 10 points, for a total of 100 points.

### **Behavioral TED Talk Analysis and Reflection**

There will be 5 videos to watch and reflect. This assignment aims to enhance students' critical thinking, listening, and analytical skills by engaging with a TED Talk selected by the instructor. Students will analyze the key messages, evaluate the speaker's effectiveness, and reflect on how the talk connects to the course material or broader societal issues. Instructions are found on canvas.

### **Classical and Operant Conditioning Video Worksheet**

You are required to watch the Classical and Operant Conditioning video located in the Modules section of Canvas. After viewing, complete the associated worksheet, also provided in the module. This assignment must be completed individually. The worksheet reinforces key learning principles and prepares you for later quizzes and exams. The completed worksheet is worth 10 points. No late submissions or make-ups will be accepted.

## Grading Policy

Your grade will be based on the sum of the following assignments:

1. **Classical and Operant Conditioning Video Worksheet** is worth 10 points.
2. **Two Exams** covering lectures, videos, and the textbook. Each exam is worth 100 points, for a total of 200 points.
3. **LMS Assignments** (10 total) worth 10 points each, for a total of 100 points.
4. **Behavioral TED Talk Analysis and Reflection** (5 total) worth 10 points each, for a total of 50 points.
5. **Classical and Operant Conditioning Exercises** (2 total) worth 10 points each, for a total of 20 points.

Grading Breakdown:

- Exams: 200
  - LMS: 100
  - TED Talks: 50
  - Video Worksheet: 10
  - Classical and Operant Conditioning Exercises: 20
- Total = 380**

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!**

## 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](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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 and for checking Canvas regularly for updates, instructions, and announcements.

**Therefore, it is extremely important to check Canvas daily during the session for new announcements and any updates to assignments.**

**Table 1 Course Schedule**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
1	12/22	Class Business/Syllabus Classical and Operant Video
2	12/23	Classical and Operant Video <b>Video Worksheet Due at 11:59 PM</b>
3	Jan 2	Introduction, Chapter 1 <b>LMS Ch1 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b>
4	Jan 5	Research Methods, Chapter 2 <b>LMS Ch2 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b> <b>TED Talk 1 Due at 11:59 PM</b>
5	Jan 6	Elicited Behaviors and Classical Conditioning, Chapter 3 <b>LMS Ch3 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b> <b>Classical Conditioning Exercise Due at 11:59 PM</b>
6	Jan 7	Classical Conditioning: Basic Phenomena and Various Complexities, Chapter 4 <b>LMS #4 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b> <b>TED Talk 2 Due at 11:59 PM</b>
7	Jan 8	Classical Conditioning: Underlying Processes and Practical Applications, Chapter 5 <b>LMS #5 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b> <b>TED Talk 3 Due at 11:59 PM</b>
8	Jan 9	Operant Conditioning: Introduction, Chapter 6 <b>LMS #6 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b> <b>Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5) due at 11:59 PM</b> <b>Operant Conditioning Exercise Due at 11:59 PM</b>
9	Jan 12	Schedules and Theories of Reinforcement, Chapter 7 <b>LMS #7 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b> <b>TED Talk 4 Due at 11:59 PM</b>
10	Jan 13	Extinction and Stimulus Control, Chapter 8 <b>LMS #8 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b>
11	Jan 14	Escape, Avoidance, and Punishment, Chapter 9: <b>LMS #9 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b> <b>TED Talk 5 Due at 11:59 PM</b>
12	Jan 15	Choice, Matching, and Self-Control, Chapter 10 <b>LMS #10 due on Canvas at 11:59 PM</b>

13	Jan 16	<b>Exam 2 (Chapters 6-10)</b>
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