

PSY 4600, Survey of Behavior Analysis Research, CRN 40384
Fall 2010 Course Syllabus and Calendar

Instructor Information

Professor:	Dr. A. Dickinson	Office:	3744 Wood Hall
Home Phone:	372-3206	Office Hours:	TR: 2:00 – 3:00 pm
Phone Hours:	9 a.m. -5 p.m. Monday through Friday		Others by appt.
Office Phone:	387-4473 (to leave messages)		
Email:	alyce.dickinson@wmich.edu (best way to contact me)		

Course Assistants

Graduate Assistant: Sarah E. VanStelle, sarah.vanstelle@wmich.edu
 Undergraduate Assistants: Anna L. Conard, anna.l.conard@wmich.edu
 Natalie M. Grandy, natalie.m.grandy@wmich.edu
 Jerrad E. Yaw, jerrad.e.yaw@wmich.edu

Questions about the study objectives and lecture material should be directed to the course assistants. Please do contact them if you have questions – they are here to help you. If you would like help in improving your study skills and/or exam grades, contact either Sarah or me. All special requests related to the course should be directed to me.

A caution about emailing the assistants: If you email the course assistants with questions about the exam, you should do so at least 24 hours before the exam. Otherwise, they may not be able to respond to your questions before the exam.

Instructional Assistance Hours

Days: The day before the exam, Monday or Wednesday
 Time: 6:00-7:30 pm
 Location: Wood Hall, first floor lounge area

If you are unable to attend the scheduled hours, but would like help, please contact me and I will try to arrange an individual appointment for you with one of the assistants.

Web Site for Lecture Power Point Presentations and Supplemental Course Materials

Course materials will be available on my web site at: <http://alycedickinson.com>. Power point presentations for the unit will be posted on the web site and can be downloaded. I will post them before the first lecture of the week. There are also supplemental materials related to some of the units posted on the web site. Some material links to Dr. Doug Johnson's web site (Dr. Johnson developed some of it for me. That web site address is: <http://operant-tech.com>)

Course Materials

A course pack is the only text for this course. It can be purchased at Western's Campus Bookstore located in the Bernhard Student Center. The pack contains the study objectives for each unit in the course and all of the text/reading material. Copyright permissions have been obtained for all of the material.

Bring the study objectives for the relevant unit to lecture (along with the downloaded ppts, if you want to do that). I had the course materials copied on 3-hole punch paper so that you can put all of the course materials in a 3-ring binder and then take out the relevant unit material and bring it to class. This will make it much easier for you – sometimes students try to take too many notes during lecture because they do not know what is already contained in the study objectives. Thus, they often miss important information because they are too busy writing down information that is already in the study objectives and/or ppts.

General Course Description

This course will provide an overview of diverse topics of behavior analysis research and applications. The objectives of the course are (a) to increase your understanding of the principles of respondent and operant conditioning and (b) to introduce you to diverse areas of applications of behavioral psychology. One purpose for doing so is to help you realize that our basic principles of behavior are relevant to all areas of psychology and all specializations in psychology. Topics include: Performance management, higher education (college teaching and an analysis of student studying behavior), teaching technology (direct instruction, precision teaching, and Headsprout reading program), motivation, behavioral medicine, gerontology, verbal behavior, ethics, and certification in behavior analysis.

Course prerequisites include PSY 3300 and 3600. Please note that PSY 3600 is a critical prerequisite - you cannot take it simultaneously with this class nor should you take this class if you received below a C in PSY 3600. About 90% percent of students who have attempted to do this have been unsuccessful.

Just a note about the topics I will be covering in this class. Behavior analysis can be applied to any area that has to do with human behavior and nonhuman (animal) behavior. Areas of application include ones with which you are probably familiar (i.e., school psychology, developmental disabilities and autism, and child and adult clinical psychology). But there are many other areas of application. I cannot cover all areas of application in one semester, so I have to make some choices about what to include and what not to include. I have avoided, for the most part, topics that are covered in popular electives in the department. But if you are interested in an area that I am not covering in this class and is not covered in one of our elective courses, chances are behavior analysts have worked in the area.

There are two excellent sources about various areas of application. One is the web site for the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies. The address is: www.behavior.org. They have buttons on their main page for the following application areas: (a) aging, (b) animal training, (c) autism, (d) behavioral economics, (e) behavioral safety, (f) brain injury, (g) clinical behavior analysis, (h) computer modeling of behavior, (i) education and school psychology, (j) gambling, (k) organizational behavior management, (l) parenting, (m) performance systems analysis, and (n) verbal behavior. Another excellent source is the Association for Behavior Analysis web site, particularly the special interest groups that specialize in particular areas of application. That web site address is: www.abainternational.org.

General Course Format

Except for the last unit (Unit 8) there will be two class lectures, followed by a 35-point essay examination. The days of the exams will rotate between Tuesday and Thursday throughout the semester. Please refer to the calendar at the end of the syllabus for the course schedule.

Unit 8 will also be worth 35 points. However, the assignment will be two parts. Fifteen points will be awarded for completing the first seven modules of WMU's Human Subjects Institutional Review Board's on-line training program on research ethics. The other 20 points will be awarded based on your performance on an exam over certification in behavior analysis and ethics (when working with clients). For additional information about this unit, please see the Unit 8 study objectives in the course pack.

Course Grades

Your course grade will be based on the number of points that you earn on the unit exams and the Unit 8 assignment. Points cannot be earned by doing alternative or extra activities. There will be a total of 8 unit exams/assignments and each will be worth 35 points. The total number of possible points is thus 280. Grades will be determined as follows:

	A	BA	B	CB	C	DC	D	E	
Percent		92	88	84	80	76	72	68	<68*
Points	258	246	235	224	213	202	190	<190*	

* "<" means less than

Grade Requirement for PSY Majors

You must obtain a C in this course in order for it to count toward the psychology major.

Some advice about grades for those of you who are planning to apply to graduate school: Many of our students plan on attending graduate school. If you are planning on that, you should be shooting for an A in the course. Graduate school is often very competitive, and, unlike undergraduate training programs, graduate programs only have a limited number of "seats" available. Thus, it is a competitive process in that your admission depends not only on your GPA (and GRE scores, etc.), but the GPAs of the other students who apply. Although undergraduate students who are planning on attending graduate school often believe a BA or even a B is a very good grade, alas, most faculty, particularly in psychology graduate training programs, who will be considering your application for graduate school will not. It is true, that your research and practical experience counts as well, but there are often plenty of applicants to graduate programs who have very high GPAs as well as research and practical experience.

Another word: Some students get the mistaken notion that I favor students who plan to pursue graduate school as opposed to those who don't. That is not true. It is true that I am very pleased when our students want to pursue graduate school. However, you do not have to go to graduate school to make valuable contributions to the world. This course is relevant for anyone – teachers, supervisors in work settings, direct care workers who work with clients with developmental disabilities and autism, stay-at-home moms and dads, those who work in nursing homes with older adults, animal trainers, police officers, social workers, etc. Each and every student in this class can contribute to society and the world by applying what you learn in this class and in other classes about behavior analysis.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodations, contact me during the first week of classes so that I have time to ensure that your needs are met in a timely manner. In

order for me to provide accommodations, students must contact the University's Disabled Student Resources and Services or the Office of Services for Students with Learning Disabilities at the beginning of the semester to inform them of the disability and obtain a letter from them indicating the type of accommodation that is appropriate. These offices provide very useful services. According to University policy: *"Any student with a documented disability who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the professor and the appropriate Disability Services office at the beginning of the semester."* I will conform to this policy and will not provide accommodations in absence of a letter from one of these two offices. For additional information, please see their web site at: <http://www.dsrs.wmich.edu>

Religious Holidays and Religious Observance

I will excuse students from class for the purpose of observing major religious holidays provided they make a request to me two weeks in advance so that I can make alternative arrangements for them to make up the work.

Unit Study Objectives

There are study objectives for each unit in the course pack. The material to be included in the unit's assignment is listed at the top of the study objectives. Only the text material specified in the objectives will be covered on the exam, although the exams will also cover any additional material that I provide in lecture. It is important that you keep all of the study objectives so that you can refer to them later in the course. You will need to restudy some of the objectives for the make-up exams. For the make-up exams, I will select several study objectives from previous units and ask you to restudy them. I will give you a list of these review objectives prior to both make-up exams.

I have included a description of how to study for this course as the first item in the course pack. Please read this carefully, particularly the material about making up and using study cards: I strongly encourage you to use study cards. Students typically find this the best way to study and prepare for exams in this class.

Unit Exams

Exams will primarily consist of short-answer questions (i.e., fill-in-the-blank, essay, listing information) with only a few multiple-choice items. Questions will be based on study objectives that are included in the course pack and any additional material that I provide in lecture. If you miss lecture you are still responsible for the lecture material and therefore you should get the notes from someone else. You should also review the ppt presentation posted on the web page. I cannot give students "individual lectures" or go over the study objectives on an individual basis, nor can the course assistants.

Approximate Amount of Study Time Required and Type of Study Time Required

This course is designed to require **6 - 8 hours** studying outside of class **each and every unit** in order for students to get a C or a B. More study is typically required in order to get a BA or an A. The amount of studying you will need to do, of course, depends upon your background in behavior analysis and your study skills. You may have to spend more hours studying if your knowledge of behavioral principles or your study skills are weak. Because this class builds on

what you learned in PSY 3600, students who received lower than a B in PSY 3600 often do have to spend additional hours studying.

Please take the study time seriously. When students have had trouble in the class, and have come to see me for help, the problem (almost always) is either (1) they simply do not have enough time to study due to the number of credit hours they are taking, the number of hours they are working, family obligations, or some combination of the three or (2) they are trying to squeeze their studying in around other activities; that is, when they have a few minutes between classes or while they are at work and are not busy. Attempts to study this way often result in distractions that disrupt concentration and focus. This type of study time is usually not productive, yet students “feel” like they have studied a lot.

If you are unable to spend the amount of time studying that I have mentioned or schedule 6-8 hours of **focused** study time for each unit, you should drop this class. It will be frustrating for you and there won't be anything I can do to help you improve your grade in the course.

When scheduling time for this course, you should schedule 1 -2 hours to read the material and study objectives **before** the first lecture of the unit; 2 - 3 hours to complete the study objectives and develop study cards based on the study objectives before **the second lecture** in the unit (and it really is better to have the study cards done before the first lecture); and 3 - 4 hours to study the day before the exam.

Exam Regrade Policy

After the exams have been graded, returned, and discussed in class, you may submit your exam to me for regrading if you believe that an item was not graded accurately. I have included a copy of the form on the last page of the syllabus. You may copy this form and use it, or create one on your computer - if you do the latter, however, be sure to include all of the information that I ask for.

Regrade requests may be returned to me in class or placed in my faculty mailbox in Wood Hall. Regrade requests **MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING AND WITHIN ONE WEEK** after the exams have been returned. When submitting a regrade request you should attach the exam questions, your answers and the answers that I will give you after you have finished the exam. The request should state the reasons why more points should be awarded for a particular answer. References to a text page and paragraph or to specific lecture material will make it more likely that your request will be granted. It is not appropriate to state things such as "because it is right" (without further explanation), "but that is what I meant to say" (I can only grade what you wrote on the exam), "I missed the lecture in which you explained this", "Pat answered exactly the same way and got more points" (I might have graded Pat's answer too leniently; thus the appropriate thing for me to do would be to deduct the points from Pat – but I won't do that), etc.

NOTE AGAIN: <u>YOU MAY NOT REQUEST REGRADES VOCALLY</u>
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I need to review the test question, recall my original grading criteria and reevaluate your answer. In order to give the attention that is necessary, I need to have the requests in writing.

Sometimes when students do not understand why they lost points, even after looking at the answers I provide, they ask me to explain why they lost points in order to determine whether they should submit a regrade request. At that point, I always ask students to submit a regrade request. If you do not understand why you lost points, I will explain that in writing through the regrade

request procedure. Again, I often need time to review the question, study the student's answer, determine the conceptual problems the student may have about the item and respond to it. If, however, you know why you lost points but don't understand the material, the assistants and I are most happy to meet with you and explain the material to you.

Please do not word your regrade requests in a hostile manner. I grade your exams very carefully and if I have made a mistake it has been an "honest" mistake. I am very happy to return points if I have made an error. Consider regrade requests an intellectual rather than an emotional exercise.

If a particular student requests too many regrades or inappropriate regrades (e.g., asking me to review my grading on all or nearly all questions or requesting regrades on issues that I addressed when I returned the exams), I will first discuss the problem with the student. If the student continues to abuse the regrade request procedure I will regrade all of the student's exam answers in addition to the ones requested. If I feel my original grading was too lenient, I will take off additional points.

Make-up Exams

If you miss an exam for ANY reason (illness, car trouble, injury, a field trip in another course, a job interview, an athletic event, too busy to study, etc.), the missing exam score will turn into a zero if you do not take the make-up exams or if you miss more exams than allowed by the make-up exam policy. Two make-up exams will be given during the semester that will permit you to make up for two such absences. In other words, you may miss one exam each half of the semester without having it hurt your grade as long as you then take the scheduled make-up exams.

If you are involved in ANY activity (a sporting activity, band, family obligations, social activities) that requires you to miss more than one exam each half of the semester, **DROP THIS COURSE IMMEDIATELY.**

The first make-up exam will be given on Tuesday, November 2, and will review material from Units 1-4. The score you earn on this exam may be used to replace a missing score for one of the first four exams.

The second make-up exam will be given on Thursday, December 16, from 2:45- 4:45 pm during the University's final exam week. It will review material from Units 5-8. The score you earn on this second make-up exam may be used to replace a missing score one of these unit exams.

Unit 8 will be handled just like the other exams – that is, if you do not complete the Unit 8 assignment, you may take ME2 to replace a missing score on that unit or a low score on that unit.

I will give you study objectives for the make-up exams - I will select about 35 study objectives from the relevant units.

If you do not miss any exams and *only if you do not miss any exam*, the score you obtain on the first make-up exam may be used to replace your lowest score on Exams 1-4, and the score you obtain on the second make-up exam may be used to replace your lowest score on Exams 5-8. If your make-up exam scores are lower than the scores of your unit exams, the make-up exam scores will be discarded. In other words, the make-up exams cannot hurt your grade.

If you do not miss any exams the make-up exams are optional. If you are satisfied with the scores you have obtained on the unit exams, then you do not have to take them - you get the day off.

Additional Make-up Exams

No make-up exams will be given in addition to the two that are scheduled, unless there are very special circumstances (such as a documented long illness). Additional make-up exams are given *solely at my discretion*. I am strict on this issue. My class is scheduled when it is (in other words this is the time for my class and by enrolling in this section, you have committed yourself to it). Also, the calendar of when exams will be given is included in this syllabus so you know in advance when they will be administered. Due to the large enrollment, I cannot give extra make-up exams to individual students.

Two "friendly" warnings about additional make-up exams:

(1) Sometimes a student will miss an exam due to a non-emergency. Later that same half of the semester, a real problem that was not and could not be anticipated such as illness, injury, a job interview, car trouble, a death in the family, etc., forces the student to miss a second exam. The student then asks me to give a special make-up exam for the second exam since that absence was due to a "legitimate" problem. I will not do that. In that situation the student receives a zero for one of the missed exams. Plan to take ALL of the weekly exams so that you will not end up with a zero in case a real problem makes you miss an exam later.

(2) Students who receive a poor grade on one exam and then miss another exam often ask me if I will give them a special make-up exam for the exam that they missed so that they can use the scheduled make-up exam to replace their low score. Again, I will not do that: In that situation the student must keep the low exam score.

SPECIAL MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL NOT BE GIVEN FOR THE TWO REGULARLY-SCHEDULED MAKE-UP EXAMS

Attendance at Lectures

I will take attendance, but attendance at lectures is not required. You will be marked absent if you are more than 10 minutes late to class. If you miss a lecture or are late for whatever reason you are responsible for the lecture material and any announcements regarding changes in the weekly assignment, exam schedule, room change, etc. I make all such announcements at the beginning of class. If you must miss a lecture you should download the ppt presentation and also ask another member of the class to take notes for you because the ppt may not contain everything that occurred during class – on occasion, I may add a study objective to the unit based on class discussion. As indicated earlier, I will not give individual lectures to students or go over the study objectives on an individual basis, and neither will my course assistants.

*Cell Phones, Pagers, iPods, MP3 Players, Calculators,
all other hand-held electronic gadgets, Computers, etc.*

Cell phones, pagers, iPods, etc. must be turned off during all classes, both lecture days and exam days (that means no texting). Computers are perfectly OK to bring to lectures, as long as you are using them for the purpose of this class (no emailing and no web surfing). Students in the class

have repeatedly told me that when other students text or surf the web in class, it is very distracting to them. I cannot permit students to distract other students. It also distracts me, and if I am distracted it affects the entire class (not to mention use of such gadgets in this type of setting is just plain rude). Unfortunately, I have had to implement a penalty in order to get students to comply with this policy. Thus, note this policy very carefully.

I will deduct *1 point from your total point score for each violation* of the above during lectures. If Sarah or I see a violation of the policy, the point will be deducted. We will not “police” the classroom, thus I fully realize that we may miss violations. On the other hand, this is no different than speeding; many instances of speeding go undetected by the police, but those that are detected are penalized. I will inform you when I deduct the point.

Any use of these devices during the exam (including ear buds) *will be considered cheating*, and subject to the penalties described in the *Academic Dishonesty* section below.

Academic Dishonesty

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the undergraduate catalog that pertain to academic honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity, and computer misuse. These policies can be found at <http://catalog.wmich.edu>. If I have reason to believe that you have been involved in academic dishonesty, I will inform the Office of Student Judicial Affairs (OSJA) with respect to the charge and refer you to them. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe that you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. *I will strongly recommend to the committee that any student who is found responsible for an act of academic dishonesty in this class be given a failing grade in the course. And, a word to the warning, the OSJA has always followed my recommendation that the student be given a failing grade in the course.*

You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test. Cheating is the most relevant aspect of the policy for this course, thus I will provide a definition here. Cheating consists of, but is not limited to, looking at another student's examination, copying answers from someone else's examination, using external aids (such as cell phones, books, notes, calculators, conversation with other) when taking the examination, altering exam answers after you have seen the instructor-provided answers, and/or altering your original exam answers when submitting regrade requests. No course books or materials should be within the student's view during the exam.

Incompletes

The University's policy on Incompletes states that: The student must be passing the course and have completed the majority of the course work to be eligible to receive an “I.” The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may not be given as a substitute for a failing grade.

In keeping with the university's policy, I will NOT give an incomplete as a substitute for a failing grade (nor for a grade that is lower than a C)- the failing grade or lower grade stands.

However, if an extended illness, injury, or family problem prevents you from completing the class, do let me know about it. Depending upon the number of classes and exams that you missed, and your attendance and performance on the exams you took before the problem arose, I may be willing to give you an incomplete in the course. *This will be completely at my discretion.*

Late Withdrawals

The University's policy on late withdrawals states that students who wish to drop a course because of genuine hardship (i.e., illness, death in the immediate family) after the withdrawal period has ended must be passing the class and must file a written appeal on a Request to Late Drop a Class form which may be obtained from the Registrar's Office. The Registrars Office will determine whether the student's situation represents a "genuine hardship." Nonetheless, just fair warning, the office will not accept "not enough time to study" or getting below a C as a genuine hardship.

Emergency Class Cancellation

In the event that classes are officially canceled (due to a snow storm, for example), the following schedule changes will automatically be in effect:

1. If the day canceled is a day on which an exam has been scheduled, then the exam will be given on the first day that classes resume. For example, if an exam is scheduled on Tuesday, and classes are canceled, the exam will be given on Thursday. If Thursday classes are canceled the exam will be given on the following Tuesday, and so on.
2. If the lecture day that immediately precedes the exam is canceled or if BOTH lecture days are canceled, the exam will be given on the regularly scheduled day, or on the first day that classes resume. For example, if an exam is scheduled on Thursday, and the preceding Tuesday lecture is canceled, then the exam will be given as scheduled on Thursday.

I am able to administer the exam because I have provided you with study objectives, and you will also have access to the power point presentations for the unit. When this happens, the exam I make up is typically easier than otherwise (as is often my grading) because I understand that you have not had the opportunity to ask questions over the material.

**PLEASE READ THE EMERGENCY CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY CAREFULLY.
IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PREDICT WHEN CLASSES WILL BE CANCELED AND
THUS I AM NOT ABLE TO REVIEW THIS POLICY AT THE CRITICAL TIME.**

COURSE CALENDAR

(Note: L means lecture, E means Exam, and the number refers to the Unit)

Tuesday

9/07 First Class

9/14 L1

9/21 L2: Operant Conditioning:

9/28 E2

10/05 L3

10/12 L4: Higher Education &
Teaching Technology

10/19 E4

10/26 L5

11/02 Make-up Exam 1 (units 1-4)

11/09 L6

11/16 L7: Health & Gerontology

11/23 E7

11/30 L8: Certification in Behavior
Analysis and Ethics

12/07 E8

Thursday

9/09 L1 Respondent Conditioning

9/16 E1

9/23 L2

9/30 L3: Performance Management &
Multiple Effects of Stimuli

10/07 E3

10/14 L4

10/21 L5: Verbal Behavior

10/28 E5

11/04 L6: Motivating Operations

11/11 E6

11/18 L7

11/25 NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING

12/02 L8

12/09 Return of E8, Special grade sheet re ME2
& ME2 Study Objectives handed out**Monday, 11/08: Last day to drop without academic penalty****THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2:45-4:45 PM, MAKE-UP EXAM 2**

Unit Topics

1. Respondent Conditioning: Principles and Applications
2. Operant Conditioning: Principles and Applications
3. Performance Management and Multiple Effects of Stimuli
4. Higher Education and Teaching Technology
5. Verbal Behavior
6. Motivating Operations
7. Health and Gerontology
8. Certification in Behavior Analysis and Professional Ethics

REGRADE REQUEST FORM
Dr. A. Dickinson

Student Name: _____ Course #: 4600 Exam Number: _____

Attach:

1. The exam questions
2. The exam answers
3. Your answers

Where to return the request:

1. Hand it to me in class or
2. Put in my faculty mailbox in Wood Hall

EXAM ITEM NUMBER REASON FOR THE REGRADE REQUEST