

Psych 6450, Psychology of Work, CRN 41033  
Fall '10 Course Syllabus and Calendar

*Instructor Information*

Instructor:	Dr. Alyce M. Dickinson	Office:	3744 Wood Hall
Email:	alyce.dickinson@wmich.edu	Office Hours:	T & R 2:00-3:00
Home Phone:	372-3206		Other hours by appt.
Office Phone:	387-4473 (to leave messages)		

*Course Materials*

**Required Course Material**

Aamodt, M. G. (2010). *Industrial/Organizational Psychology: An applied approach (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Course pack that can be purchased at the WMU Book Store, Bernhard Student Center.

*General Course Description*

This course examines human behavior in organizations from a behavioral psychology perspective. The course has two main objectives: A. To teach students how to analyze organizational behavior and performance improvement techniques from a behavioral perspective; and B. To familiarize students with common performance improvement techniques and their applications. Topics include: the history of organizational behavior management and industrial/organizational psychology, performance assessment and measurement, task clarification, feedback, goal-setting, rewards and monetary incentives the relationship between job satisfaction and performance, and interventions in human service settings (which have some unique challenges). Students entering the course are expected to have a thorough understanding of the basic principles of behavior analysis, including operant and respondent conditioning.

*General Course Format*

For the most part, there will be two classes and then an essay examination. There are a few exceptions to the general format, however. The course calendar is at the end of the syllabus.

*Web Site for Lecture Power Point Presentations*

My web site address is: [alycedickinson.com](http://alycedickinson.com). I use ppt presentations for each lecture and I will post them on the web page before the first lecture of each unit. I have also posted the syllabus, study objectives, and regrade request form (see below) on the web site in case you would like electronic versions of them.

*Course Grades*

Your grade will be based on the number of points that you accumulate on the unit assignments. There are 10 units and each unit assignment will be worth 35 points. There will be (a) six 35-point essay exams (Units 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, & 9), (b) two 27-point essay exams combined with 8 point

exercises (Units 4 & 6), (c) a performance measurement project proposal worth 35 points (Unit 5), and (d) a performance measurement project final report worth 35 points (Unit 10).

The total number of possible points is 350. Points cannot be earned by doing alternative activities. Grades will be determined as follows:

	A	BA	B	CB	C	DC	D	E	
Percent		92	85	80	75	70	65	60	<60*
Points	322	298	280	263	245	228	210	<210*	

\* "<" means less than

Psychology master's and doctoral students must obtain at least a "B" in order to receive credit for the course (a CB won't suffice).

#### *Time Requirements for the Course*

In order to get a grade of B or higher in this course, you will generally have to spend 10-12 hours a week *outside* of class for each unit, although the time will vary depending upon your knowledge of behavioral psychology and your study skills.

#### *Study Objectives*

There are study objectives for each unit in the course pack. **The unit assignment is listed at the top of the study objectives for each unit. If there is an exercise that is due, the exercise will also be listed and described at the top of these study objectives.**

Only the text material specified in the objectives will be covered on the exams. Note that the exams will be based on all of the study objectives, whether or not I cover them in lecture. You should keep all of the study objectives so that you can refer to them later in the course. You may need to restudy some of the objectives for the make-up exams. You will receive a set of study objectives for the two make-up exams. The objectives will consist selected review objectives from previous units.

#### *Exams*

Exams will consist of essay questions (i.e., fill-in-the-blank, short essay, listing information). They will be based on the study objectives and any supplemental material that I present in lecture. If you miss the lecture you are still responsible for the lecture material. I will not review the material or record the lecture for you if you miss it - it is your responsibility to obtain this material from another student. Therefore, you should get the notes from someone.

#### *Exam Regrade Policy*

After exams have been graded, returned and discussed in class, you may submit your exam to me for regrading if you believe that it was not graded accurately or if you have any questions with respect to why points were taken off and the reasons were not discussed when the exams were handed back. I have attached a regrade request form. Use copies of this form when submitting regrade requests. 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 your set of exam questions and your own exam answers. The request should state the reasons why more points should be awarded for a particular answer.

**NOTE: REGRADE REQUESTS MUST BE MADE IN WRITING, NOT VOCALLY**

To give adequate consideration to your request I need to review the test question, recall my original grading criteria and reevaluate your answer.

While I am on the topic, some students are afraid to submit regrade requests for fear I will look down upon them for "point grubbing" or complaining. That is not the case - I do make an occasional mistake. I can misinterpret what you have written, or I may not be able to decipher your handwriting. If you believe that I have not graded your exam accurately, I encourage you to resubmit it to me. If you submit too many regrade requests and abuse this system, I will let you know -- and then I will regrade all of your answers when you submit an exam for regrading and may deduct additional points if I feel I graded an item too leniently.

*Make-up Exams*

If you miss an exam for any reason (illness, car trouble, injury, work, job interview, a conference, etc.), the missing exam score will turn into a zero if you do not take the scheduled make-up exams. Two make-up exams will be given to enable you to make up for two such absences; one each half of the semester. 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.

The first make-up exam will be given on Wednesday, November 3. This exam will review material from Units 1-4. You will be given study objectives for this exam. The score you earn on this exam may be used to replace a missing exam score from Units 1-4. The second make-up exam will be given on Monday, December 13 during the University's final exam week. It will review material from Units 6-9. The score you earn on this second make-up exam may be used to replace a missing exam score for Exams 6-9. (Units 5 and 10 are related to the work measurement project).

If you do not miss any exams, the score you obtain on the first make-up exam may be used to replace the lowest score obtained on Units 1-4, and the score you obtain on the second make-up exam may be used to replace the lowest score on Units 6-9. If your make-up exam scores are lower than the scores of your units, 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 the make-up exams.

*Additional Make-up Exams*

As a rule, no make-up exams will be given in addition to the two that are scheduled. Under very special circumstances you may be able to take a special make-up exam but this will be completely at my discretion.

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

*Exercises*

The exercises will be used for in-class discussion. Thus, if you have not completed the exercise or if you miss class, you cannot contribute to or benefit from that discussion. There are two classes where exercises are due. I will give you one “freebie” as long as you turn in your written exercise on the day of the exam for that unit. That is, I will not deduct any points for the exercise due to the fact that you missed class or failed to turn it in on the day it was due. If you do not turn it in on the exam day for that unit, however, I will deduct the 8 points from your point score for that unit. I will deduct 8 points from your U6 point score if you once again miss class or turn in the exercise late.

If you lose points because of the exercises, you may use the make-up exams to replace your entire score on that unit *if you have taken all of the other exams and if it is the lowest unit score* you obtained during that half of the semester. That is, you may replace your U4 score with ME1 or your U6 score with. If one of your other unit scores is lower, you are “stuck” with that score for the unit. That is, you cannot turn the exercise in late and have the points added to your point score for that unit.

*Performance Measurement Project*

You will be required to develop and implement a measurement system for an actual job. It can be for one or more employees. I will provide detailed instructions about this project in Unit 2, but will give you a bit of detail now. For this project, you may work in groups or by yourself. If you decide to work in a group, each individual in the group will receive the same grade - I have no way of assessing individual contributions to the final product.

You will have two options for this project. The first is to select the job, develop an objective measurement system, and implement it for a minimum of 4 weeks. You do *not* have to implement an intervention, but if you want to do that you may do so after getting my approval. In the event that you select a job for which there are already good performance measures (for example, good sales measures already exist for many sales positions) and archival data exist for at least 4 weeks, then the second option is to design and implement an intervention.

I have registered the class with the HSIRB and have approval for you to conduct these projects. After I have approved the projects, I will send the titles and short descriptions to the HSIRB as an addendum to the protocol and once they give final approval, you will be able to start. They respond very quickly to these protocols, so you will have time to implement your measurement system. I will discuss the ethics and HSIRB issues in more detail in Unit 2. **However, be advised that if you conduct the project as a pilot to your thesis or dissertation, plan to present your work publicly, or write up the project for publication, then you must complete a full HSIRB protocol and get approval before you begin the project.**

I have broken the project down into two steps. The project proposal is due Monday, October 18 and will be worth 35 points. The final project report is due on Monday, December 13 (Monday,

December 6 if you need/want to know your score before ME2). You must complete this project and proposal or you will receive zeros for the two assignments. In other words, you cannot replace the points for this assignment by taking one of the make-up exams.

For both the proposal, points will be automatically deducted for lateness. Ten percent of the total points for the assignment will be deducted each week that the assignment is late. And the week starts the day after the proposal is due. In other words, if you hand in the proposal on Tuesday, Oct. 19 rather than Monday, Oct. 18, 10% of the points will be deducted. 10% of the points will also be deducted if you hand in the final project report after Monday, December 13 (unless you obtain my approval). If I do not have the final report by Thursday of finals week (Thursday, December 16), and I have not given you permission to hand the report in after that time, you will receive a zero.

#### *Attendance at Lectures*

Attendance at lectures is not required (but see the policy above regarding the class exercises). However, if you miss a lecture you are responsible for the lecture material and any announcements regarding changes in the assignment, exam schedule, room change, etc.

#### *Academic Dishonesty*

If I have evidence of any form of academic dishonesty, I will charge the student with violating the Academic Honesty Policy of the University in a report to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs (OSJA). A student charged with a violation is given an opportunity to defend himself or herself before a Committee formed by the OSJA. I will recommend to the OSJA that if a student is found responsible for an act of academic dishonesty, he/she should be given a failing grade in the course. Although the OSJA must approve, they have always followed my recommendation. Thus, it is a pretty sure bet the OSJA will approve my giving the student a failing grade.

Cheating consists of, but is not limited to, copying from another student's exam paper, from "crib sheets," from notes, from books, from cell phones, or from any other material on which course information has been written, turning in another person's work as you own, or "multiple submission" - that is, submitting substantial portions of the same work for credit in more than one course without authorization (See the Graduate College Catalog for detailed definitions of offenses that constitute academic dishonesty).

A clarification: I do not care if you work with another student when completing the exercises. While the exercises are individual assignments, it is fine with me if you work together as long as each student turns in a separate exercise (but please let me know if you do this).

#### *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" may not be given as a substitute for a failing grade. In keeping with the university's policy on incompletes, I will not give an incomplete as a substitute for a failing grade (or for a grade below a B) - the failing grade stands.

### *Students with Disabilities*

If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodations, please contact me during the first week of classes so that I have time to ensure that your needs are met in a timely manner. Students with disabilities should contact the University's Disabled Student Resources and Services and/or the Office of Services for Students with Learning Disabilities at the beginning of the semester to inform them of the disability and obtain information about their 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." Also, according to University policy, in order for me to provide accommodations, I need authorization from the University.

### *WMU's Religious Holidays Policy*

Per WMU's policy, students will be excused from class for the purpose of observing major religious holidays without penalty provided the student has made such a request at least two weeks in advance to me. Missed class time because of major religious observances does not excuse the student from class work or examinations

### *Emergency Class Cancellation: Please read carefully!!!*

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

1. If an exam/assignment day is canceled, the exam will be administered on the first day that classes resume. For example, if a Monday exam day is canceled, the exam will be given on the following Wednesday. If Wednesday is also canceled, the exam will be given the following Monday.
2. If a lecture or discussion day is canceled, the test **will be given as scheduled** on the first day that classes resume. For example, if an exam is scheduled on Monday, and the preceding Wednesday lecture is canceled, the exam will be given as scheduled on Monday. If an exercise was due on the day that was canceled, it will be due on the test day.

COURSE CALENDAR  
Note: L = lecture and E = exam

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>
	9/08 First Class: OBM & I/O Psy
09/13 L1	09/15 E1
09/20 L2: Performance Measurement/Task clarification Measurement Project described	09/22 L2
09/27 E2	09/29 L3: Work Motivation
10/04 L3: Work Motivation	10/06 E3
10/11 L4: Indirect acting contingencies and Feedback	10/13 L4 and Exercise Due: Was feedback reinforcement?
10/18 U5: PM project proposal due	10/20 E4
10/25 L6: Feedback cont., Goal-setting, and Schedules of Reinforcement	10/27 L6 and Exercise due: Schedules of reinforcement in lab and applied settings
11/01 E6	11/03 ME1 over Units 1-4
LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY: MONDAY, 11/08	
11/08 L7: Pay for Performance	11/10 L7
11/15 E7	11/17 L8: Performance & Satisfaction/Hawthorne
11/22 E8	11/24 No class: Thanksgiving
11/29 L9: Interventions in Human Service Settings	12/01 L9
12/06 E9 Project due IF you want your grade before ME2	12/08 Return of E9 Study objectives for ME2 Return of any projects handed in

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 7:15 - 9:15 PM (NOTE TIME OF CLASS)**

- 1. U10 Final PM project due**
- 2. Make-up Exam 2 over Units 6-9**

REGRADE REQUEST FORM  
Dr. A. Dickinson

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exam Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Attach:

1. The exam questions
2. Your answers

Where to return the request:

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

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EXAM ITEM NUMBER      REASON FOR THE REGRADE REQUEST