WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

Why do you do what you do? Why do you feel, think, imagine? Why do you procrastinate? Why is Xavier so passive-aggressive? Why won’t that anxiety just go away? Understanding causes of behavior is one central aim of this course, and we’ll approach this endeavor from a natural science perspective. Another aim of the course is to actually apply this understanding to solve real-world behavior problems. Indeed, most of the problems we face in contemporary culture are behavioral in nature. Consider phobias, depression, drug addiction, crime, prejudice, eating disorders, and the list can go on and on. What’s exciting is that the principles we will cover can solve these problems; we have the data. I have three main objectives in this course: (1) To think critically about the causes of behavior, human and non-human, using specific tools of scientific thinking; (2) To understand how a natural science of behavior, especially respondent conditioning and operant learning, can help us understand behavior and experience; and (3) To apply this knowledge in every possible way to your own and others’ behavior and experience, and solve socially important problems. More ambitiously: I hope this course changes your life.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a fully on-line course with no specified meeting times. However, the course is not self-paced. Each week, new course modules will open. For each module you will be given an overview of the scheduled activities so that you will know what you are expected to do that week. You will need to complete all weekly activities by the due dates listed in Canvas.
WHAT YOU’LL NEED

1. Reliable access to UF’s Canvas Computer System

If you’re not familiar with the Canvas environment, check out this tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zzl_PRt3M-U&feature=youtu.be.

It’s a good idea to complete quizzes and discussion posts well before the deadline. Extensions will not be given for student-based technical difficulties. If UF Canvas experiences technical difficulties (and we know when this happens), deadlines will be adjusted.

2. This Textbook


COMMUNICATION

Please use Canvas to email me or your TA. Expect us to respond within 24 hrs during the week and 48 hrs during the weekend. You can also email us to set up a real-life meeting. We exist. Communication is important in this class, especially because it is online. You should check Canvas and your email for any updates on a daily basis during the week. This is important.

HOW YOU’LL BE GRADED

1. Getting Started Quiz & Module Quizzes – 10 pts each x 14 = 140 pts

   a) Getting started. By the date specified on the quiz, complete the Getting Started quiz. By completing this quiz, you agree to all rules of the course. This quiz also assesses your knowledge of the syllabus.

   b) There will be 13 Module Quizzes during the semester. Quizzes open on Saturdays at 9:00am and are due by Fridays at 11:59 pm. Content will be drawn from the book and lecture.

   c) Quizzes are timed. The questions are answerable in the time allotted if you have taken measures to prepare yourself (much like you would for an in-person course). However, if you try to look up the answers to each question and watch videos you will (very) likely run out of time.

2. Discussions - 10 pts each x 7 = 70 points

   a) 9 Discussion forums: 9 initial posts and 9 reply posts are due during the semester, worth 5 points each for a total of 10 points per forum.

   b) Discussion forums will open Saturdays at 12:00 pm are due by Fridays at 5:00 pm.
c) To receive credit, your post must be contributing to the conversation. Making a simple statement such as “I agree” will not be counted as a post for grading. A minimum of three sentences is required, and it must be relevant to the discussion prompt. This initial post is worth 5 points.

d) After making your initial post, you can view what your peers have posted. At this point you need to pick a post to reply to. Again, simply stating that you agree or disagree is not substantial enough to receive credit. Your post must be thoughtful and applicable. A minimum of three sentences is required. This reply post is worth 5 points.

e) Posts will only count if they were posted before the deadline.

f) Do not edit posts after you make them. This has been known to remove the post on Canvas.

3. **Portfolio – 10 pts each 6 = 60 points**
   a) You will build a portfolio during the semester. The focus of the portfolio is to apply concepts and principles to real world phenomena.
   b) I will provide rubrics for each portfolio assignment. In many cases, the portfolio entries will build upon the discussion topics from the previous week.
   c) Portfolio entries will open on Saturdays at 12:00pm and are due by Fridays at 5:00pm.
   d) Portfolio entries will be made in the Assignments tab in Canvas.

4. **Final Portfolio – 30 points**
   a) The final portfolio will be a compendium of all portfolio entries during the semester. You will build your final portfolio in ePortfolio.
   b) You will reflect on how the portfolio assignments helped you address the big goals listed in the first paragraph of this syllabus. You will also have the chance to tell us how you might revise any of your portfolio assignments based on feedback and/or new learning.
Grading Policies:

Quizzes. I release the correct answers to quiz questions right after the quiz window closes. So obviously, allowing more time after the quiz window has closed and the correct answers are viewable is not possible.

Make-up Quizzes. At the midpoint of the semester, and again at the end of the semester, you will have the opportunity to take a make-up quiz. These quizzes can substitute for any missed quiz. If you took all of the quizzes and want to drop your lowest grade, the make-up quiz (or quizzes) will be counted in place of your lowest quiz. Let’s say you take all the module quizzes and one make-up quiz and your score on your make-up quiz was your lowest, then your make-up score will be dropped. The make-up quizzes only apply to module quizzes. It does not apply to other class components like discussions or portfolio assignments. If you miss discussion posts or portfolio entries, those will stand as zeros unless you have a university accepted excuse.

The make-up quiz questions will be drawn from previous modules. So at the middle of the semester, the quiz will draw 10 questions from the module 1-6 quizzes. At the end of the semester, the quiz will draw 10 questions from module 8-13 quizzes.
COURSE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

1. If you have a general question about the course, post it on the FAQ discussion board. If it is something you would raise your hand to ask in class, it belongs on this board. Feel free to use this board to communicate with each other, set up study groups, say hi, whatever.

2. If you have a question about your grade, message me or your TA. Don’t post information about your grade on the FAQ board.

3. After the Drop/Add period ends, you will be assigned a TA. This will be the person (or myself) who you get in touch with if you have any personal issues or questions (anything that’s not appropriate to post on the FAQ Board).

4. All interactions with instructors and among class members are expected to be professional and appropriate.

5. Extensions. Extension of deadlines may be requested for discussion posts and portfolio assignments. (See make-up quiz policy above for any missed quizzes – there are no extensions for quizzes). Any requests for an extension must be based on University approved reasons and must include proper documentation as per University guidelines. Requests for extensions must be made before the assignment deadline, if possible, or within 24 hours of the deadline for unexpected emergencies. Late assignments without approved extensions will not be accepted.

6. Announcements. Announcements will be made periodically about class issues (such as reminders about upcoming assignments, or when assignments are returned). These will be visible on our course’s home page. Students are responsible for all announcements made there.

7. This course adheres to all University Policies. See http://www.dso.ufl.edu/ for useful information at the Dean of Students Office webpage.

8. Academic Honesty. This course uses the definitions and guidelines for academic honesty as described by the Dean of Students Office. The following is text that is required in every course syllabus regarding academic honesty:

   “Cheating is defined in the UF Handbook, and it is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with its many forms (including plagiarism). If a student is caught cheating, the first offense will result in a zero for that exam or assignment and a record of the event will be placed in a temporary file with the Office of Student Affairs. The second offense will result in an ‘E’ for the course, and the student will go before the Honor Court. As a result of completing registration at UF, every student has agreed to the following statement: I understand that UF expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.”

9. Getting Help: For issues with technical difficulties with Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at: Learning-support@ufl.edu or (352) 392-HELP - select option 2 or their website at https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml.

10. Students with disabilities requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this
documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. See http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/ for details.

11. Religious Observances. Please check your calendars against the course syllabus. If you have a conflict due to religious observance you should contact me as soon as possible so that we can make any necessary arrangements.

12. Syllabus Change Policy. Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change.