

## **Psychology 486**

Fall 2010, TR 0930-1050

<http://www.psych.ualberta.ca/~msnyder/p486/main.html>

### **Instructor:** Dr. M.R. Snyder

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Office hours: TR 1:00 – 2:30, and/or by appointment

### **Readings**

There is no assigned textbook for this course. A series of journal articles and on-line readings are available on the course web site. See the course website for the reading schedule.

### **Course Assignments:**

Group research project: 19, 21, 26, 28 October, 9, 16 November

Individual research project

Proposal with annotated references: 14 October

Poster: 2, 4 November

Draft copy of paper to peer editor: 18 November

Edited draft returned to author: by 25 November

Term paper (plus draft copy and editor's comments): 7 December

### **Assignment Values:**

Group research project: 30%

Proposal: 5%

Poster: 15%

Term paper: 30%

Peer editing: 10%

Class participation: 10%

### **Other Significant Dates:**

8 September: Fall term begins

21 September: Fall term registration deadline

8 October: Fall term refund deadline

11 October: Thanksgiving Day: University closed

10 November: Last day for withdrawal from Fall term courses

11 November: Remembrance Day: University closed

12 November: Fall term class break: no classes

8 December: Last day of Fall term classes

10-22 December: Final examinations for Fall term courses

Students will be organized into groups. Each group will pick a project from an assigned list of topics. Group members will collaborate to research their topic and will present their work to the class in a 40 minute presentation.

During the course students will also be working on an individual research project of their own choice. Students will submit a proposal of their research topic, present their work as a poster, and finally turn in a 12 page term paper.

For the proposal students must provide one or two paragraphs describing their research topic and an annotated reference list of at least 5 journal articles. That is, the appropriate APA references for the 5 articles selected, along with a brief (i.e., abstract length) explanation (note: not a summation of the article) of the relevance for each article to the proposed research topic.

The poster will be an academic-style poster presentation of the topic you have submitted in your proposal and are working on for your term paper. Details about poster construction, design, and grading will be covered in class and on the course website.

We will be using peer evaluation for your poster. Three other students (i.e., your peers) will evaluate your poster using the same grading format as the instructor. The instructor's grade of a poster counts for 75% and the three peer evaluators' grades comprise the remaining 25%. If a student fails to complete the evaluations (i.e. grading) of the required posters that student will suffer a 15% penalty on his or her own poster.

The term paper should be 12 pages in length, plus or minus one page where 12 point Times font, double spacing, and 1 inch margins are used. The paper should have at least 15 references. Details about APA style format, embedded citations, etc. will be discussed in class and on the course website.

We will be using peer editing for your term paper. This means that each student must submit a draft copy of their paper on 18 November. This draft will be read and edited by one other student in class. The writer of the paper and the peer editor must meet to discuss the editor's evaluation by 25 November. When the final term paper is turned in the edited draft copy along with the peer editor's evaluation must also be submitted. Part of a student's grade on the term paper will reflect development from the draft copy to the final paper. The peer editor will be evaluated on the thoroughness of his or her editing job of the term paper.

The proposal and paper must be turned in to the instructor by the days they are due. For every day an assignment is late (including weekends), 10% will be deducted. Please *do not* put an assignment under the instructor's door! A late assignment may be submitted directly to the instructor or may be turned in to office staff at the Department of Psychology office (BSP-217).

There is no final exam in this course.

### **Grading Scheme:**

<u>Mark (%)</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>
94-100	4.0	A+	Excellent
88-93.9	4.0	A	Excellent
83-87.9	3.7	A-	Excellent
78-82.9	3.3	B+	Good
73-77.9	3.0	B	Good
68-72.9	2.7	B-	Good
63-67.9	2.3	C+	Satisfactory
58-62.9	2.0	C	Satisfactory
55-57.9	1.7	C-	Satisfactory
52-54.9	1.3	D+	Poor
50-51.9	1.0	D	Minimal Pass
0-49.9	0.0	F or F(R)	Failure

Assignment marks will be tallied at the end of the course and converted to the 4-point University grade scale. Note that this course *is not* graded on a curve. The mark received translates directly to the letter grade given.

There are several reasons that this course is not graded on a curve. First, statistically there are issues with fitting a normal distribution curve to a class of this type. Second, if this course was curved some students would have to be failed, regardless of how well they performed; this strikes me as unfair and somewhat arbitrary. Related to this, curved courses can produce unpleasant consequences with respect to competition to the restricted number of high grades that can be handed out. By not being curved, the only person you are competing with for your grade is yourself. Finally, by not being graded on a curve students can calculate exactly where they stand going into any assignment and use this information for more effective time management with respect to studying and preparing their work.

### **Posting of Grades**

Student grades will be listed (by student ID) on the Department of Psychology's grade website (<http://www.psych.ualberta.ca/cgi-bin/grades>). Any students who do not want their grades posted in this manner should contact the instructor in writing during the first two weeks of class.

### **Course Prerequisite**

To receive credit in this course, students must previously have taken and passed Psyc 381 (or its equivalent at another institution). No exceptions or waivers will be granted. Failure to have the prerequisite could result in the Registrar's Office canceling your enrolment in the course or retroactively removing credit for the course. Be sure you have the prerequisite!

### **Course Objectives**

To examine the application and use of learning and behavioural principles in the field of advertising and marketing. Areas to be examined include: associationism, classical and operant conditioning, the mere exposure effect, instinctive behaviour patterns, sex differences, and observational/imitative learning.

Assignments have been specifically pedagogically structured to provide students with valuable experience applicable to graduate school programs and post-secondary employment opportunities. Experience with critical evaluation of information, application of theory to real-world situations, and practice in both oral and written communication are highly valued in both the academic community and the business sector. The assignments in this course have been specifically structured to give students experience in skills that will provide them with a competitive edge in their future endeavours.

### **Who Should Take this Course?**

This course is not for everyone. The workload in this course is above the average and good time management skills are important. That said, this course is ideally suited for students are:

- interested in the field of learning and behaviour,
- looking for exposure of the application of dry theory to real-world situations,
- considering going on to graduate school, and/or
- considering a future career in business, marketing, government, or related fields.

### **Cheating and Plagiarism**

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/secretariat/studentappeals.cfm](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/secretariat/studentappeals.cfm)) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

In particular, please note: No student shall represent another's substantial editorial or compositional assistance on an assignment as their own. Also, no student shall submit in any course or program of study, without the written approval of the course instructor, all or a substantial portion of any academic writing, essay, thesis, research report, project assignment, presentation or poster for which credit has been obtained by the student or which has been or is being submitted by the student in another course or program of student in the University or elsewhere.

### **Contacting the Instructor:**

You may contact the instructor by:

Phone (492-3834),

by leaving a written message for him at the Department of Psychology office (BSP-217),

by speaking with him before class (as time allows), or by making an appointment via e-mail ([mrsnyder@ualberta.ca](mailto:mrsnyder@ualberta.ca)).

### **E-mail Protocols:**

Some questions can be dealt with very easily with e-mail, although others can not. If you ask a question via e-mail that can not be easily addressed you will be instructed to see the instructor in person.

When communicating with the via e-mail, students **must** include "Psyco 486" in the subject line of their message – note the spelling: Psyco 486. Because of recent problems with viruses and SPAM mail, any e-mail lacking the Psyco 486 subject line will be automatically shifted to trash.

Second, students **must** include their full name and student ID in any e-mail to the instructor (your e-mail address and/or alias are insufficient).

Third, students **must** use their university e-mail account (i.e., an e-mail account with the @ualberta.ca suffix) when contacting the instructor or teaching assistant; e-mails from non-university accounts *will not* be responded to. Past experience has shown that for various reasons e-mails from non-university accounts are sometimes difficult to reply to and are more likely to present security risks; university accounts do not Academic Information and Communication Technologies (780-492-9400, or <http://helpdesk.ualberta.ca/>). Please be aware that it may take one or two business days for your e-mail to be answered by the instructor.

If you e-mail the instructor and do not receive a reply within two or three business days, please make sure you followed the above protocols correctly and either resend the e-mail or contact the instructor by another means.

**Note:** students are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings being covered that day.

Policy about course outlines can be found in section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.