Douglas College

A:	Division:	**INSTRUCTIONAL**	Effective Date:		**SEPTEMBER 2004**

B: Department / Program Area: **PSYCHOLOGY FACULTY OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Revision **X** New Course ☐

If Revision, Section(s) Revised: **C, H**

Date of Previous Revision: **OCTOBER 2001**

Date of Current Revision: **APRIL 2004**

C:	**PSYC 3365**	**D**:	**THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING**	**E:**	**3**
	Subject & Course No.		Descriptive Title		Semester Credits

F: Calendar Description: This course provides an introduction to the psychology of learning and is concerned with the conditions, principles, and theories of learning. Traditional behaviouristic approaches (including Pavlovian and instrumental conditioning) and contemporary learning theories will be covered. The influences of biology and cognitive factors as well as the practical applications of the principles of learning will be included.

G: Allocation of Contact Hours to Type of Instruction / Learning Settings

Primary Methods of Instructional Delivery and/or Learning Settings:

Lecture

Number of Contact Hours: (per week /semester for each descriptor)

Lecture: **4 hrs. per week / semester**

Number of Weeks per Semester: **15**

H: Course Prerequisites:

PSYC 1200

I: Course Corequisites:

NONE

J: Course for which this Course is a Prerequisite

NONE

K: Maximum Class Size:

35

L: PLEASE INDICATE**:**

☐ Non-Credit

☐ College Credit Non-Transfer

X College Credit Transfer:

SEE BC TRANSFER GUIDE FOR TRANSFER DETAILS (www.bccat.bc.ca)

M: Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the course the successful student will be able to:

1. List the major historical figures in the history of the psychology of learning and describe their contributions.

2. Define learning and list the various types of learning included in the definition.

3. List the major traditional and contemporary theoretical approaches in the psychology of learning.

4. Describe the classical conditioning paradigm and the procedures for acquisition and extinction.

5. Explain how the principles of Pavlovian Conditioning can be applied in clinical and other settings.

6. Describe Instrumental Conditioning procedures and the effects of various schedules of reinforcement.

7. Discuss the effects on behaviour of positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, positive and negative punishment.

8. Explain how the principles of instrumental conditioning can be applied to practical settings.

9. Define generalization and discrimination and describe the major paradigms and phenomena associated with these processes.

10. Explain the major biological constraints on the generality of the laws of learning.

11. List and describe the various biological influences on learning such as the Garcia Effect, Seligman's preparedness dimension, animal misbehaviour, sign tracking, imprinting, and species specific defense reactions.

12. Discuss the cognitive factors involved in learning and list the major contemporary cognitive theoretical approaches.

13. Compare and contrast the traditional behaviourist approach with expectancy theory, Tolman's purposive behaviourism, attribution theory and social learning theory.

N: Course Content:

1. Historical Factors
   Behaviourist tradition
   Cognitive tradition
   Contemporary learning theory

2. Theoretical Approaches
   Definition of learning
   Evolutionary perspective
   Habituation and sensitization

3. Pavlovian Conditioning
   Acquisition
   Extinction
   Applications

Course Content Cont'd.

4.   Instrumental Appetitive Conditioning
     Thorndike's position
     Skinner's behaviourism
     Acquisition
     Positive reinforcement
     Schedules of reinforcement
     Extinction
     Applications

5.   Instrumental Aversive Conditioning
     Escape conditioning
     Avoidance conditioning
     Negative reinforcement
     Positive punishment and negative punishment
     Applications

6.   Stimulus Control of Behaviour
     The generalization process
     Excitatory generalization
     Inhibitory generalization
     Discrimination learning
     Theoretical approaches

7.   Cognitive Control of Behaviour
     Tolman's purposive behaviourism
     Latent learning and cognitive maps
     The role of reinforcement
     The covariation of events
     Expectancy theory
     Attribution theory
     Bandura's approach
     Applications

8.   Biological Influences on Learning
     Generality of the laws of learning
     The preparedness dimension
     Animal misbehaviour
     Flavour aversion: the Garcia Effect
     Sign tracking, autoshaping
     Imprinting
     Species specific defense reactions
     The biology of reward and punishment

O: Methods of Instruction:

The course will employ a variety of instructional methods to accomplish its objectives, including some of the following: lectures, seminar presentations, audio visual materials including vide, 16mm film, etc, small group discussions, research projects, practical conditioning demonstrations and research papers.

P: Textbooks and Materials to be Purchased by Students:

Texts will be updated periodically. Typical examples are:

Lefrancois, G. R. (1999). Theories of Human Learning: What the Old Man Said. New York, Wadsworth.

Lieberman, D. (2000) Learning: Behaviour and Cognition, 3rd ed. Pacific Grove, CA. Brooks/Cole Publishers

Mazur, J. E. (2001). Learning and Behavior, 5th ed. New Jersey, Prentice Hall.

Or some comparable textbook.

Q: Means of Assessment:

Evaluation will be carried out in accordance with the Douglas College policy. Evaluation will be based on course objectives and will include some of the following: quizzes, multiple choice exams, essay type exams, term paper or research project, class participation, seminar discussion, oral presentation. The specific evaluation criteria will be provided by the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

An example of one evaluation scheme:

4 quizzes	40%
Mid term paper	15%
Term paper	15%
Oral presentation	5%
Seminar attendance and participation	5%
Final exam	20%
	100%

R: Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition: specify whether course is open for PLAR

No. Given that this course involves theoretical and empirical analyses of the psychology of learning, it is unlikely to be open for PLAR except as a credit transfer from another institution.

Course Designer(s):   Education Council / Curriculum Committee Representative

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Dean / Director   Registrar