**University of Pittsburgh - Department of Psychology**

**PSY 0405 - LEARNING AND MOTIVATION (CRN 10499)**

**Fall 2017**

***Instructor:***  Abel J. Koury, PhD

***Day/Time:*** Monday, 6-8:30 pm

***Place:*** 202 Frick Fine Arts

***Course website:*** http://courseweb.pitt.edu/

***Email:*** [a.j.koury@pitt.edu](mailto:a.j.koury@pitt.edu)

***Office Hours:*** Friday, 10:15 am-12:15 pm and by appt.

**Course Rationale:**

Welcome to the most interesting course you will take as an undergraduate! Well, at least that’s the goal ☺ This course focuses on how, what, when, where, and why we learn as well as motivating factors for learning. We will focus on real-world applications of course material and explore a variety of topics, answering questions as distinct as, “Where does fear come from?”, “How can people become addicted to exercise?”, and “How can a blind person ride a bike?” This course was designed with both Psychology majors and non-majors in mind. It is specific enough for those who plan to enter the field but general enough for non-majors to walk away with a broad understanding. I am so delighted you are here!

**Course Objectives:**

I plan to use a lecture-discussion format to cover the major topical areas; however, I will incorporate videos, podcasts, and small-group activities during each class.

At the end of this course, students should have at least a general understanding of/that

* Principles and laws of behavior including how we learn, why we learn, and how to use this knowledge to your advantage
* How context matters for learning and motivation
* Core human motives that drive behavior
* Humans are in a continual state of learning

**Required Texts:**

The following textbook is required for this course. It is available for purchase in the campus bookstore or online. If you are unable to purchase the book, please know it is on reserve at the library.

You can find the textbook here: <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/motivation-science-edward-burkley/1126315644?ean=9780205240654&st=PLA&sid=BNB_DRS_BN+Bing+Books_00000000&2sid=Bing_e&sourceId=PLBiP74830>

* Burkley, E., & Burkley, M. (2017). *Motivation Science.* New York, NY: Pearson. ISBN 13: 9780205240654

We will also be reading the following book which can be bought online or in the bookstore. I would recommend buying a used copy and/or seeing if it is available to borrow at one of the libraries in and around campus.

* Benedict, C. (2015). *How we learn: The surprising truth about when, where, and why it happens.* Random House Trade Paperback. ISBN: 9780812993882 <https://www.amazon.com/How-We-Learn-Surprising-Happens/dp/0812984293>

**CourseWeb:**

A CourseWeb page has been created for this course. Lecture slides, handouts, announcements, and quiz grades will be posted on the page. I will be in touch via CourseWeb’s email function so please check your Pitt email regularly. You can access this course’s CourseWeb page via http://courseweb.pitt.edu. Log in with your Pitt username and password. Please contact me immediately if you have any problems.

**Attendance:**

The best advice I can offer for a successful and positive experience is to attend every class. However, I will not be taking class attendance. Instead, you will have the opportunity to earn points through in-class assignments that are only offered in class. You are responsible for all material presented in class, including announcements and material that cannot be found in your books. Missing opportunities to participate in class discussions, to hear the material presented aloud, and to ask questions/hear others’ questions will, no doubt, influence your learning, your performance on quizzes and assignments, and thus, your final grade.

Class attendance is your responsibility; thus, if you miss class, you must make arrangements to get the notes from a classmate. I will not provide notes from the class although I’m happy to answer any questions you may have about the material. This is to maintain equality among you and your fellow classmates and to encourage personal responsibility. Please try to arrive on time—arriving late disrupts the flow of the lecture and infringes upon the learning of other students

**Course Expectations:**

**Expectations of the Professor:** *You can expect me to:*

* Provide a syllabus that clearly delineates course policies, assignments, and expectations.
* Show up ready and excited to teach.
* Take your constructive feedback into account and make reasonable adjustments accordingly.
* Set high but attainable expectations and help you reach them.
* Evaluate you fairly and never give preferential treatment.
* Be available to meet with you during office hours and by appointment.
* Maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment where students can freely express ideas and opinions.

**Expectations of the Student:** *I will expect you to:*

* Read the entire syllabus and understand the expectations. You will be held to all of the outlined expectations, thus it is in your best interest to understand what they are.
* Refrain from texting, surfing the web, or other distracting computer/cell usage during class.
* Read all of the assigned reading before class.
* Actively participate in class discussions and group activities.
* Maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment by being respectful of the opinions and ideas of others.
* Have pride in your work. Turn in assignments that reflect your true abilities, not marred with grammatical errors and done 5 minutes prior to class. I expect better and you should, too.

**Evaluation:**

**FOR THE LABORATORY:** All students enrolled in the course must also be enrolled in and must attend the laboratory section. The purpose of the lab is to provide methodological experience in implementing some of the learning principles discussed in class and data interpretation. Lab attendance is mandatory. It is very important that you attend the first lab meeting, as there will be important information presented, the first assignment will be given, and attendance (or miss) will count. “Added the class late” is not an excuse for missing the first lab meeting. The lab is worth approximately one-third of the final course grade and you must pass the lab in order to pass the class. A failing grade in the lab (less than 60%) is an automatic failing grade in the course.

**FOR THE LECTURE:** The lecture component is worth approximately two-thirds of the final course grade. You must pass the lecture section in order to pass the class. A failing grade in the lecture (less than 60%) is an automatic failing grade in the course. So if you are experiencing difficulties or need help with the course material – see me ASAP and early in the term. Please do *not* wait until the end of the term when there is nothing that can be done.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Description** | **Points** | **%** |
| **Quizzes** | 10 online quizzes | 100 | 24% |
| **In-class exercises (ICE)** | 10 randomly dispersed throughout semester | 100 | 24% |
| **Weekly question** | Submit a thoughtful discussion question from the reading (13) | 65 | 16% |
| **Journal** | Track progress of a habit over the semester | 50 | 12% |
| **Final exam** | Cumulative | 100 | 24% |
| **Total** | Points possible without bonus points | 415 | 100% |
| **Bonus points** | Opportunities discussed in class | 10 |  |

**Quizzes**:

* There will be 10 quizzes.
* The material on the quizzes will come from reading materials, lectures, and media presented.
* Quizzes will be completed via CourseWeb.
* You will have 25 minutes to complete each quiz after which time the quiz will close.
* You MUST complete it by the next class period. It will be available until an hour before class.

**Make-up Quizzes:**

There will not be any make-up quizzes given. If you miss a quiz, you will receive a 0 and it will count towards the quiz you can drop.

**In-class exercises:**

* There will be 10 in-class exercises randomly given throughout the semester.
* You will only be able to complete them in class; thus, if you miss class, you miss out.

**Weekly question**

You will submit a weekly discussion question based on our reading for the week by **noon** on Monday.

**Journal:**

You will document your experience changing a behavior or incorporating a new behavior into your life. This is your chance to use all the information you’re learning and apply it directly to your life. You will receive a rubric and a more detailed description of this assignment in the classroom.

**Final Exam:**

Cumulative exam that will be largely from your quizzes.

**Grading Scale:**

Letter grades will then be assigned as follows:

A+ = 97 – 100% B+ = 87 – 89% C+ = 77 – 79% D+ = 67 – 69%

A = 93 – 96% B = 83 – 86% C = 73 – 76% D = 63 – 66%

A– = 90 – 92% B– = 80 – 82% C– = 70 – 72% D– = 60 – 62% F= below 60%

I do not grade on a curve. Students are held to high but attainable expectations, and as your instructor, I accept the responsibility of helping you reach these goals. I am committed to your success as I hope you are committed to your own.

**Disputing Grades:**

You have the option of disputing questions you missed on your quiz. You MUST follow these guidelines exactly as stated or your rebuttal will not be considered.

1. Type your name, the quiz number, and the item number you are disputing.
2. Type the correct answer.
3. Type the answer you put.
4. Explain in a statement of no less than 200 words why your answer is correct. This must be based on citing evidence presented in your text or in lecture. No online resources, please.
5. I will consider all rebuttals that meet the guidelines, but points will only be given for those that are sufficiently convincing.
6. You may only write a rebuttal for 2 questions per quiz so choose wisely. If more than 2 rebuttals are submitted, I will read the first 2 only.
7. If a question is **clearly** wrong, no need to write a rebuttal, just bring it to my attention so I can give everyone credit.
8. You MUST turn in your rebuttal IN PERSON during the next scheduled class after the quiz. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.

**Student Athletes:**

Ask your coach or the Athletics Department for the “instructor’s letter” and your sports schedule. Please give me your schedule during the first week of class for my class file. Check for conflicts with quizzes and notify me ASAP and *before* the conflict date. Please remember that it is your responsibility to contact me and make arrangements *well in advance* of the schedule conflict to make arrangements to complete the work. After the conflict date, there is nothing that can be done to makeup the missed work.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity ([http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/acguidelinespdf.pdf](http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/acguidelinespdf.pdf%20) ). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the quiz of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to a quiz, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

My personal policy on cheating is as follows: If you cheat on a quiz, you will get a 0% on this quiz. By cheating, you are forfeiting your opportunity to drop your lowest quiz score. This 0% will be factored into your final grade, meaning that even if you score perfectly on every other quiz (including the final quiz, which is no longer optional) and assignment, the best grade you could earn would be an 80%. You also will not have the opportunity to earn extra credit, which is considered a privilege and not a right in this course. **If you’re struggling, cheating is not the answer. Don’t let it even be an option.**

Plagiarism, even if unintentional, is cheating. This is a really helpful website on what plagiarism is and how to avoid it (<http://www.englishlit.pitt.edu/lit_plagiarism.html>). If you’re not sure if it’s plagiarism, err on the side of citing it. Questions? Just ask!

**Communication:**

Please feel free to email me at [a.j.koury@pitt.edu](mailto:a.j.koury@pitt.edu). I will try reply to students within 24 hours, Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. If you do not receive a reply in 2 weekdays, send the message again (or call me) as messages do get lost in cyberspace or are re-routed to the spam-message mailbox. I have given you my personal number above. It is only appropriate to call if (1) you have an emergency and need to get in touch, (2) you need to cancel an appointment or let me know that you are running late. Please do NOT call after 9:00 pm.

Email is great for specific questions that do not require a long and complicated explanation. If you have a more involved/complicated question or one that requires a lengthier explanation, please see me during office hours, before or after class, or during an appointment. This will give me a chance to explain the answer more adequately and for you to ask for clarification if I am not being clear. When emailing to make an appointment to meet, please send *all* the days/times when *you* are available to meet. My schedule is constantly changing and this cuts down on the back’n’forth emailing to set a meeting time. Once you send me your availability schedule, I will see what fits my schedule and set the meeting.

**Arts & Sciences Email Policy (**<http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html>)**:**

Each student is issued a University email address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This email address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read email sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an email forwarding service that allows students to read their email via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their email from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If email is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University email address. Instructions on how to forward email messages are at: http://www.technology.pitt.edu/email-accounts/email/imap/imap-forward.html

**Disability Resources and Services:**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412 648-7890 [412-383-7355 (TTY)], as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. A comprehensive description of the services of that office can be obtained at www.drs.pitt.edu.

**Statement On Classroom Recording**

To address the issue of students recording a lecture or class session, the University’s Senate Educational Policy Committee issued the recommended statement on May 4, 2010. While it is optional, the Committee recommends that faculty consider adding the statement to all course syllabi. “To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.”

***FRIENDS IN CLASS (note buddies)***

Make friends in class and exchange contact information. If you miss class and want a copy of the notes, please contact your friends. If you have questions regarding those notes, please see me. Please *bring the notes with you* when you come to see us so that we can answer your questions, provide explanation of the notes, and help you fill in gaps.

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Frequently Asked Questions:

**What if class is cancelled due to inclement weather or personal emergencies?**

*I will post this information under “Announcements” in CourseWeb and send out an email.*

**Do I need to make an appointment for office hours?**

*No, please feel free to stop in. Remember that immediately before and after a quiz, office hours can be pretty busy so you may want to come close to the beginning of office hours.*

**Where are office hours?**

*I will generally hold office hours in my office. I will post an Announcement if I switch locations.*

**Oh shoot, I made an appointment with Dr. Koury and now I can’t make it. What to do?**

*Please send an email or give me a call as soon as you know you won’t be able to make it.*

**I am failing the class. Is it too late to talk to Dr. Koury?**

*It is never too late! It is better to talk to me once you first sense you are having difficulty, but I am happy to help you at any point. Please don’t wait until after final grades are posted to talk to me.*

**I am a charming student/student athlete/celebrity look-alike. I wonder if Dr. Koury will change my grade?**

*No…Still no…And, no again. I am committed to your success; however, I will not change grades. Grades are earned, not given. I have designed the class to give you every possible chance to earn a satisfactory grade. It is my priority to teach you and for you to learn and part of the learning process is knowing when you need help and figuring out how to adjust your strategies to meet the challenge.*

**I think I might have a learning disability. Who can I talk to?**

*First, you are not alone. There are a number of students who have come to see me about learning difficulties. Second, yes, we have a wonderful center on campus called the Disability Resource Center (*[*http://www.drs.pitt.edu/*](http://www.drs.pitt.edu/)*). They can help you get the FREE services you need. Please keep me informed-you are entitled to testing accommodations, and I want to be sure you get any resources you want/need. There is no need to struggle in silence.*

**I have been feeling down in the dumps. Is there anyone I can speak to?**

*Absolutely. Everyone has periods when they are down or feeling super anxious. You are entitled to FREE counseling services through the counseling center at Pitt (*[*http://www.counseling.pitt.edu/index.html*](http://www.counseling.pitt.edu/index.html)*). Please contact them for additional information. I can’t tell you how many students have told me good things about the counseling center…again, there’s no need to struggle in silence. I will be happy to contact them for you if you ask me to.*

**I have a million questions—can I ask Professor Koury them even if I am afraid they are silly?**

*YES. Please! It would be silly to not ask questions ☺*

**Schedule of Topics and Reading Assignments**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Date** | **Topics** | **Readings to be discussed** |
| 1 | 8/28 | Introduction to course, syllabus | None! |
| 2 | 9/4 | No Class | None! |
| 3 | 9/11 | Intro to Motivation | Chapter 1 in textbook; Intro-p21 in HWL |
| 4 | 9/18 | Origins of Motivation | Chapters 2; Chapter 2 HWL |
| 5 | 9/25 | Core Human Motives | Chapter 3-4; Chapter 3 HWL |
| 6 | 10/2 | A is for Autonomy | Chapter 5; Chapter 4 HWL |
| 7 | 10/10 | C is for Competence | Chapter 6; Chapter 5 HWL |
| 8 | 10/16 | B is for Belonging | Chapter 7; Chapter 6 HWL |
| 9 | 10/23 | Goal Setting & Planning | Chapters 8-9; no HWL reading |
| 10 | 10/30 | Quitting and Being Mixed up | Chapter 7 and 8 HWL |
| 11 | 11/6 | Classical conditioning | Reading provided; Chapter 9 HWL |
| 12 | 11/13 | Classical conditioning | Reading provided; Chapter 10 HWL |
| 13 | 11/20 | Operant conditioning | Reading provided; Appendix HWL book |
| 14 | 11/27 | Stereotypes and learning | Reading provided |
| 15 | 12/4 | Expectations and learning | Reading provided |
| 16 | 12/11 | Addiction and learning | Reading provided |

**NOTE:** I will make every attempt to maintain the schedule indicated in this syllabus; however, I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus if it is necessary in order to ensure that the course’s learning objectives will be met. If I must make a change, I will notify you via e-mail, in class, and/or on CourseWeb. You will be responsible for any changes.