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PSYX 352.01: Comparative Psychology

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Syllabus

Psychology 352
Comparative Psychology
Fall 2013

Dr. Allen Szalda-Petree	Required Text:
Office: Skaggs 201 Phone: 2091 Email: allen.szalda-petree@umontana.edu	Principles of Animal Behavior (3 rd ed.) - Dugatkin
Office Hours : MWF 11-12 and by appt	Department URL - www.umt.edu/psych

Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to provide a balanced view of the major modern perspectives on animal behavior (human primates included). There are four primary goals of this course: 1) Develop an understanding of the biological bases of animal behavior, 2) Develop an understanding of the ways in which the environment and evolution shape animal behavior, 3) Gain an appreciation for the similarities and differences in the ways in which animals communicate, learn, and solve the day to day problems of living, and 4) Expose students to the logic of carrying out empirical investigations both within and across species.

The major topics to be covered include the History of Animal Behavior studies (history of animal behavior studies, modern evolutionary theory and research methods, genetics), Biological Bases (neural and chemical control of behavior, sensory systems and timing, migration and navigation, emigration and habitat selection), Learning & Cognition (learning, cognition, foraging, predator defense), and Reproduction/Social Behavior (reproductive processes, attraction, mating systems, parental care, communication, social groupings).

Exams:

There will be 3 midterm exams and a comprehensive final. Each exam, including the final, will be worth 50 points and will consist of 30 multiple choice items (1 pt each) and 1 short answer essay question (20 pts). You will be allowed to drop the lowest exam score of the four exams (including the final) and use the three highest exam scores for the calculation of your final grade. See the tentative reading schedule for exam dates.

Both lecture and book material will be covered on each exam in approximately equal proportions. As a general rule the multiple choice items will be drawn primarily from the text while the essay questions will be taken mostly from the lecture materials.

Requests for reevaluation/rescoring of test items (essays in particular) will be accepted until the date of the next exam.

Makeup exams will NOT be given except under unusual circumstances. This issue always becomes particularly sticky regarding the time and date for the final exam. Please note that we will adhere to the date published in the course schedule for the final. I will not give early finals except for **very** unusual circumstances.

Attendance:

While attendance is not required it is **HIGHLY** recommended. In-class extra credit points may be offered for attendance or short assignments at the instructor's discretion. Please note that any changes in the reading or exam schedule will be announced in class and all students, attending or otherwise, will be required to conform to any modifications in the schedule.

Classroom Behavior:

General

As a university student, certain behavior is expected of you. Most importantly, it is your responsibility to meet the requirements of this course. You may expect me to be in the classroom on time, prepared & organized, and open to discussion/questions pertaining to the day's subject material.

I will expect you to be in the classroom on time, to be awake and attentive, to participate in demonstrations/discussions, and to be respectful toward the instructor and other students.

I understand there will be circumstances beyond your control that, on occasion, will require you to leave class early. Please plan accordingly by notifying me at the beginning of class and choose seating that will result in minimal disruption.

You should feel free to ask any questions in class. Also, please feel free to see the instructor about any classroom issue during office hours.

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me after class or in my office. Students requesting disability accommodations must follow the DSS handbook (see page 334 of the Catalog).

Wireless communications (cell phones/tablets/computers)

For what should be blatantly obvious reasons, the use of wireless communications devices during class is prohibited. This specifically includes such activities as 1) placing or receiving phone calls, 2) sending or receiving text messages, and 3) internet searching, game playing, watching movies, etc.

If you are an emergency professional (physician/nurse, counselor/therapist, EMT, etc) or you are expecting an **EMERGENCY** communication please set your wireless device to silent alarm mode and quietly exit the classroom to respond.

Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php.

The Student Conduct Code discusses plagiarism. However, it is a serious offense worth re-mentioning. This course requires students to adhere to APA format when citing, paraphrasing, or referencing sources. If you have plagiarized, either intentionally or accidentally, you will receive a zero on the entire assignment. If you plagiarize a second time, you will fail the course.

Dropping/Adding/Changing grade option

Please refer to the Registrar's website on policies and dates for dropping/adding/changing grade options - http://events.umt.edu/?calendar_id=27&upcoming=upcoming&

Grading:

Grades will be assigned using the adjacent criteria for all exams and final course grade. **I will NOT be using the "+/-" grading system.**

Incompletes will adhere to university policy (see the Academic Policies and Procedures of the catalog).

<u>Percent Correct</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90 - 100 %	A
80 - 89 %	B
70 - 79 %	C
60 - 69 %	D
0 - 59 %	F

TENTATIVE Reading and Exam Schedule

Aug 26, 28, & 30	Chapter 1 : Principles of Animal behavior Chapter 2 : The Evolution of behavior
Sept 2	Labor Day Holiday (no class)
Sept 4 & 6	Chapter 3 : Hormones and Neurobiology
Sept 9, 11, & 13	Chapter 4 : Molecular genetics and Development
Sept 16, 18, & 20	Chapter 5 : Learning
Sept 23 & 25	Chapter 6 : Cultural transmission
Sept 27	Exam 1 (Chapters 1 – 6)
Sept 30, Oct 2 & 4	Chapter 7 : Sexual selection
Oct 7, 9, & 11	Chapter 8 : Mating systems
Oct 14, 16, & 18	Chapter 9 : Kinship Chapter 10 : Cooperation
Oct 21, 23, & 25	Chapter 11 : Foraging
Oct 28 & 30	Chapter 12 : Antipredator behavior
Nov 1	Exam 2 (Chapters 7 – 12)
Nov 4, 6 & 8	Chapter 13: Communication
Nov 11	Veterans Day Holiday (No class)
Nov 13, 15, & 18	Chapter 14 : Habitat selection, territoriality, & Migration Chapter 15 : Aggression
Nov 20, 22, & 25	Chapter 16 : Play
Nov 27 & 29	Thanksgiving Holiday (no class)
Dec 2	Play continued
Dec 4	Exam 3 (Chapters 13 – 16)
Dec 6	Return Exam 3 and course wrap-up
Tuesday, Dec 10 8:00 – 10:00	Comprehensive Final Exam (Chapters 1 – 16)