**PSY 209: Brain and Behavior**

Section 730 – Online Course, Asynchronous

Summer 2023 A Term: May 15th – June 29th

Location: D2L

**Instructor**

Allison Costello, M.A., Behavioral Neuroscience Doctoral Candidate

Office hours: Via Zoom, Tuesdays 8-9am

[coste142@msu.edu](mailto:coste142@msu.edu)

She/her/hers

**Time Zone**

All times listed in the syllabus are East Lansing, MI time. Make sure to adjust if you are in a different time zone.

**Email Policy**

Email is my preferred form of communication. If you email me, you can expect a response within 24 hours during the week and on Mondays following a weekend.

**Course Information**

**Course Description**

This is an introductory course covering the biological basis of behavior. This is a general course, there is not an honors 209 option offered during the summer. We will examine the physiological, developmental, and evolutionary mechanisms of behavior. The basic structure of the nervous system, its components, circuitry, and organization will also be discussed. In addition, the course will cover major behavioral deficits that result from brain damage and/or neurochemical imbalances. The overarching goal is to provide you with a basic understanding of relationships between the nervous system and behavioral and mental states, both healthy and disordered.

**Course Time Commitment**

Since this is an online summer course, you should expect to spend more time each week on the course than you typically might spend on your semester long or in-person courses. You should expect to spend 12-24 hours a week on this course during our compressed -week schedule. This is a reminder that this will require planning and discipline to get the most out of this course. It is important to keep up and not fall behind in your assignments.

**Required Textbook**

**“Behavioral Neuroscience” Breedlove, Watson. Sinauer Publishers, 9th edition, 2019.**

The companion website to this textbook is located [here](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/breedlove9e-student-resources#tag_enhanced-e-book). This website features chapter summaries, tutorials, flash cards, and other study aids. There are also links to recently published news articles on topics relevant to each of the chapters in the text.

**Note:** You may use the 8th or 10th edition of the textbook if you have it. A pdf version of the 8th edition is available on D2L under Course Information. However, you are also responsible for knowing any information that may be in the lecture videos from the 9th edition but might not be in previous editions.

**Course Platform**

This course is asynchronous and is entirely online through D2L. Each lecture, accompanying materials, and exams are available online through D2L. You will need access to the internet throughout the course. Please ensure that your internet access is high speed and capable of accessing the videos and audio files.

D2L supports Internet Explorer, Edge, Firefox, Chrome, and Safari. The newest Firefox browser is the recommended browser for PCs and MACs. For details and to see tablet/mobile web support, visit [the D2L Technical Requirements website](https://online.cj.msu.edu/tech-support). Make sure that cookies are enabled.

**Technical Assistance**

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or need to report a problem, you can visit the following:

* MSU Help line at 1-800-500-1554, (517)-355-2345
* MSU Help site at <http://help.msu.edu>
* Desire2Learn Help Site at <http://help.d2l.msu.edu>
* MSU IT Service Desk at (517)-432-6200, (844)-678-6200, [ithelp@msu.edu](mailto:ithelp@msu.edu)

Help is available 24 hours/7 days a week from the MSU Help Line. This line will log your problem and report the details to us. If it’s an issue with your computer, the help line can help you troubleshoot that too. **Time differences are not an acceptable excuse for not reporting problems to the help line; they are available 24/7 throughout the course.** Please email me to let me know about any unresolved issues.

**Assignments & Grades**

**Overall grade**

You will have an opportunity to earn a total of **500** points in this course:

**Class Activity Quizzes**: 60 points (10 points/week)

**Discussions**: 80 points (16 points/week)

**Exams:** 360 points (60 points/exam)

Final course grades will be determined according to a standard grading scale:

90-100% (450-500 points) = 4.0

85-89.99% (425-449 points) = 3.5

80-84.99% (400-424 points) = 3.0

75-79.99% (375-399 points) = 2.5

70-74.99% (350-374 points) = 2.0

65-69.99% (325-349 points) = 1.5

60-64.99% (300-324 points) = 1.0

<60% (0-299) = 0

**Class Activity Quizzes**

There will be weekly class activity worksheets for students to complete. These worksheets are worth 10 points each and should be completed on D2L. The worksheet questions are fill-in-the-blank and matching format and there are word banks provided. Please be careful about spelling! D2L will count your answer wrong if it is spelled incorrectly. The correct spelling will be provided to you in the word bank.

Worksheets for each module will be available when that module opens and must be submitted on D2L by the due date each week. Each worksheet in the weekly Class Activity module will have a corresponding Response Sheet Quiz, where you will record and submit your answers.

You will only have **one attempt** to take each quiz but will be given an unlimited amount of time to take the quiz. There are a total of 7 class activity worksheets and only the highest 6 scores will count (lowest score will be dropped). The quizzes are open-note and open-book, but you must work on these assignments on your own.

**Discussions**

There will be one discussion topic each week discussing a neuro-ethics issue in biological psychology. A new topic will be assigned each week, with the exception of week 7, for a total of 6 discussion topics. Students are encouraged to participate in all of the discussions but can receive credit for participating in a **maximum of 5 discussions**. Since the lowest grade can be dropped from these neuro-ethics discussions, there will be no other opportunity for make-up discussion points.

For the discussion topics, the instructor will divide the class into groups of 7 or 8 students. Each week, videos will be posted examining a controversial social issue related to biological psychology. The students will then be prompted to answer a few questions and post their opinions on the discussion forum in D2L. Students are expected to post their initial response by **Wednesdays at 11:59pm Eastern Standard Time**. Then, within their groups, students must post a thoughtful response to another student’s initial post by **Fridays at 11:59pm Eastern Standard Time**. In order to gain all discussion points for that week, students must post their own response to the controversial issue **and** respond to another student’s post. **No partial credit will be offered.**

Students should be aware that disruptive behavior that impedes the learning/discussion process in the discussion forums will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be respectful of other’s opinions and avoid offending classmates. Be professional, clear, and concise. The instructor may withdraw a student from the discussion forum if they are interfering with the instructional process and will be assigned an alternative assignment consisting of a 20-page review paper on a neuro-ethics issue of the instructor’s choosing.

**Exams**

There will be one exam at the end of each of the seven weeks of the course. Exams 1-6 will be available at 6am on Fridays and last until 11:59pm on Sundays. Exam 7 will be available at 6am on Tuesday, June 27th and last until 11:59 on Thursday, June 29th. **Exam times are Eastern Daylight Savings, please be sure to convert your time zone.** You must start your exam before 11:59pm on the scheduled due date. D2L will automatically time the exams and will close you out of the exam after 50 minutes. The lowest grade of the seven exams will be dropped.

Each exam covers the preceding week’s material. Exams will be open book and consist of 30 questions. These questions will be multiple choice or other objective questions. You will have 50 minutes to answer the 30 questions, so you must be familiar with the material. These exams include all information covered in that week of the course: reading assignments from the textbook, lectures, reading assignments posted on D2L, videos, tutorial activities and so on. **You may use your book, but all work must be completed on your own.**

Do not exit the exam to go into D2L folders in the course to avoid technological problems. During a test **do not** have D2L open in another browser – D2L may register you as “you” in one browser and as a “guest” in the other. This can also cause significant technological problems.

Because students are able to take exams at any time during the exam period, and because the lowest grade will be dropped, make-up exams will not be given except under extreme circumstances. Following review of documentation (e.g., letter from a physician), you will be informed if a makeup exam is permitted.

**Extra Credit – Human Participation in Research/Alternative Assignment**

You can pick one of two options to earn extra credit in this class:

* You can earn extra credit for this course by participating in psychology research. You will receive 1 point for every 30 minutes of research participation, with a maximum of 10 points (5 hours) of extra credit added to your final grade. **Documentation and information for research participation is on D2L.** All research must be completed by Wednesday, **June 28th** by 11:59pm.
* You can complete an alternative assignment instead (Sleep & circadian rhythm activity) for a maximum of 10 points. You will observe your sleep rhythms for one week, then design a research proposal to test a beneficial sleep habit based on your individual sleep pattern. Sample research questions: How might my sleep/mood/energy levels be affected if I introduced a “no blue light” rule two hours before bedtime; five minutes of natural light after I wake up; a meditation practice before bed? Cite papers proving the efficacy of the techniques in the question you propose and discuss why it would benefit your individual sleep pattern. Summarize your sleep observations, research question, expected results, and conclusions in a short research proposal (5 pages). **Detailed instructions, sleep diary sheet, and report rubric are on D2L.** This must be completed by Wednesday, **June 21st** by 11:59pm.

**University Policies**

**Academic Honesty**

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states, "The student shares with the faculty the

responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In

addition, the Department of Psychology adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Website. Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, class work, quizzes, and exams, without assistance from any source. Turnitin will be used for written assignments and extra credit assignments.

Students who violate MSU rules will receive a penalty grade, including but not limited to a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. A letter will also be sent to the dean of your college and to the dean of the College of Social Sciences about the incident.

**MSU Final Exam Policy**

“A student absent from a final examination without a satisfactory explanation will receive a grade of 0.0 on the numerical system, NC on the CR-NC system, or an N in the case of a course authorized for grading on the P-N system. Students unable to take a final examination because of illness or other reason over which they have no control should notify the assistant deans of their colleges immediately.”

**D2L Tracking**

Please be aware that D2L tracks all student login information. For example, it tracks when you have logged into D2L and when you have logged out. It also tracks when you begin your exam and when your exam is submitted. This is helpful for the instructors because it allows us to resolve issues if there is a problem with the D2L system in terms of logging in and/or gaining access to the various sections of the site. Tracking can also help us resolve disputes about exams and assignments, particularly those that are timed. D2L tracking also can reveal academic misconduct. Of course, professors cannot view the personal content of a student in the “My Content” area of D2L.

**Limits to Confidentiality**

Please be aware that class materials are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University’s student policies. However, all University employees, including instructors, cannot maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues based on external legal obligations or health and safety considerations of MSU community members and others. The instructor must report the following information (including your name and the details of the disclosure) to the Office of Inclusion if you share it with her:

* Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
* Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty or staff, and
* Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

The Office of Inclusion will reach out to you via a confidential email, to see if you would like to pursue legal action and to provide you with additional university resources. **You have the right to choose whether or not you would like to utilize any of these services or even respond to the university’s email.** If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting, you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center (<https://caps.msu.edu/>).

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**  
Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at <https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/>. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date.

**Course Schedule & Due Dates**

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| **Week** | **Topics** | **Assigned Readings** | **Class Activity Quizzes** | **Discussions** | **Exams** |
| Week 1  May 15th | Introduction to Biological Psychology  Functional Neuroanatomy | Chapter 1  Chapter 2 | 11:59pm May 19th | Post  11:59pm May 17th  Reply  11:59pm May 19th | Opens  6am May 19th  Closes  11:59pm May 21st |
| Week 2  May 22nd | Neurophysiology  Chemical Basis of Behavior  Hormones | Chapter 3  Chapter 4  Chapter 5 | 11:59pm May 26th | Post  11:59pm May 12th  Reply  11:59pm May 26th | Opens  6am May 26th  Closes  11:59pm May 28th |
| Week 3  May 29th | Evolution  Development | Chapter 6  Chapter 7 | 11:59pm June 2nd | Post  11:59pm May 31st  Reply  11:59pm June 2nd | Opens  6am June 2nd  Closes  11:59pm June 4th |
| Week 4  June 5th | Sensory Processing  Motor Systems | Chapter 8  Chapter 11 | 11:59pm June 9th | Post  11:59pm June 7th  Reply  11:59pm June 9th | Opens  6am June 9th  Closes  11:59pm June 11th |
| Week 5  June 12th | Sex  Homeostasis  Biological Rhythms | Chapter 12  Chapter 13  Chapter 14 | 11:59pm June 16th | Post  11:59pm June 14th  Reply  11:59pm June 16th | Opens  6am June 16th  Closes  11:59pm June 18th |
| Week 6  June 19th | Stress  Psychopathology  Learning & Memory | Chapter 15  Chapter 16  Chapter 17 | 11:59pm June 23rd | Post  11:59pm June 21st  Reply  11:59pm June 23rd | Opens  6am June 23rd  Closes  11:59pm June 25th |
| Week 7  June 26th | Attention & Cognition  Language & Lateralization | Chapter 18  Chapter 19 | 11:59pm June 29th |  | Opens  6am June 27th  Closes  11:59pm June 29th |