

PSY209: Brain and Behavior

Section 730 – Online Course
Summer 2020: May 11 – June 25
Location: Desire2Learn (D2L)
Instructor: Prachi Solanki
Instructor's email: solanki7@msu.edu

Course Description

This is an introductory course covering the biological basis of behavior. 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 imbalance.

Required Textbook

Behavioral Neuroscience, Breedlove, Watson. Sinauer Publishers, 8th edition, 2018. The companion website to this textbook is located at the [biopsychology website](#). This website features chapter summaries, tutorials, flash cards and other study aids as well as links to recently published news articles on topics relevant to each of the chapters in the text.

Note: You may use the 7th edition of the textbook if you have it (Biological Psychology, Breedlove & Watson 2013). However, the companion website for this textbook edition is no longer available. You are also responsible for knowing any information that may be in the lecture videos from the 8th edition but might not be in the 7th edition.

Online Course Requirements

This course is entirely online available through the D2L system at Michigan State University. Each lecture and accompanying material as well as tests are available online. You will need access to the internet throughout the course. Be sure that your internet access is high speed and that you can download the necessary plugs-ins to access videos and audio files.

Technical Problems

Are you having problems with D2L? **YOU MUST CALL THE MSU HELP LINE: 1-800-500-1554 or (517) 355-2345.**

Any technical problems should be directed to the D2L help line. They will log the problem in and report it to me. All students must report any technical problems immediately, within 6 hours maximum. You may also report the problem to me, but I am not available 24/7—however, the D2L help desk is open at all times.

D2L Support Browsers

This is especially important at exam times! D2L supports Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, and Safari. The newest Firefox browser is the recommended browser for PCs and MACs. For details and to see tablet support and mobile web support visit the [D2L Technical Requirements website](#). Also, you need to make sure that cookies are enabled.

You need high-speed internet access for this course. Check out the [MSU Office of the Registrar Online Courses FAQ](#).

Online Class Participation

There are two forms of class participation that you will be graded on:

1) Class activity Worksheets

There will be weekly class activity worksheets for students to fill out. 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. You must score a 75% or higher on each quiz to receive full credit (10 points/activity). If you score lower than a 75% on any of the quizzes, you will not receive credit for that week's quiz. 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.**

2) Class 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 **Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.** Eastern Standard Time. Then, within their groups, students must post a thoughtful response to another student's initial post by **Friday at 11:59 p.m.** 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.**

Additional details regarding discussion forum group expectations will be discussed during the course orientation video. However, 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. 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.

Online Exams

There will be one exam at the end of each of the seven weeks of the course. Exams 2-6 will be available at 12pm on Saturday and last until 5:00 pm on Sunday.

Exam 1 will be available Sunday, May 17 at 12pm and last until 5pm on Monday, May 18.

Exam 7 will be available Wednesday, June 24 and last until 5pm on Thursday, June 25.

EXAM TIMES ARE EASTERN DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME SO BE SURE TO CONVERT TO YOUR TIME ZONE!

Each exam covers the preceding week's material. Each exam will be open book and consist of 30 questions. These questions will be multiple choice or other objective questions. These exams include all information covered in that part of the course: reading assignments from the textbook, lectures, reading assignments posted on D2L, videos, tutorial activities and so on. You will have 35 minutes to answer the 30 questions, so you must know the material very well even though it is open book. **You may use your book but all work must be completed on your own.**

Also, you must stay in the exam and not exit it at all. **Do not** go to folders in the course or different folders in D2L because that can cause technical problems. You can have notes from these other sites. During a test NEVER have D2L open in another browser – D2L may register you as “YOU” in one browser and as a “GUEST” in the other. This can cause significant problems for you. **You must start your exam before 5:00pm on the scheduled due date.** D2L will automatically time the exams and will close you out of the exam after 35 minutes.

Exam Assessment Method

The “single-question, no backtrack” method is used in PSY 209 exams. This means only one question is delivered at a time. Once you answer the question and submit your answer, then the next question will be presented. **You cannot go back to previous questions.** This is the no backtrack method. This method requires a different strategy for test taking. Since this course uses open-book testing many students find that those questions about which they had doubts are the ones that they want to look up in the book. A quick look to refresh their memories and they can proceed with confidence.

If the single-question, no backtrack, open book tests sound like a method with which you will not be comfortable, then this online PSY 209 class is probably not a good fit for your assessment style.

The lowest grade of the seven exams will be dropped. This policy gives you one grace period of poor performance or unexcused absence from an exam. However, you are **STRONGLY** encouraged to take all of the exams, even if you don't feel as prepared as you would like to be.

Makeup Exam Policy

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.** Make-up exams will be 45-minute in length and entirely short answer essay format, and will be offered only to those who have a significant illness documented by a letter

from a physician or those who have an extremely serious family problem (e.g., death of an immediate family member) that precludes them from taking the exam on the scheduled days. This must be documented by sending an e-mail to Prachi Solanki (solanki7@msu.edu) with the subject line “PSY 209 Missed Exam Documentation.” Following review of the documentation, you will be informed if a makeup exam is permitted. Students who miss an exam without satisfying these conditions will receive a grade of zero for that exam.

Grade Breakdown

Total Class Activity Points: 60 points (10 points/week)

Total Discussion Points: 80 points (16 points/week)

Total Exam Points: 360 points (60 points/exam)

Total Class Points: 500 points

Grading Scale

Final grades are based on the following scale:

Percent	Grade
90-100	4.0
85-89	3.5
80-84	3.0
75-79	2.5
70-74	2.0
65-69	1.5
60-64	1.0
Less than 60	0.0

Exam Question Appeal

You will receive exam feedback including your grade and a hypertext date when you took your exam from 8:00am Monday to Wednesday noon on most weeks. If you click on the hypertext date, then a page will open up and you will see all the exam questions and answers. In the case that you feel that an item is scored incorrectly, you may appeal the item through D2L via an email to me (solanki7@msu.edu). In the subject line, type “PSY 209 Question Appeal”. Only points appealed in this method will be considered. In order to appeal a question, explain why your choice is the BEST answer. Document your explanation. Provide page numbers from the textbook, slide numbers from the PowerPoint presentations, etc. Explain why the other choice is wrong or ambiguous. Appeals must be received by 5pm on the Sunday, immediately after an exam in order for it to be considered.

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, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. Here are some examples of academic dishonesty:

- Have another student provide academic assistance or coaching during an online quiz or test
- Have another person take a quiz or test for you
- Copy questions or answers from your online quiz or test and share them with another student
- Copy questions or answers from your online quiz or test and post them on a website for others to view
- Get questions and/or answers from students who have already taken an exam or quiz you are scheduled to take
- Collaborate with other students on projects or assignments without your Instructor's permission

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.

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 7- 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. The code word you will need to enter in your course orientation quiz is: **isocortex**.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call (517) 353-9642 (voice) or (517) 355-1293 (TTY). Visit the [RCPD website](#) or send them an email at rcpd@msu.edu.

Course Schedule

Week	Topics	Assigned Readings*	Exam Opens	Exam Closes
Week 1 May 11 – May 18	Introduction to Biological Psychology	Chapter 1	Sunday May 17 12:00pm	Monday May 18 5:00pm
	Functional Neuroanatomy	Chapter 2		
Week 2 May 18 – May 24	Neurophysiology	Chapter 3		
	Chemical Basis of Behavior	Chapter 4	Saturday May 23 12:00pm	Sunday May 24 5:00pm
Week 3 May 24 – May 31	Hormones	Chapter 5		
	Evolution	Chapter 6	Saturday May 30 12:00pm	Sunday May 31 5:00pm
Week 4 May 31 – June 7	Development	Chapter 7		
	Sensory Processing	Chapter 8	Saturday June 6 12:00pm	Sunday June 7 5:00pm
Week 5 June 7 – June 14	Motor Systems	Chapter 11		
	Sex	Chapter 12		
Week 6 June 14 – June 21	Homoestasis	Chapter 13	Saturday June 13 12:00pm	Sunday June 14 5:00pm
	Biological Rhythms	Chapter 14		
Week 7 June 21 – June 25	Stress	Chapter 15		
	Psychopathology	Chapter 16	Saturday June 20 12:00pm	Sunday June 21 5:00pm
Week 7 June 21 – June 25	Learning & Memory	Chapter 17		
	Attention & Cognition	Chapter 18		
Week 7 June 21 – June 25	Language & Hemispheric Specialization	Chapter 19	Wednesday June 24 12:00pm	Thursday June 25 5:00pm

*[Breedlove, S.M. & Watson, N.V. \(2018\). Behavioral Neuroscience \(8th ed.\). Sinauer Publishers.](#)