

University of Massachusetts Lowell
PSYC 3120: Learning & Behavior – Spring 2025

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Office Hours & Location: Mon 12pm-2pm, Wed 3:15-4:15pm @ Coburn 340G
Course Assistant: Jack Blake, MS, BCBA- jack_blake@student.uml.edu
Class Location: Coburn Hall 140

- Feel free to drop by during office hours or if my door is open! I'm happy to chat or answer questions about the study objectives.
- Personally, I respond to emails within 1 day (but typically sooner, with exception to e-mails sent after 5 pm or the weekends, so I will get back to you on the next business day.) In your e-mails, please provide me with as much information as possible for your question (e.g., what is your understanding or interpretation). This is most helpful to me to address your e-mail in a timely fashion.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to examine various methods and techniques that are suitable for understanding and influencing behavior, based on the principles and findings of experimental studies of animal and human behavior. If your work or daily activity requires interaction with other individuals (that's all of us!), you will likely benefit from the information presented in this course. You will learn how to use principles of behavior analysis to understand your own behavior, as well as the behavior of others and the world around you.

At the end of the semester, my goal is for you to:

1. Explain how behavior analysis differs from other approaches that aim to understand human behavior.
2. Define, explain, and identify examples of basic behavioral concepts.
3. Apply basic behavioral methods for increasing/decreasing behavior.
4. Identify, define, and measure behavior.
5. Use visual analyses to determine behavior change.
6. Understand more complex issues related to behavior change with different populations.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. **Madden, G. J., Reed, D. R., & Reed, F. D. (2021). An introduction to behavior analysis. Wiley.**
A copy of the textbook is available via Course Reserves at the O'Leary Library.

Additional and supplemental readings will be posted on Blackboard.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

There are several assignments and opportunities to do well in this course. As such, I implement a drop policy for your lowest grade or missed assignment in lieu of late or make-up assignments. No documentation is required for the dropped grade, and providing documentation will not override this drop policy. Please make sure you familiarize yourself with the syllabus, course dates, and Blackboard to maximize your success and take advantage of the resources to succeed in this course.

1. Study Objectives

- Complete the questions provided while you read the textbook before class.
- Only the material specified in the objectives will be covered on quizzes and exams (this is your study guide!).
 - Keep all of the study objectives so that you can refer to them later in the course as concepts may build and relate to one another.
- Bring your completed study objectives to class to take additional notes from lecture.

2. Class Lectures

- My PowerPoint will be posted on Blackboard before class.
- Some class lectures will involve activities and/or practice opportunities. Due to the live participation component of these activities, they will not be posted on Blackboard. Sometimes I may collect attendance at lectures for bonus points.

3. Quizzes (10 points each)

- You will take 1-2 untimed and open-book quizzes on Blackboard weekly (by **Sundays at 11:59p EST**) to allow you to practice the material.
- The question format varies (multiple choice, short answer, fill in the blank, etc.).
- There are **12 scheduled quizzes** but your **10 highest scores** will count towards your grade.
 - If you submit all 12 quizzes, your lowest 2 scores will be converted to extra credit (out of 5 points each, up to 10 total points extra credit).
- I recommend that you complete the quiz after the corresponding class, but you can also opt to take it earlier (quizzes are available to take once the unit folder is available).
 - Quiz answers are available immediately after the deadline, so you can review your quiz attempt for feedback and the correct answers. For this reason, there are no late quizzes accepted since I included 2 dropped quiz grades. The drops are built in for sudden life events that preclude you from taking the quiz (work conflicts, illness, forgot), and for off-days in which you may not perform as high as you hoped.

4. Exams (35 points each)

- Exams are given in-class and cover that unit's study objectives. Exams are not cumulative although some concepts may build upon previously covered concepts.
- The format will consist of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay questions. Exam questions will differ from those provided on quizzes, with similar content.
- There are **6 scheduled exams**, in which your **5 highest scores** will count towards your grade.
 - If you are aware of a schedule conflict in advance (doctor's appt, interview, athletic event, etc.), please e-mail me at least one week before the scheduled exam day to schedule a time to take the exam early.
 - I try to provide feedback as quickly as possible for exams and aim to go over the exam in the following class and answer student questions. For this reason, I cannot accommodate late exam takers.
 - If you miss an exam for any reason (illness, injury, car trouble, too busy to study, alarm didn't go off, etc.), the missing exam score will turn into a zero and automatically be your dropped exam and will not negatively count against you should you take the remaining exams!
 - However, any additional missed exams will be scored as a 0 and will negatively impact your grade. I have also provided a calendar of when exams will be given in this syllabus so that you can plan ahead. I recommend planning to take all of the exams so that you will not end up with a zero in case a real problem makes you miss an exam later.

6. Letters to (25 points each)

- You will write letters to a person of your choosing based on an assigned article or video provided in Blackboard.
- There are **6 scheduled letters**, in which your **5 highest scores** will count toward your grade.
 - If you submit all 6 letters, your lowest score will be converted to extra credit (out of 10 points).
- The purpose of these letters is for you to convey the information covered in the assigned article in an understandable fashion to someone unfamiliar with psychology and behavior analysis.
 - Each letter should contain a summary of the content, how it relates to behavioral concepts you've learned in class, and why the content is important or relevant to a science of behavior and/or how it differs from traditional approaches or assumptions regarding behavior.
- Letters must be typed and use well formulated and sequenced paragraphs. Completed letters will be submitted via Blackboard on the due date indicated on the course schedule and will be graded on a rubric. APA formatting will not be required, but assignments should be formatted professionally and free of grammatical and spelling errors. E-mailed letters or letters submitted past the due date will not be accepted and will be scored as a 0.

POINT DISTRIBUTION:

Quizzes (10 quizzes; 10pts. each)	= 100 pts.
Exams (5 exams; 35pts. each)	= 175 pts.
Letters (5 assignments; 25 pts. each)	= <u>125 pts.</u>
Total Possible	= 400 pts

GRADING SCALE: Student grades will be based on the following scale and points accrued. There will be no curve; all student grades are earned.

Letter	Percent	Points
A	93%	386+
A-	90%	370+
B+	86%	358+
B	83%	342+
B-	80%	330+
C+	76%	318+
C	73%	302+
C-	70%	290+
D+	63%	278+
D	60%	250+
F	<60%	238+

EXTRA CREDIT.

There are 3 built-in ways to earn extra credit in this class:

- 1) completing all 12 quizzes (your lowest 2 scores will be converted to extra credit out of 5 points for each quiz, up to 10 total points).
- 2) completing all 6 letters (your lowest score will be converted to extra credit, up to 10 points.)
- 3) completing a self-paced tutorial on learning principles (up to 10 extra credit points.)

I will not provide individualized extra credit at any point during the semester (this includes at the end of the semester). Only events or opportunities that are announced by me in class or via email will count toward extra credit.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:

- Bringing computers, tablets, and phones is encouraged as I tend to use polling software and/or shared documents in class.
 - However, if you do not, it will not be an issue!
 - If you do, I ask that you use these devices to enhance class, rather than detract from it (e.g., texting during class, reading personal e-mails, surfing the internet, completing other coursework).
- If we are engaged in activities, discussion, and/or other collaborative work, please give your best effort in attending and participating fully.
- If you are sick or need to miss class for whatever reason, please review the lecture on Blackboard on your own time.
 - I do not need proof, doctors' notes, positive covid test results, etc., (nor will these documents supersede the guidelines laid out within this syllabus.)
- If you need to leave early or arrive late, I ask that you leave or enter quietly.
- Be kind, respectful, and cordial. My goal is to have a nurturing classroom environment where we can all learn from one another. Thought questions, your personal experiences or opinions are highly welcome! That said, unprofessional, disrespectful, and/or inappropriate interactions with me or your peers will not be tolerated (such as talking while peers are asking questions, ignoring your group or partner during activities).

ACCOMMODATIONS: If you are registered with Disability Services and will require course accommodations, please notify me via the Accommodate [semester request process](#) as soon as possible so that we might make appropriate arrangements. It is important that we connect to discuss the logistics of your accommodations; please speak to me during office hours or privately after class as we respect and want to protect your privacy. If you need further information or need to register for academic accommodations, please visit the [Disability Services Website](#).

Course Calendar

*The professor reserves the right to modify this course calendar as necessary to meet the needs of the students or professor during the semester. If changes are made, you will be notified of these changes in class. ***Additional readings and assignments may be assigned throughout the semester.***

Date	Monday	Date	Wednesday	Assignments due Sunday 11:59pm ET
		Wed 1/22	Syllabus & course introduction	
Mon 1/27	Introduction to behavior analysis (Ch. 1)	Wed 1/29	Measuring behavior (Ch. 2)	Quiz 1 *Set 1
Mon 2/03	Measuring behavior (cont.)	Wed 2/05	Unit 1 Exam	Letter 1
Mon 2/10	Single-subject designs (Ch. 3.)	Wed 2/12	Single-subject designs (cont.)	Quiz 2
Mon 2/17	-No Class-	Wed 2/19	Respondent conditioning (Ch. 4)	Quiz 3 *Set 2
Mon 2/24	Respondent conditioning (cont.)	Wed 2/26	Unit 2 Exam	
Mon 3/03	Operant conditioning: Reinforcement (Ch. 5, 6, 8)	Wed 3/05	Reinforcement (cont.)	Quiz 4 Letter 2 *Set 3-6
Mon 3/10	-Spring Break -	Wed 3/12	- Spring Break -	
Mon 3/17	Schedules of reinforcement (Ch. 11)	Wed 3/19	Extinction & differential reinforcement (Ch. 7)	Quiz 5; Quiz 6 *Set 7
Mon 3/24	Unit 3 Exam	Wed 3/26	Motivating operations (Ch. 9, pp.229-236)	Quiz 7 Letter 3
Mon 3/31	Punishment (Ch. 10)	Wed 4/02	Discriminative stimulus control (Ch. 12)	Quiz 8 Letter 4 *Set 8-10
Mon 4/07	Unit 4 Exam	Wed 4/09	Verbal behavior (Ch. 14 pp. 390-400; BB- Learn RFT Ch. 2)	Quiz 9
Mon 4/14	Verbal behavior (cont.)	Wed 4/16	Derived relations (BB- Learning RFT Ch. 4); Rule-governed behavior (Ch. 14, pp. 401-413)	Quiz 10 Letter 5
Mon 4/21	-No Class-	Wed 4/23	Unit 5 Exam	
Mon 4/28	Choice, impulsivity, and self-control (Ch. 13)	Wed 4/30	Self-management (Ch. 9, pp 248-252; BB- Martin & Pear Chapter 26) Changing group behavior (BB- CHH Chapter 26)	Quiz 11; Quiz 12 Letter 6 Unit 6 Exam

Readings with "BB-" before it indicate that it is a reading posted on Blackboard (not in your textbook).

*Sets indicate the Learning Principles self-paced tutorial sets, which are extra credit and optional. Note you can decide to start and not finish the sets, but you cannot start at a later set without completing the previous ones.

TUTORING RESOURCES AND CENTERS FOR LEARNING AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

SERVICES: CLASS will be offering [tutoring](#) and [Writing Center](#) services both in-person and virtually. I strongly urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to reinforce your learning.

INCOMPLETES AND WITHDRAWALS: If you are experiencing a medical (or other) issue that requires a lengthy absence, it may be necessary to discuss options such as a medical withdrawal or an incomplete. In those (hopefully rare) cases, I am happy to help you brainstorm solutions, and/or direct you to the appropriate university resources. University policy allows students to be given an incomplete grade (INC) at the end of a semester ONLY if the student is in good standing but for some legitimate reason is unable to submit or complete a final course requirement on time. If granted an Incomplete, students have until about the 10th week of the next regular semester to make up missed work. If you wish to drop the course with a grade of 'W' you must do so officially through the registrar's office before the institution deadline. If you simply stop attending class, you will receive an 'F' as a final grade.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: You must work independently on all assignments. Any exam or paper that shows evidence you have collaborated with someone else, copied someone else's work, allowed someone to copy your work, or submitted a paper essentially the same as one you submitted in another course, will receive a '0' on the submitted assignment or exam, and you will be referred for disciplinary action in accordance with university policies as set forth in the [UMass Lowell undergraduate catalog](#).

Please note this policy also applies to receiving help from tutors, who are welcome to work with you to help you understand concepts and to develop plans for completing assignments, and who may look over work that you have done and give feedback, but who may not complete any of the actual work you submit. Students are permitted to use material from the instructor and from published or electronic sources, provided the source is cited in proper APA style; direct quotations (which should be used only when truly essential) must be in quotation marks and the source also clearly cited. Consult me if you have any questions pertaining to academic dishonesty prior to the submission of an assignment or exam.

AI Policy: Writing is integral to thinking. It is also hard. Natural language processing (NLP) applications like ChatGPT are useful tools for helping us improve our writing and stimulate our thinking. However, they should never serve as a substitute for either. And, in this course, they cannot. Therefore, the use of AI to complete assignments is discouraged. But, working with AI as a "co-pilot" is acceptable.

Think of the help you get from NLP apps as a much less sophisticated version of the assistance you can receive (for free!) from a UML Writing Center tutor. That person might legitimately ask you a question to jump-start your imagination, steer you away from the passive voice, or identify a poorly organized paragraph, but should never do the writing for you. That said, you are expected to conduct your own research, verify your sources and facts, and the final submission must be your own work.

Appropriate use of AI:

- Use spell check, grammar check, and synonym identification tools (e.g., Grammarly, and MS Word).
- Use app recommendations when it comes to rephrasing sentences or reorganizing paragraphs you have drafted yourself.
- Use app recommendations when it comes to tweaking outlines you have drafted yourself.
- Use app recommendations for APA formatting, with the understanding that it is your responsibility to verify the accuracy of AI's responses, and you may lose points if AI fails to correctly apply APA to your assignments.
- Clarify or better understand terms, concepts, or course topics for your own knowledge.

Inappropriate use of AI:

- Write or rephrase any part of your course assignments – at no point should the output be copied and pasted into an assignment or draft.
- Summarize or analyze content of assigned readings or videos.

Evidence of inappropriate AI use will be grounds for submission of an Academic Integrity report.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Your personal health and well-being are important to all of us at the university. I'm available to talk about your stresses or concerns related to your coursework in my class. Here are some resources to support your well-being:

[Counseling Services](#) provide crisis intervention, assessment, referrals, short term individual counseling and group therapy. Call to book an appointment at (978) 934-6800.

[UMatter2](#) is a university-wide initiative to support students and promote mental health. They can be reached at (978) 934-6671. There, you also will find information at that website on how to access [Togetherall](#), an online community which is a peer-to-peer platform dedicated to mental health support.

[Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services \(CLASS\)](#) provides advising services including goal setting, course selection, SIS functions, changing majors/minors and course deletions. (978) 934-2936 or Advisement@uml.edu.

The mission of the [Office of Student Life & Wellbeing](#) is to advance the holistic concept for student success by infusing health-promoting actions and collaboration into campus culture. They can be reached at 978-934-4342 or Wellbeing@uml.edu.

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND CLASSROOM COMMUNITY STANDARDS: UMass Lowell—and I—value human diversity in all its forms, whether expressed through race and ethnicity, culture, political and social views, religious and spiritual beliefs, language and geographic characteristics, gender, gender identities and sexual orientations, learning and physical abilities, age, parenting status and social or economic backgrounds. Enrich yourself by practicing respect in your interactions, and enrich one another by expressing your point of view, knowing that diversity and individual differences are respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength.

[The Office of Multicultural Affairs \(OMA\)](#) supports and advocates for students while leading diversity-related programming. At the same time working to create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ individuals via the LGBTQ+ Resource Center. Contact (978) 934-4336 or Multicultural_Affairs@uml.edu.

TITLE IX REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: In accordance with Title IX, UMass Lowell is required to investigate incidents of sex discrimination that occur on our campus. Faculty who become aware of an incident of sexual harassment or sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, relationship violence, or stalking, are required to notify UMass Lowell's Title IX Coordinator. The purpose of this disclosure is to inform students of the University's obligations under Title IX and the reporting responsibility of faculty. For more information about how to file a complaint, your rights and your reporting options available at UMass Lowell, including confidential and anonymous reporting options, please visit this [website](#).

Students should be familiar with the university's policy regarding any form of [sexual harassment or violence](#) as well as with its policies governing [student conduct](#).

STUDENT COMPLAINTS: UMass Lowell is committed to the fair treatment of all its students by faculty, staff, and other students. If you feel you have been unfairly treated, your rights are described [here](#).

VETERAN'S SERVICES:

UMass Lowell is committed to helping our military students take full advantage of all the educational benefits available through the federal and state governments. We welcome veterans, guardsmen, reservists and all active duty military students who are enrolled in undergraduate, graduate and continuing education degrees and/or certificate programs. Students are certified for benefits by our Veterans Benefits Administrators (VBA).

The Office of Veterans Services provides world-class service to our student veterans: UMass Lowell was named to Military Times "Best for Vets" 2014 College rankings, and is ranked among the top Military Friendly Schools in the nation by Victory Media, indicating the campus is among the top 20 percent for military students' experience. For complete information on the services and resources available please visit this [website](#).