



PSY 341.01W: Learning Theories and Processes

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Professor: Dr. Stephen Reysen

Class Location: Online

Office Location: Henderson 210

Office Hours: Tuesday 8:00AM to 1:00PM, and by appointment

Office Phone: 903-886-5197

Email Address: Stephen.Reysen@tamuc.edu (*email is the best way to reach me*)

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description: In this course we will cover the fundamental theories and research conducted related to learning and motivation within psychology. We will cover both classic and modern psychological research. There is no textbook for this class. Instead we will read journal articles and book chapters each week. The purpose of the readings is to give you an understanding of (1) early research in learning and motivation, (2) modern research in learning and motivation, and (3) how research is conducted. Due to the breadth of the research that has been conducted in these areas within psychology it is impossible to cover every theoretical contribution. Therefore, I have selected what I believe to be key writings in the field.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop an overview of the field of psychology by studying and reflecting on the topics.
2. Appreciate how psychologists take a scientific approach to understanding human behavior and thought.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grading:

1. Exams: There will be two exams. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions, and are worth 50 points each. Exams will cover the readings.

Exam 1 is due Sunday March 8 by 11:59PM

Exam 2 is due Sunday May 3 by 11:59PM

2. Reaction Papers: Students will complete 15, ¼-page (single space) reaction papers (one for each week's readings). The purpose of the reaction paper is to apply the concepts in a given article to your own life (e.g., past experience, expectations, ideas of how the concepts can be applied in other areas of life, research ideas). There is no specific requirement for these papers except to show that you have thought about the concepts presented in the class readings. The reaction paper can cover just one reading (or all the readings that week). The reaction papers

should be written in a word document (to catch spelling and grammar errors). The text should then be copied and pasted into the discussion section of myLeo Online (for that week). Please do not attach the paper in the discussion board, rather copy/paste the text into the discussion box. You can write more than a ¼ page, however you will be docked points if your reaction paper is less than ¼ page. The reaction papers are due by Sunday night at 11:59PM for that week. **Within each paper please write one multiple-choice question on that topic.** I highly recommend that you work ahead (e.g., post reactions a couple days (or weeks) in advance of when they are due) to avoid a last minute rush to post your reaction. Late reaction papers will be accepted, however points will be docked. Each paper is worth 10 points (150 total points).

Assessment:

Exams: 100 points

Reaction Papers: 150 points

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the best way to study for the test?

A: Print out and read over the articles and have them with you as you take the test. The questions on the test will be based on the questions prior students have posted in the reaction papers. Thus, it is a good idea to study those questions (they tend to be similar from semester to semester).

Q: I forgot to post my reaction paper can I still post it?

A: Yes, I will take late papers. However, I will take a couple points off for being late. The one exception to this is that all work in the class must be completed by Sunday May 3 by 11:59PM. I will not accept any late work after that time.

Q: Why where points taken off my reaction paper?

A: In myLeo Online there is a way to see any comments I may give. If points are taken off the paper I will put a comment. The two most common reasons for deducting points are (1) the paper is too short (i.e., less than 1/4 page single-spaced) and (2) the response is missing the multiple-choice question.

Q: Do I need to understand the statistics in the articles?

A: No, the purpose of the articles is to expose you to actual research and theory. Often students are only exposed to a textbook. One sentence in the textbook usually represents years of research and theory on a topic. The purpose of the articles is to expose you to that side of psychology. I do not expect you to understand everything in the article (however, you may have to google some of the terms to gain a fuller understanding of the article). I DO expect you to grasp the gist of the article (i.e., the general thesis of the article).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week 1: Monday January 12 to Sunday January 18

Paper 1: Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (2000). How to read a journal article in social psychology. In E. T. Higgins & A. W. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Motivational science: Social and personality perspectives* (pp. 425-434). Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Week 2: Monday January 19 to Sunday January 25

Paper 2: Chance, P. (1999). Thorndike's puzzle boxes and the origins of the experimental analysis of behavior. *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior*, 72, 433-440.

Paper 3: Bouton, M. E., & Moody, E. W. (2004). Memory processes in classical conditioning. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 28, 663-674.

Paper 4: Watson, J. B., & Rayner, R. (1920). Conditioned emotional reactions. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 3, 1-14.

Week 3: Monday January 26 to Sunday February 1

Paper 5: Beck, H. P., Levinson, S., & Irons, G. (2009). Finding little Albert: A journey to John B. Watson's infant laboratory. *American Psychologist*, 64, 605-614.

Paper 6: Harris, B. (1979). Whatever happened to little Albert? *American Psychologist*, 34, 151-160.

Paper 7: Walther, E., Weil, R., & Langer, T. (2011). Why do we like the iPhone? The role of evaluative conditioning in attitude formation. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 5, 473-486.

Week 4: Monday February 2 to Sunday February 8

Paper 8: Both, S., Brauer, M., & Laan, E. (2011). Classical conditioning of sexual response in women: A replication study. *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 8, 3116-3131.

Paper 9: Baldwin, M. W., & Dandeneau, S. D. (2009). Putting social psychology into serious games. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 3, 547-565.

Week 5: Monday February 9 to Sunday February 15

Paper 10: Bitterman, M. E. (2006). Classical conditioning since Pavlov. *Review of General Psychology*, 10, 365-376.

Paper 11: Rossiter, J. R., & Foxall, G. R. (2008). Hull-Spence behavior theory as a paradigm for consumer behavior. *Marketing Theory*, 8, 123-141.

Week 6: Monday February 16 to Sunday February 22

Paper 12: Eisenstein, E. M., Eisenstein, D., & Smith, J. C. (2001). The evolutionary significance of habituation and sensitization across phylogeny: A behavioral homeostasis model. *Integrative Physiological and Behavioral Science*, 36, 251-265.

Paper 13: Wong, S. E. (2008). Operant learning theory. In B. A. Thyer (Ed.), *Comprehensive handbook of social work and social welfare, Volume 2: Human behavior in the social environment* (pp. 69-99). New York: John Wiley.

Paper 14: Shields, C., & Gredler, M. (2003). A problem-solving approach to teaching operant conditioning. *Teaching of Psychology*, 30, 114-116.

Week 7: Monday 23 to Sunday March 1

Paper 15: Bandura, A., Ross, D., & Ross, S. A. (1963). Vicarious reinforcement and imitative learning. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67, 601-607.

Paper 16: Seligman, M. E. P., & Maier, S. F. (1967). Failure to escape traumatic shock. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 74, 1-9.

Paper 17: Jablonsky, S. F., & DeVries, D. L. (1972). Operant conditioning principles extrapolated to the theory of management. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 7, 340-358.

Week 8: Monday March 2 to Sunday March 8

TEST 1 DUE SUNDAY MARCH 8 (Covers Weeks 1-8)

Paper 18: Rentfrow, P. J. (2012). The role of music in everyday life: Current directions in the social psychology of music. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 6, 402-416.

Week 9: Monday March 9 to Sunday March 15: SPRING BREAK

No reaction papers this week.

Week 10: Monday March 16 to Sunday March 22

Paper 19: Henderlong, J., & Lepper, M. R. (2002). The effects of praise on children's intrinsic motivation: A review and synthesis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128, 774-795.

Paper 20: Suls, J., & Wheeler, L. (2012). Social comparison theory. In P. A. M. Van Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of theories of social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 460-482). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Week 11: Monday March 23 to Sunday March 29

Paper 21: Crandall, C. S., Silvia, P. J., N'Gbala, A. N., Tsang, J.-A., & Dawson, K. (2007). Balance theory, unit relations, and attribution: The underlying integrity of Heiderian theory. *Review of General Psychology*, 11, 12-30.

Paper 22: Aronson, E., & Cope, V. (1968). My enemy's enemy is my friend. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 8, 8-12.

Paper 23: Festinger, L., & Carlsmith, J. M. (1959). Cognitive consequences of forced compliance. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 58, 203-210.

Week 12: Monday March 30 to Sunday April 5

Paper 24: Miron, A. M., & Brehm, J. W. (2006). Reactance theory - 40 years later. *Zeitschrift für Sozialpsychologie*, 37, 9-8.

Paper 25: Powers, K. E., Worsham, A. L., Freeman, J. B., Wheatley, T., & Heatherton, T. F. (2014). Social connection modulates perceptions of animacy. *Psychological Science*, 25, 1943-1948.

Paper 26: Bastian, B., Jetten, J., Hornsey, M. J., & Leknes, S. (2014). The positive consequences of pain: A biopsychosocial approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 18, 256-279.

Week 13: Monday April 6 to Sunday April 12

Paper 27: Greenberg, J., & Arndt, J. (2012). Terror management theory. In P. A. M. Van Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of theories of social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 398-415). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Paper 28: Scherer, K. R. (1999). Appraisal theory. In T. Dalgleish & M. Power (Eds.), *Handbook of cognition and emotion* (pp. 637-663). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Week 14: Monday April 13 to Sunday April 19

Paper 29: Reysen, S., & Katzarska-Miller, I. (2013). Playing moderately hard to get: An application of Brehm's emotion intensity theory. *Interpersona*, 7, 260-271.

Paper 30: Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup behaviour. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-47). Monterey, CA: Brooks-Cole.

Paper 31: Turner, J. C., & Reynolds, K. J. (2012). Self-categorization theory. In P. A. M. Van Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of theories of social psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 399-417). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Week 15: Monday April 20 to Sunday April 26

Paper 32: Branscombe, N. R., Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (1999). The context and content of social identity threat. In N. Ellemers, R. Spears, & B. Doosje (Eds.), *Social identity: Context, commitment, content* (pp. 35-58). Oxford: Blackwell.

Paper 33: Hogg, M. A., & Adelman, J. (2013). Uncertainty-identity theory: Extreme groups, radical behavior, and authoritarian leadership. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69, 436-454.

Paper 34: Slotter, E. B., Duffy, C. W., & Gardner, W. L. (2014). Balancing the need to be “me” with the need to be “we”: Applying optimal distinctiveness theory to the understanding of multiple motives within romantic relationships. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 52, 71-81.

Week 16: Monday April 27 to Sunday May 3

Paper 35: Kurtis, T., Adams, G., Yellow Bird, M. (2010). Generosity or genocide? Identity implications of silence in American Thanksgiving commemorations. *Memory*, 18, 208-224.

Paper 36: Adams, G., & Markus, H. R. (2004). Toward a conception of culture suitable for a social psychology of culture. In M. Schaller & C. S. Crandall (Eds.), *The psychological foundations of culture* (pp. 335-360). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Any late reaction papers are due by Sunday May 3 by 11:59PM (no work will be accepted after that time).

TEST 2 DUE SUNDAY MAY 3 by 11:59PM (Covers Weeks 10-16)

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID and Password

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Technology-Related Issues

Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

My expectations in this area should be very simple to fulfill. (1) Immaturity will NOT be tolerated! If a student's behavior is disrupting the class, he/she will be asked to stop. (2) Respect: Given the nature of this course, we may discuss issues that some of you may find embarrassing, uncomfortable, and/or even "inappropriate." To remain in this class, you must be respectful of others and maintain a mature and professional manner at all times. Failure to do so will result in your expulsion from the course. (3) The Student's Guidebook addresses the issues of academic cheating and plagiarism. These are a breach of conduct, and students are subject to disciplinary actions. It's simple. Do NOT cheat (to cheat is to act dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain an advantage) or plagiarize (to plagiarize is to take the work or idea of someone else and pass it off as one's own)!

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

Learning Management System (LMS) – D2L

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are the technical requirements:

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
- Salutation (e.g., Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The [Code of Student Conduct](#) is described in detail online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Use of Artificial Intelligence

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

Students with Disabilities -- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu
Website: [Office of Student Disability Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health – Counseling Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit <https://www.etamu.edu/counseling-center/>

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it, or follow this link: <https://www.etamu.edu/telus/>



Community Psychology Clinic

The Community Psychology Clinic at East Texas A&M offers assessments services to assist students who may be experiencing difficulties in their classes, mental health issues, support groups, Autism, ADHD, and assist with gaining accommodations in college. All services are FREE to students. Call today to schedule an appointment 903-886-5660 or email cpc@etamu.edu