



PSYC 515 01W, 21430, Neurological/Biological Bases of Behavior

COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Will Whitham, PhD

Office Location: TBD, Zoom

Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 2:00pm-4:30pm (please notify me in advance if possible)

University Email Address: will.whitham@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: email

Communication Response Time: 24-48 hours Monday-Friday, weekends and holidays may take longer than 48 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

- An Introduction to Brain and Behavior (7th ed.), (2023). Kolb, B, Whishaw, I.Q., & Teskey, G. C. Book will be accessed online through Perusall

Course Description

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- 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.
- 3) Practice the convention of scientific discourse appropriate to the audience, purpose and message.
- 4) Explain the real world phenomena by applying the concepts, theories, and methods learned in our course. Learning how to learn is a good start.
- 5) Nurture scientific thinking. This is an approach to information that combines a high degree of skepticism (questioning what “everybody knows”), followed by

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

objectivity (using empirical data to separate fantasy from reality) and rationalism (practicing logical reasoning).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

You need to be able to use the following.

- Microsoft Office or equivalent
- PDF
- myLeo/Desire2Learn (D2L)
- Searching the internet for texts
- Using Library resources

In addition, refer to the following: <https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources/essential-technological-skills/>

Instructional Methods

This is a web-based course. Each week you will be expected to complete required reading materials, and to complete assignments designed to encourage integration of the readings with previous and future readings and with applications to the real world.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Your attendance is a significant factor in student course grades. Start with attending our class and do the following basics.

- 1) Check and read class emails promptly for announcements, updates, clarifications, etc.
- 2) Take notes as you listen to lectures, read the assigned parts of the textbook to check if your listening comprehension matches with the textbook descriptions, and fill in the missing pieces.
- 3) Quiz yourself often. Can you define a concept in your own words? Can you answer 3 or 4 questions of the textbook practice questions correctly?
- 4) Review the materials on a regular basis.
- 5) Complete assigned coursework on time.
- 6) Please contact me when you have questions. The material is difficult, and no one learns everything perfectly the first time through. This class, and your time, is too important for you to spend time getting frustrated instead of learning

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or Below

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Reading Assignments	60%
Term Project	40%
TOTAL	100%

Assessments

Term project: 40%

By the end of the semester you will submit a project representative of your developing expertise in neuromechanisms and biological bases of behavior. The project requirements are somewhat flexible but must include a written, deliverable component. Formal instruction and a grading rubric will be provided during the semester.

Weekly reading assignments: 60%

Each week you will submit some deliverable evidence of your engagement with the material for the week. These assignments may include, but are not limited to:

- o completing a reading guide,
- o watching videos relevant to the week's material,
- o leading a class discussion or responding to discussion posts,
- o submitting a video response

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

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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@tamuc.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 East Texas A&M University campus open computer lab, etc.

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>

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

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

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Course Generative Text Policy

Unless authorized by me, you are expected to complete all course assignments without assistance from any source, including artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Google AI, etc.

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.

University Specific Procedures

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 can be found at <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-code-of-conduct/>.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

If you believe someone has engaged in behaviors that do not align with the Code of Student Conduct or you have other concerns, please visit the File a Report page at <https://www.tamuc.edu/office-of-student-rights-and-responsibilities/concerns-incident-reporting/>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

Academic Integrity

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

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Graduate student academic dishonesty policy:
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

Graduate student academic dishonesty form:
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

East Texas A&M University Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage.

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

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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 Services
Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5930

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Website: <http://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campusServices/StudentDisabilityServices/default.aspx>

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.



East Texas A&M University Supports Students' Mental Health

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

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

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 East Texas A&M University 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.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

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.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

<u>Week</u>	<u>Tues</u>	<u>Thurs</u>	<u>Sun</u>	<u>Content</u>
1	13-Jan	15-Jan	18-Jan	Course Intro, Perusall Setup
2	20-Jan	22-Jan	25-Jan	Brain and Behavior Ch03
3	27-Jan	29-Jan	1-Feb	Brain and Behavior Ch04
4	3-Feb	5-Feb	8-Feb	Brain and Behavior Ch05
5	10-Feb	12-Feb	15-Feb	Brain and Behavior Ch02
6	17-Feb	19-Feb	22-Feb	Brain and Behavior Ch07
7	24-Feb	26-Feb	1-Mar	Brain and Behavior Ch06
8	3-Mar	5-Mar	8-Mar	Brain and Behavior Ch11
9	10-Mar	12-Mar	15-Mar	Spring Break 🌞
10	17-Mar	19-Mar	22-Mar	Brain and Behavior Ch13
11	24-Mar	26-Mar	29-Mar	Brain and Behavior Ch8
12	31-Mar	2-Apr	5-Apr	Brain and Behavior Ch9
13	7-Apr	9-Apr	12-Apr	Brain and Behavior Ch14
14	14-Apr	16-Apr	19-Apr	Brain and Behavior Ch15
15	21-Apr	23-Apr	26-Apr	Brain and Behavior Ch16
16	28-Apr	30-Apr		

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.