

University of Lethbridge
Department of Psychology and Neuroscience
Psychology 2700A: Introduction to Animal Behavior
Spring 2003

Instructor: Sean E. Walker Office: C450 (Cricket Lab)
Meeting Time: TR 13:40-14:55 Office Hours: M 13:00-14:00, T 15:00-17:00,
Meeting Place: C674 or by appointment
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Phone: 380-1879

Prerequisites: PSY1000 (Introduction to Psychology) or Bio 1020 (Diversity of Life)

Course web page: <http://home.uleth.ca/~sean.walker/COURSES/PSYC2700A.html>

Required Text: Alcock, J. (2001). Animal Behavior (7th ed.). Sunderland, Mass.: Sinauer Associates, Inc.

The relevant material should be read prior to each lecture. Lectures and films may introduce material not covered in the textbook. You are responsible for this material.

Course Description

This course will examine the evolutionary processes responsible for shaping functionally organized behaviors so as to solve basic life problems such as finding food, avoiding predators, attracting mates, rearing young, and living socially. In short, it will be aimed at answering the most fundamental question asked about animals and their behavior: “Why do they do what they do?”

Course Objectives

Students will:

- 1) Demonstrate understanding of the major environmental challenges facing various organisms and the behavioral solutions that have evolved in response to them.
- 2) Critically evaluate the implications of the concepts presented, and be able to apply them to novel problems.

Course Requirements

Three tests and a final exam will be given based on lecture and textbook material. The three tests will be administered during class time, will be non-cumulative, and worth 20% each. They will be made up of multiple-choice questions. The final exam will take place Friday, April 25 from 2:00-5:00 pm. It will be worth 40% of your final mark, will also be multiple-choice format, and will be **cumulative**.

Grades will be determined according to the following scale:

<u>Score</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
50-56	D
0-49	F

Questions and Discussion

All questions and discussion about the course material should occur during class time, including questions and discussion about the exams so that all students benefit from the discussion. Failing that, students are encouraged to post their questions and commentary to the class email list 200301psyc2700a@uleth.ca both to invoke discussion and receive clarification (if needed) from the instructor.

Although the instructor is more than happy to discuss course material with students individually, *under no circumstances* will the instructor discuss grades or exam performance with the individual student.

Missed Tests

If you cannot take a test at the scheduled time, you should contact the instructor as soon as possible with appropriate documentation verifying the circumstances. Medical reasons must be supported by a statement that test performance would be seriously affected, with the physician's name, address and telephone number. *A simple note that you had visited the doctor's office is not sufficient.* Non-medical reasons must also be supported (i.e., obituary notice, accident report, etc.). It is your responsibility to arrange a make-up test.

TENTATIVE LECTURE SCHEDULE

	Date	Topic	Reading Material
Week 1	January 7	Introduction	
	January 9	Evolutionary Principles I: Darwin's Dangerous Idea	
Week 2	January 14	Evolutionary Principles II: Variation, Genetics and Adaptation	
	January 16	Evolutionary Principles II Continued	
Week 3	January 21	An Evolutionary Approach to Animal Behavior: Proximate and Ultimate Causes	Ch. 1 & 2
	January 23	The Development of Behavior-Heridity	Ch. 3
Week 4	January 28	Test 1	
	January 30	The Development of Behavior-Environment	Ch. 4
Week 5	February 4	The Development of Behavior-Environment	Ch. 4
	February 6	Control of Behavior – Neural Mechanisms	Ch. 5
Week 6	February 11	Organization of Behavior: Neurons and Hormones	Ch. 6
	February 13	Adaptation & Behavior	Ch. 7 pp 183-192
Week 7	February 17-21	NO CLASSES –Reading Week	
Week 8	February 25	Anti-Predator and Feeding Behavior	Ch. 7 & 8
	February 27	Habitat Selection	Ch. 9
Week 9	March 4	Communication in Animals	Ch. 10
	March 6	Test 2	
Week 10	March 11	Communication in Animals	Ch. 10
	March 13	Evolution of Reproductive Behavior	Ch. 11
Week 11	March 18	Evolution of Reproductive Behavior	Ch. 11
	March 20	The Evolution of Mating Systems	Ch. 12
Week 12	March 25	The Evolution of Mating Systems	Ch. 12
	March 27	The Evolution of Parental Care	Ch. 13
Week 13	April 1	The Evolution of Parental Care	Ch. 13
	April 3	The Evolution of Social Behavior	Ch. 14
Week 14	April 8	The Evolution of Social Behavior	Ch. 15
	April 10	Test 3	
	April 25	Final Exam, 2:00-5:00 pm	Room (TBA)