



Psychology 306A – Principles of Animal Behaviour

Syllabus: 2020/2021 Winter Term I

**When:** Tuesday/Thursday: 11:00am - 12:20pm

**Where:** Online

**Instructor:** Dr. Desiree Seib

Research Associate, Department of Psychology

Office hours: By appointment

Email: [desireeseib@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:desireeseib@psych.ubc.ca)

\*\*\* If you have questions, I would like to help you in person. I will only use email to schedule in-person meetings (via zoom/collaborate ultra).

**TA:** Jackson Schumacher

Office hour: By appointment

Email: [schumacher@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:schumacher@psych.ubc.ca)

\*\*\* If you have questions, please see the TA in person (via zoom/collaborate ultra). The TA will only use email to schedule in-person meetings.

**Course description:**

There are no prerequisites for this class. A precursory knowledge of biology is suggested. This course covers the scientific study of behaviour across a wide range of animal species. Topics will include: development/genetics of behaviour, evolution of behaviour, and neural/endocrine basis of behaviour. Throughout this course key principles of the scientific method will be introduced, discussed, and related to animal behaviour experiments. This course is designed to encourage critical and independent thinking, promote discussion, and improve written and oral communication.

**Required Textbook:** *Animal Behavior*, Rubenstein and Alcock, 2019, 11th edition. Please get the 11<sup>th</sup> edition (it is very different from 10<sup>th</sup> edition). You can buy the book at the UBC Bookstore or Amazon etc. The eBook is also fine. Occasionally, additional readings (published articles, podcasts, book excerpts) will be assigned to supplement lecture content and to facilitate discussions.

**Canvas:** Slides will be available online before the lecture. Take notes during the lecture! The slides will be missing critical information that will be tested on the exams. Missing information will be provided during lectures, so attend all the lectures.

**Contact:**

If you have a question or concern, please first consult the syllabus and if you cannot find the answer, please follow the guidelines below:

- Question about course content: Post in the class discussion board
- Question about course deadlines and expectations: Post in the class discussion board
- General questions about exams: Post in the class discussion board
- Questions about your exam (e.g. needing feedback): Email Jackson Schumacher
- Issues and concerns (personal): Email Desiree Seib

**Note:** In order to reduce the volume of emails received, and in order to ensure that all students have access to content that would otherwise be received by email, I am strongly encouraging the class to make use of the discussion board. This board will be monitored by the teaching staff; however, we are strongly encouraging students to help answer questions (when appropriate), to use the board for group work etc. In addition, prior to posting a question on the board, please review the previous posts to ensure that your question has not yet been answered.

**Office hours:** In addition to the discussion board, office hours can be arranged. Office hours (with TA or instructor) will generally be scheduled by appointment only. Office hours are designed to help you with course content, develop study strategies, etc. Please do not hesitate to make an appointment. If you are experiencing difficulties in the course, PLEASE CONTACT US EARLY. Scheduling an appointment immediately prior to the exam will likely not be productive. Please email the TA to schedule an appointment, providing details as to nature of your request (e.g. course content questions, study strategies etc.). The TA will either set up an appointment or forward your request to me.

**Adaptation to online teaching:**

I plan to combine synchronous with asynchronous parts of the course.

For the **synchronous** part, I plan to record lectures to have them available for students in different time zones, as well as providing an alternative for students having to manage care for family members, children or have other commitments during this difficult time. I plan to use break out groups, sparingly and mainly in the beginning of the term to connect you with your peers. Besides lectures, I want to use synchronous time to discuss questions and recapitulate class content for exam preparation. I might ask one or several students to act as moderators during class to help me answer questions.

I want to use the following **asynchronous** techniques: 1) Discussion boards to get you engaged. I plan to stagger my course in online modules that requires you to post in discussion boards and perform ungraded quizzes in order to access the next module. 2) Ungraded online quizzes to estimate your progress and for me to get feedback (as a substitute for iClicker questions – we have to test if we do this online during class or as quizzes in Canvas. Canvas quizzes are more inclusive for students who are not able to attend the lecture being recorded). 3) Graded quizzes to promote continuous learning and take weight off midterms and the final. Exams will most probably be open book and will focus on applying learned content rather than just retrieving it, which promotes critical thinking and is more essential in my opinion.

**\*\*\* Do the readings before the lectures. This will help you follow the lectures.**

	Topic	Reading
Sep 8	No Class (UBC Imagine day)	
Sep 10	Syllabus and course introduction	pp. 3-23
Sep 15	Principles of animal behaviour	pp. 25-57
Sep 17	Development of behaviour, part 1	pp. 59-74
Sep 22	Development of behaviour, part 2	pp. 74-103
Sep 24	Neural mechanisms, part 1	pp. 105-118
Sep 29	Neural mechanisms, part 2	pp. 118-142
Oct 1	Neurons and hormones, part 1	pp. 145-156
Oct 6	Neurons and hormones, part 2	pp. 156-182
Oct 8	Review for Midterm 1	
Oct 13	<b>Midterm 1</b>	
Oct 15	Avoiding predators	pp. 13-21, 185-204
Oct 20	Feeding behaviour	pp. 204-217, 260-262; Taubes article
Oct 22	Territoriality and migration	pp. 219-254
Oct 27	Communication	pp. 257-301
Oct 29	Reproductive behaviour, part 1	pp. 303-328
Nov 3	Reproductive behaviour, part 2	pp. 329-350
Nov 5	Review for Midterm 2	
Nov 10	<b>Midterm 2</b>	
Nov 12	Mating systems	pp. 353-399
Nov 17	Parental care	pp. 401-443
Nov 19	Sickness behaviour	Guest Lecture by Dr. Tamara Bodnar
Nov 24	Social behaviour	pp. 445-511
Nov 26	Human behaviour, part 1	pp. 513-543
Dec 1	Human behaviour, part 2 (final info)	pp. 543-548
Dec 3	Conclusions	

### Potential for Changes in the Contents of this Syllabus

This syllabus provides a roadmap for how this course will proceed. But, let's face it: This course is being offered in an unusual format under unusual circumstances, and it's possible that some aspects of this roadmap will be revealed to be less-than-optimal. Consequently, it's possible that some revisions (in course materials, in scheduling, in policy, etc.) may have to be made as we proceed through the course, in order to help students achieve the learning objectives. Any such revisions--which will be discussed with students and communicated to students on the class website--will "count" just as much as policies outlined in this syllabus.

## Evaluation:

- Midterm 1 20%
- Midterm 2 25%
- Final exam 35%
- Small quiz every Thursday 20% (10 quizzes, no quiz in first week and weeks with a midterm, 10-15min, hosted on Canvas, must be performed within a 24h period). I plan to do 2 extra quizzes on other days (TBA) to give you some flexibility. The 2 quizzes with the lowest scores will not be counted towards the final grade.

In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology classes are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions. **However, in the spirit of flexibility and compassion in light of COVID-19 and the associated pivoting to online teaching, those departmental norms have been adjusted upwards by 5% for only 2020W.** According to these adjusted norms, the average grade in 100- and 200-level Psychology classes will be 72 for an exceptionally strong class, 70 for an average class, and 68 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 14. **The corresponding figures for 300- and 400-level classes will be 75, 73, and 71, with a standard deviation of 13.** Scaling may be used in order to comply with these norms; grades may be scaled up or down as necessary by an instructor or the department. Grades are not official until they appear on a student's academic record. You will receive both a percent and a letter grade for this course. At UBC, they convert according to the key below:

A+	90-100%	C+	64-67%
A	85-89%	C	60-63%
A-	80-84%	C-	55-59%
B+	76-79%	D	50-54%
B	72-75%	F	0-49%
B-	68-71%		

## Exams:

**Exams will be open book, I want you to learn to think critical and apply what you learned in class. I plan to give 2 time slots for each midterm/exam to accommodate students in different time zones.**

- Material from both the lectures and readings will be on the exams.
- Midterm 2 will not be cumulative.
- The final exam will be cumulative, but with an emphasis on the last third of the course.
- Exams will consist of multiple choice and short-answer questions.
- Emphasis on critical thinking, analysis of experimental design, interpretation of data, and proposing new experiments
- Students can view their marked exams with the TA or professor. The exam remains the property of the university.
- **Regrade requests must be made in writing. The professor reserves the right to regrade the entire exam (not just a particular question), which means that your grade could go down.**

### Policy on missed tests:

- If you miss an exam, you must email the professor within 24 hours of the exam.
- NOTE: make-up exams will consist of an oral exam in front of the professor and the TA.

### Special accommodations:

The University accommodates students that have registered with the Centre for Accessibility. Students who plan to be absent for athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments usually cannot be accommodated. In these cases, you must ask your instructor during the first week of class – not later than that.

### Psychology Department's Position on Academic Misconduct

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently by individuals.

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them. In the first place, the Department has implemented software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple-choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students' responses. In addition, the Department subscribes to **Turnitin – a service designed to detect and deter plagiarism**. All materials (term papers, lab reports, etc.) that students submit for grading will be scanned and compared to over 4.5 billion pages of content located on the Internet or in Turnitin's own proprietary database. The results of these comparisons are compiled into customized "Originality Reports" containing several sensitive measures of plagiarism; instructors receive copies of these reports for every student in their class.

#### **Google and Google Scholar can also readily detect plagiarism.**

In all cases of suspected academic misconduct the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript.

## Statement about the University's values and policies

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (<https://senate.ubc.ca/policiesresources-support-student-success>).

### Copyright

All materials of this course (course handouts, lecture slides, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the Course Instructor or licensed to be used in this course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline.

### A final note:

Information about academic regulations, course withdrawal dates, and credits can be found in the Academic Calendar. If you need information about studying, note taking, or time management, then free workshops and advice are available from student advising centres on campus.

*During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and studying at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities (please visit <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0> for an articulation of the values of the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus, we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: <http://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/freedom-expression>*

## Acknowledgements

We acknowledge that the UBC Point Grey campus is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwmə0–kwəy'əm (Musqueam).

Portions of this syllabus were inspired by Drs. Kiran Soma, Daniel Tobiansky, Tamara Bodnar, Lillian May, Elizabeth Dunn, and Mark Schaller.