

Syllabus
University of Evansville
Fall 2009

Course: PSY 470 Behavior Modification

Time and Place: 2:45-4:00 TTh, HH 120

Instructor: S. Mark Kopta, Ph.D.; HH 210; 488-2533, mk35.

Text: Martin, G. & Pear, J. (2007). *Behavior modification: What it is and how to do it* (eighth edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Course Description: Studies learning principles as a means for changing behavior in the home, hospital, psychotherapy setting, school, industry, and other social situations. Operant, respondent, and cognitive techniques are reviewed in terms of treatment interventions, self-control strategies, and improving productivity in industry. There is a focus on modifying both child and adult behavior.

Course Objectives: After completing the course the student should:

- 1) Have general knowledge, in terms of theory and technique, with regard to the use of operant conditioning, respondent conditioning, and cognitive modification in changing behavior for a variety of problems.
- 2) Be able to develop programs that utilize operant, respondent, and cognitive techniques in order to modify behavior in a more adaptive direction.
- 3) Be able to utilize behavior modification techniques to improve his/her own self-control and personal effectiveness.
- 4) Be able to communicate, in writing and in discussion, more effectively and creatively.
- 5) Be able to give an effective, creative presentation.
- 6) Obtain an increased ability to think critically and logically.

Course Evaluation:

- 1) **Five examinations** are given. There is no final comprehensive examination. Each exam includes only material covered since the previous exam.
- 2) Each exam consists of multiple-choice, true-false, and matching items covering both the textbook and lecture material. Lectures include material not mentioned in assigned readings. Study points--which indicate material from the text covered on the exams--are contained within the Lecture Notes Packet. . ***The exam covers all material in the***

Lecture Notes Packet and points made by the professor during class lectures/discussions that are emphasized on the blackboard. You are responsible for no other material regarding the five examinations.

- 3) In addition, five other evaluation criteria are included:
- a) **Behavioral Project Paper.** A student has two choices for this paper. (1) One may develop and carry out a project utilizing behavior modification techniques to modify another person's behavior to a healthier level. Two examples follow: (a) a self-control program to lose weight and increase fitness or (b) a program to stop smoking. (2) One may develop and carry out a project utilizing behavior modification techniques to modify his/her own behavior to a healthier level. Two examples follow: (a) a self-control program to lose weight and improve fitness or (b) a program to manage stress. An 8-12 page paper (excluding cover sheet, tables, graphs, references) is required for all choices. **Please make every effort to do option #1.**
 - b) **Behavioral Project Presentations.** Each student is required to give three 10-20 minute presentations that track the progress of their behavioral project. The presentations should be enhanced by a power point format. The presentation series will be in the following order across the semester. (See the course calendar in this syllabus for the presentation dates.)
 - Introduction.** The client's demographics (age, race, occupation, education, marital status, gender, number of children), plus the background (when did problem start, duration, intensity) and description of the behavioral problem (specific behaviors and symptoms) are presented. Suggestions are given to help develop a program. This presentation should be no longer than 20 minutes.
 - Update.** This is presented about the middle of the behavioral program. Strengths and weaknesses of the program are discussed; additionally, recommendations are given by the class/professor to improve outcomes. Tables and graphs are presented. This presentation will be no longer than 10 minutes.
 - Outcome.** The results of the project are presented with tables and graphs to illustrate the behavioral outcomes. This presentation will be no longer than 20 minutes.

For each of the three presentations, the student will receive 0 to 1.5% added to the final grade average for the course. Failure to do a presentation will be -5.0% from the final grade average.
 - c) **Response Papers to Case Vignettes.** Case vignettes are distributed that serve as a basis for group discussion. Written responses to the vignettes (usually 2 - 3 pages) are submitted the day of the discussion. A student is required to respond through papers to 2 of the 4 vignettes. Response papers will be graded either "Satisfactory"(S) or "Unsatisfactory" (U). If a student achieves all S's, he/she will receive +2.0% added to the final grade average. Only one U (and one S) earns +0.5%. Two U's earns -5.0% off the final grade. Any one paper that receives a U may be corrected to try to improve

the grade to an S.

- d) **Extra Credit. (Up to to 2.0% added to final grade average).** Each student may choose to give a 10-15 minute class presentation. The presentation will be a choice of four topics—(a) self-monitoring of a negative or positive habit for 2 weeks, (b) tracking mood and positive/negative events for 2 weeks, (c) developing/using an anxiety management technique, and (d) keeping a diary of negative cognitive distortions for 2 weeks. See page 10 for more detail about the topics.
- e) **Class participation** is also required, which includes attendance and discussing issues in class. ***Unexcused absence from a discussion class or behavioral project presentation results in –4.0% calculated off your final grade average.*** Discussion groups are part of the course. ***Participation in class discussion is important.***
- 4) A total examination percentage is computed on the basis of total number of items answered correctly divided by the total number of items for the five examinations. The student also receives a grade on his/her project paper. A final percentage score is computed and converted to a final grade according to the following procedure.

a) **Weights for computing final grade:**

Total examination percentage = .75
Project paper = .25

b) **Final grading scale:**

92-100% A	77-79 C+
90-91 A-	70-76 C
87-89 B+	68-69 C-
82-86 B	60-67 D
80-81 B-	0-59 F

c) **As an example*:**

Exam #1 = 44 correct/50 items	Project paper = 95.0%
Exam #2 = 46 correct/50 items	Resp. papers (all S's) = +3.0%
Exam #3 = 38 correct/50 items	Project presentations = +2.0%
Exam #4 = 40 correct/50 items	
Exam #5 = 50 correct/50 items	

218/250 = 87.2%

Final grade = $(.872 \times .75) + (.95 \times .25) + .03 + .02 = 94.2\% = A$

* Number of items in this example may not represent number of items which will actually be given on that particular exam.

- 5) **DO NOT MISS EXAMS!** If you do, notify me before the exam that you'll be absent or, if unavoidable, as soon as possible after the exam. ***Make-up exams are given at my discretion; late notification of absence risks refusal for a make-up opportunity.*** The make-up exam may not be of the same format as the original exam (i.e., may include essay questions). If a student fails or is not permitted to make up an exam, the grade will be a zero (0) for that exam and computed as such (i.e., 0% correct) in the calculation of the final grade.
- 6) **MAKE SURE YOUR PROJECT PAPER IS IN ON DECEMBER 14, Monday, 9:00 a.m.** If you fail to turn in your final paper you will receive a zero (0) for that part of your grade. Late papers lose -5% off the grade for each day late.
- 7) All exams are subjected to statistical analysis to identify "unfair" items. Unfair items are those where 10% or fewer students get them correct. In such cases, all students will receive credit for items determined as unfair.
- 8) **HONOR CODE, IMPORTANT:** For all course examinations, projects, and papers, you are expected to adhere to the University's honor code. (I understand that any work which I submit for course credit will imply that I have adhered to the Academic Honor Code: I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid nor will I tolerate an environment which condones the use of unauthorized aid.) Failure to adhere will likely result in receiving an "F" for the course.

Class Participation: ASK QUESTIONS! Questions and comments from students are expected. If you don't know, are confused, feel lost in the material let me know--please. I intend to help you get through the course in good shape, but I need your help in giving me feedback about where you're having problems.

Office Hours: HELP IS AVAILABLE! Drop by my office or phone me. Formal office hours to counsel students about class work are as follows: M 9:00-1:00; Tu, Th 9:15-10:45; 12:15-1:45; Tu 4-5; F 9-10. Other times can be scheduled by appointment. Or you may take a chance and drop by to see if I'm free at any particular moment.

Withdrawal Policies. A course may be dropped without a designated grade during the first two weeks of a term of the regular academic year. From the third to the eleventh weeks, a grade of W is assigned. Discontinuance of attendance does not automatically constitute a withdrawal. Students failing to file a proper drop/add form by the appropriate deadline must complete classes for which they are registered or receive a grade of F. Withdrawal from a course after the deadline requires petition to and approval of the Admissions and Standards Committee and/or Vice President of Academic Affairs.

--Last day to drop with a W grade for Fall 2009 is Friday, November 13.

Incomplete Grade. An Incomplete grade is given only when the student and professor agree to

the conditions under which the Incomplete is allowed; this discussion should occur before the final exam for the course. Additionally, a date will be set as to when the required work must be submitted to the professor. **If this procedure is not followed, then the student may receive an F for course. If an Incomplete grade remains on the record for 1 year, it will automatically be changed to an F.**

Accommodations For Students With Disabilities. It is the policy of the University of Evansville to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification to faculty from the Office of Counseling and Health Education is required for any academic accommodations. If you are eligible to receive and accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow two weeks notice. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be received on a timely basis. If you have questions about services for students with disabilities or procedures for requesting services, you may contact the Office of Counseling and Health Education at 488-2663.

Class Meetings: DO NOT MISS CLASS! Attendance is required and taken at each class meeting. If you miss initialing the sign-up sheet after it has been distributed, then you may not sign it late. You may miss 2 class periods for whatever reason without penalty; more than two absences results in a reduction of -4.00% from your final grade average for each additional period missed. Excused absences will be considered only in valid, documented circumstances. Each absence period must have separate documentation. This policy excludes tests, presentations, and discussion group meetings where no absences are expected; any missed meetings of this type is -4.00% from your final grade average for each meeting.

VI. COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

11/19-11/24	27
12/1-12/3	Behavioral Project-Outcome Presentations
12/08	Case Vignette #4 Discussion Paper Due
12/10	Finals week begins. Test #5
12/14	Final Project Paper Due

CASE VIGNETTE PAPER POLICY

Requirements and Grading. Two of four possible response papers associated with the case vignettes are required. The papers must be submitted on the day of the discussion session. Response papers will be graded “satisfactory” (S) or “unsatisfactory” (U). If you achieve two S’s, you will receive +3.0% added to your final grade average. One U (and 1 S) earns +0.5%. Two U’s earns -5.0% off the final grade average. ***Unexcused absences from a case vignette discussion session will be -4.0% calculated into the final grade.***

Second Chance. You are permitted to revise one U paper and resubmit it for a better grade. When you submit the corrected paper, the original must be attached to it and your corrections underlined/highlighted on your revised paper. Failure to follow these correction requirements will result in a U. Corrections are due the class after you receive the original graded paper. Thus, there’s the opportunity to improve your grade on one paper where you received a U grade.

Grading Criteria. THE FOLLOWING ERRORS WILL RESULT IN A U GRADE:

1. One incomplete sentence. Example: Which Tom decided not to buy.
2. One run-on sentence (two sentences punctuated as one). Example: Sheila tried to win the race however she fell during the last lap.
3. Two misspelled words.
4. A significant error in understanding the reading assignment.
5. Inadequate coverage of the topic.
6. Less than the required length of the paper.
7. No cover page.

FINAL PAPER REQUIREMENTS

Your paper will be graded on the following criteria:

1. References in text and Reference section are in the publishing format of the American Psychology Association (see Dr. Kopta's publication that was distributed in class or see the *APA Publication Manual* in the Psychology Department office). The paper, in general, should **follow APA guidelines**.
2. The paper should contain at least **8 complete double-spaced pages and no more than 12 complete pages of text** excluding references, tables, graphs, and cover page.
3. Pages should be stapled and numbered.
4. Format—**APA style** including references.
5. Writing style—spelling, grammar, punctuation, readability, and organization.
6. Research—at least **three research references** with regard to the interventions that you used. This research should demonstrate that the techniques are effective. Your textbook cannot be counted as one of the three references.
8. Content—demonstrated accuracy/understanding of concepts; organization; comprehensive coverage of the topic; evidence of critical thinking.
9. Sections of the paper to be labeled as follows. For additional information see **Behavioral Project Presentations** on page 2 of this syllabus.
 - a. **Introduction**—Introduce the topic, explain the problem, note your expected outcomes, and provide research indicating that the techniques you chose are effective.
 - b. **Method**—Describe the client, behavioral problem, baseline strategy, assessment method (**include the BHM-20 measure; give it weekly for all adult clients**), behavioral program. The Method section should have **Client, Behavioral Problem, Assessment Method**, and **Procedure** subheadings.
 - c. **Results**—Delineate the outcomes; provide tables, graphs.
 - d. **Discussion**—Give your opinion of the project; explain why it succeeded or why it didn't meet your expectations; what would have been a better approach?
10. Turn in all raw data (notes, diaries, frequency distributions, etc.). Failure to turn in raw data will result in –15% subtracted from your final paper grade.

Extra Credit Projects

1. Choose a habit that you'd like to "make or break" (e.g., smoking, overeating, exercise, studying) and define it in behavioral terms. Record its frequency over a 14-day period and then make a graph of the results. Discuss the pattern of the trend line. What did you learn from this self-monitoring experience? Present your findings to the class. Presentation should be 10-15 minutes.

2. Record the positive reinforcers (+) and punishers (-) that you experience over a 10 day period. At the end (and middle if there is a significant mood swing) of each day rate your mood on the following scale. For the next 7 days, deliberately try to include positive reinforcers in your schedule and consider whether these 7 days showed a significant increase in mood compared to the previous 10 days

0.....50.....100 scale.
Terrible Normal Great

Present a report to the class at the end of your project. Discuss interesting days that may show a major mood swing or any other usual effects. Presentation should be 10-15 minutes.

Your consequences/mood diary should be as follows:

Date	Consequence (+/-)	Description of Consequence	Mood Rating at End of the Day
9/12/08	+	B+ on Test	
	-	Late for Math	
	-	Girlfriend Didn't Call	
	+	Pizza for Lunch	
	+	Swam at Pool	
	+	Girlfriend Finally Called	
	+	Nap	
	-	Tore Shirt During Basketball	
	-	Lost Basketball Game	
	+	Did Homework for 3 Hours	70

3. Select a situation (or situations) that cause you significant anxiety--taking a test, asking for a date or accepting a request for a date, exercising with other people like at the health center, giving a talk in class. Think about and then describe how you typically try to cope with the situation. Create an anxiety management approach and then try it. Assess the situation before

and after you use your approach. Is there a difference in anxiety? Why? Report to the class your results. Presentation should be 10-15 minutes. Use the following SUDS scale to assess your anxiety.

SUBJECTIVE UNITS OF DISCOMFORT SCALE

0 *	20-30 *	50 *	70 *	100
Completely relaxed.	Normal level of tension.	You know you're anxious.	You're highly anxious.	You're extremely anxious.

4. Identify a cognitive dysfunctional style that causes problems with your mood (depression, anxiety) and behavior. Choose from the following (You may use more than one): (a) some of Ellis' irrational beliefs, (b) Beck's depression triad and/or the neurotic patterns. Describe how the style interferes with your life and how you've tried to cope with it. Give some specific examples—two to four—using the A>B>C cognitive model. Presentation should be 10-15 minutes.