

PSY 4310  
FALL 2014

## ANIMAL BEHAVIOR (Psy 4310)

Professor: Dr. Andrea Lynn Powers

Required text: Animal Behavior, by Nordell & Valone ISBN: 978 0 19 973759 8

### Course description and objectives:

The activities of humans and other animals commonly overlap. Pets are found in many households, and observing wild animals is a favorite activity for many. We see millions of birds migrating every fall and spring, grizzly bears catching salmon to fatten up for the winter, squirrels gathering nuts to tide them over until spring, and bats catching insects in the evenings. We can see similarities in their and our behaviors, all of which fascinate us.

In this course you will learn how scientists study animal behavior in the lab and in the wild. By the end of the semester you will be familiar with mating behavior and parental care, communication, habitat selection, learning, and the foraging behaviors of a variety of animal species.

Readings and exams: You will be reading and learning information from about one chapter every week. Exams will be given every other Monday. How you perform on exams will be totally dependent on how much time you devote to memorizing the information in the text. Exam dates will be as follows: 9/8, 9/22, 10/6, 10/20, 11/3, 11/17, and 12/1. Exams will be available from 7:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. and you will have no longer than 50 minutes to complete each one. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice items, and be worth a possible 100 points. Exam questions are randomly selected from the publisher's test bank, so no 2 students will receive the same exam.

Research summaries: For this assignment, you should summarize a research article about animal behavior from the web site, Science Daily. The summary should be 3 pages, double-spaced, size 12 font, and must be written in YOUR words, not the author's. This is extremely important; if I catch you using the exact words of the author(s), you will receive a zero. Approximately 3/4 of your paper should be a summary of the article you have selected. About 1/4 of your summary should be related information from your textbook. Due dates for these summaries will be as follows: 9/15, 10/13, 11/10. You will have 2 days during which you may submit your summaries beginning 7:00 A.M. the day before the due date until 11:00 P.M. on the day it is due. Summaries are worth a possible 25 points each.

Precise instructions for submission can be found under Library Resources. The example shown uses the Mind and Brain section. You will be using the Plants and Animals section. Note that you will be required to do 3 3-page summaries instead of a final paper. You will not be able to make them up if you do not submit them when due. Each summary must be submitted correctly through Blackboard, along with a direct link to your article. Assignments submitted incorrectly or sent to my e-mail address will not be graded. Learn ahead of time exactly how to do this. On the due date, you will find where to submit this assignment.

Grades: For every exam and summary, you will receive points and will not have a letter grade until the end of the semester. The total points available are as follows:

Exams: 700

Summaries: 75

Total 775

To receive an A, you must have at least 659 points (85% of the total points available). For a B, you must have at least 581 points (75% of the total points available). For a C, you must have at least 504 points (65%), and for a D, you must have at least 426 points (55% of the total points available).

**DOING WELL IN THIS COURSE:** If you are not very motivated, disciplined, and planning to work hard to do well, this course is not for you. You must spend many hours reading and memorizing the information in your text to score high on exams, and must plan ahead to be sure you are submitting the research summaries correctly and on time.

**ASSISTANTS FOR THIS COURSE:** Joe Renieri is available to help you if you have any problems using Blackboard, accessing exams or submitting assignments. If you need assistance, call him immediately at extension 8489 or e-mail him at [rrenieri@sulross.edu](mailto:rrenieri@sulross.edu). Librarian Jacob Galindo is available if you have problems learning how to submit your summaries. You can reach him at extension 8414 or see him in his office (109) in the library.