Sul Ross State University, Spring, 2016

Course: The Psychology of Learning (Psy 3309)

Professor: Dr. Andrea Powers

Required text: Learning and Behavior, 7th edition, by Paul Chance (ISBN: 978 1 111 83277 3)

The Psychology of Learning is not about how we learn information. It is about why we continue to do some behaviors, while discontinuing other behaviors. It's all about the consequences. If the outcome of an act is pleasant, we will probably do that behavior again. If the outcome is unpleasant, we may never do that behavior again. All that you learn is this course will be based upon human and animal research that focuses on how organisms learn. You will see how associations are formed between stimuli, and how the outcome of a behavior will determine if that behavior will be repeated and maintained. By the end of the semester, you will be familiar with the two main types of learning and understand the importance of memory in all human and animal behaviors.

The assignment sections include the chapters to be read and when each exam will be scheduled. Exams will be given on alternate Thursdays: 2/4, 2/18, 3/3, 3/24, 4/7, 4/21, and 5/5. You will have from 7 AM until 11 PM to complete the exams, which will consist of 50 multiple choice questions randomly selected from the publisher's test bank. No student will receive the same exam.   It is your responsibility to be sure you are using a computer that will remain connected until you finish your test.

Written assignments will involve summarizing a research article published in a professional journal on any aspect of human or animal learning. You will be expected to add related information from your textbook.   The paper should be 3 pages, size 12 font. About 3/4 of your paper should be a summary of your article and about 1/4 should be related info from your text.   When searching, do not type in "learning." Choose a term from your book such as habituation, extinction, or classical (Pavlovian) conditioning.   It may be best to choose a topic from the chapter you are currently reading.   Do not use first person (I) when writing these papers or include personal thoughts or experiences.

You must submit this assignment through Blackboard exactly as instructed under Library Resources, providing a working link to your article so that I may read it. Be sure your link is blue and shows the

name of the site where the article was published. The link should NOT say Sul Ross or Ebsco. Assignments sent incorrectly or to my e-mail address will not be graded. Dates for this assignment will be: 2/11, 3/10, & 4/14. You may submit the assignment from 7 AM on the day before it is due until 11 PM on the due date. Know <u>ahead of time</u> how to submit these written assignments. Contact a Blackboard tech if you need some help.

Grades: For each exam and written assignment, you will receive points and will not see a letter grade until the end of the semester. Each exam will be worth a possible 100 points and each summary will be worth a possible 25 points, for a grand total of 775 points. To receive an A, you must have a minimum of 659 points (85%). To receive a B, you must have a minimum of 581 points (75%). To receive a C, you must have a minimum of 504 points (65%). To receive a D, you must have a minimum of 426 points (55%). Grades will be posted on Banner within a week after the last exam.

Doing well in this course: If you are not very motivated, responsible, and able to work well independently, this course is not for you. You must spend many hours memorizing information from your textbook to do well on exams, and be able to plan ahead to write the summaries and submit them correctly and on time.

Pertaining to students with disabilities: Sul Ross is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services.   For such services, contact Mary Schwartze in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall,

Room 112. Phone: 432 837-8203.

Distance Education: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course