

PSCH 361 - LABORATORY IN LEARNING AND CONDITIONING

Spring 2008

Tuesday/Thursday 2:00 - 3:50

BSB 2019

Call # 20292

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Office Hours: After class and by appointment

Prerequisites: PSCH 343 and PSCH 360



REQUIRED TEXT: Alloway, T., Wilson, G., Graham, J. and Krames, L. (2005). Sniffy the Virtual Rat: Pro Version 2.0 (with CD-ROM). Thomson Publishing.

RECOMMENDED TEXT: Frieman, J. (2002). Learning and Adaptive Behavior. Wadsworth/Thompson Learning.

This laboratory class is designed to demonstrate to students some of the findings and procedures of the animal learning literature. The course is divided into three blocks. In Block 1, a computer simulation ("Sniffy" the Virtual Rat) will be used as an introduction to some classical and operant conditioning procedures. In Block 2, we will take field trips (confirmation pending) to the zoo and the aquarium to see the application of operant principles in real-world training situations. During Block 3, students will work in pairs on real animal projects. Each pair of student will be responsible for their own rats. The procedures in Block 1 and Block 3 will be self-paced.

Block 1: Classical conditioning and operant conditioning with Sniffy (5 assignments).

Block 2: Field trips to Lincoln Park Zoo and Shedd Aquarium (2 reaction papers).

Block 3: Operant conditioning with real rat (2 lab reports).

- Project 1. Magazine Training
- Project 2. Shaping
- Project 3. Discrimination
- Project 4. Chain Schedule

GRADING

Your final grade is based on 100 points as follows.

Block 1 (First 6 weeks of the semester): 30 points available (6 points per assignment).

The first assignment will be sent to you during Week 1.

Due date: 5:00 pm Friday of the following week.

A new assignment will be emailed to you each Friday.

1 point deducted for each day delay.

Block 2 (Two afternoons during the semester): 20 points available.

Reaction Paper Lincoln Park Zoo (10 points)

Reaction Paper Shedd Aquarium (10 points)

Due date: one week after the field trip.

2.5 points will be deducted for each day a paper is late.

Block 3 (Weeks 7 - 15): 50 points available.

A lab report is required for Projects 3 and 4 (each lab report = 25 points).

Due date: one week after completion of Project 3 or Project 4.

Points will be deducted for lab reports submitted after the deadline (TBA).