Purpose of the Course: The purpose of this course is to critically evaluate the theories, concepts and principles of learning in humans and animals. The textbook focuses largely on the development of the theories of learning throughout the history of experimental psychology. However, we will discuss some of the contemporary developments in learning theory as well.

Overview of the Course Structure: Grading will occur through a mastery process. The course is broken down into 12 units. There are readings and lectures for each unit.

The Mastery System: What is the Mastery System and what is the value of the system? The mastery system:

1) gives students a chance to analyze specific issues thoroughly rather memorizing massive amounts of facts and details from many chapters from a typical textbook.

2) allows students to decide what units they wish to obtain mastery. Hence, the process gives students control over what they learn. Also, the process gives students control over when they learn since a student can skip a certain unit during a particular week if they have a lot of quizzes in other classes at that time or have some other conflict.

3) By allowing students to decide whether they wish to try to obtain mastery for a unit by quiz or evaluative report, it gives students control over how they are graded.

There are two requirements in this course.

Requirement #1: Reaction Papers. Students must write at least four "passing" reaction papers to meet the course requirements for the course. Note that these "passes" are not the same as "masteries" as you will see below. Therefore, receiving a "pass" on these papers is merely a requirement to complete the class, but it does not influence your grade. If you do not have at least 2 passing reaction papers by the university's "last day to withdraw" deadline and at least one mastery, then you will receive a
WF grade. Students get to choose which sections of the book or lecture (and, correspondingly, which topics) they use to write the papers. A "passing" grade on the Reaction Papers will be "C" work or better and the TA or the instructor will make this determination. You CAN write more than one reaction paper on a unit but you cannot write more than one evaluative report on a unit. Writing two extra reaction papers (an option) combined with one or two "mastery pluses" may be able to earn a student a "plus" final grade (see instructor for details). Three reaction papers must be revised which means the first draft for these must be handed in by the THIRD TO THE LAST class meeting at the latest.

Four Reaction Papers – 2-3 pages. The papers will not simply be a summary of the section of the text, but a critical, evaluative perspective provided by the student that stems from the reading of the material. One rewrite for three of them is required due to the writing intensive component of the class.

Requirement #2: Mastery by Quiz or Evaluative Report Papers. Masteries must be earned to determine your final grade. Note that you will not earn a final grade unless you also meet the Reaction Paper requirement (Requirement #1 above).

A student must obtain mastery for 7 units to receive an "A"
A student must obtain mastery for 6 units to receive a "B"
A student must obtain mastery for 5 units to receive a "C"
A student must obtain mastery for 4 units to receive a "D"
Mastery of 0-3 units results in an "F"

How do students obtain a mastery grade for a unit?

In order to obtain a mastery for a unit:

1) You must read the reading material for the unit. You do not want to wait until the night before the quiz or evaluative report due date to do the readings. We also recommend that you take notes on the reading material, particularly if you decide to obtain mastery for the unit through a quiz.

2) You must decide whether you will attempt to obtain mastery a unit by quiz or by evaluative report. The one exception is UNIT 3….there will be no Evaluative Report for this unit - only a quiz. Because of the WI component of this course, you must master at least two units by Evaluative Report.

A) OBTAIN MASTERY BY QUIZ: If you are going to attempt to obtain a mastery for a particular unit by quiz, then you must show up for the quiz during the scheduled class period on the day listed for that unit. There will be no make ups for any reason. If you show up late for a quiz, you may be disqualified from taking the quiz. The quiz for a unit will occur on that one day only. The quiz will be short and will be comprised of something like a few definitions and two or so short answer questions. Quizzes will be graded by
"Mastery" (M) or "Nonmastery" (NM). Quizzes will not be graded using conventional letter grades ("A", "B", etc.), but we will be giving a Mastery (M) grade for quiz performance that corresponds to what could be considered "A" or "B" work. Once you have read the readings for a unit, you should spend 2-3 hours studying the material for the quiz.

OBTAIN MASTERY BY EVALUATIVE REPORT: You can obtain mastery for a unit by writing a 5-7 page evaluative report. This paper should be based on the material in the readings, but the paper must extend beyond the material in the readings. You will receive a mastery grade to the extent that you go beyond the readings by putting thought into presenting your own ideas (although it also can help if you show you understood the readings). The evaluative report should take about 3-4 hours to write (not counting the reading of the material) although students differ in how quickly they write papers. You must turn in the report during the first five minutes of class on the day when a quiz for that unit is being given. Evaluative Reports cannot be turned in late. You must hand in your evaluative report to the instructor in person.

What are Evaluative Reports? Students must obtain at least two of their "masteries" by writing an Evaluative Report. They certainly can write more than two if they wish. That is, if a student wishes to earn 7 masteries to obtain an "A", then at least two of the masteries must come from mastering a unit with an Evaluative Report. If the student wishes to earn 4 masteries to obtain a "D", then two masteries must come from Evaluative Reports. When evaluative reports are handed back, they will be given a provisional grade (such as a provisional Mastery grade) and the student must rewrite it to actually earn the mastery. The emphasis for the grading of the first draft (due the day of the quiz) will be on content (although style, spelling, and grammar will also receive attention). The emphasis on the final draft will be style, spelling, grammar, etc. The rewrite of an evaluative report will be due during the class meeting immediately after it is handed back although the instructor is sometimes flexible on when the rewrite is due.

Steps in writing an Evaluative Report:
Step 1: Turn in Draft 1 of Evaluative Report on DUE DATE. (Note: This draft should focus on content in particular but grammar and organization and coherency are also critical).
Step 2: Receive Draft 1 of Evaluative Report back with a grade (provisional Mastery or No Mastery).
Step 3: If No Mastery grade is given--STOP and go to next unit.

If a provisional Mastery grade is given, then one only needs to make adequate changes in the report requested by the instructor or TA and turn in this report as Draft 2 and a Mastery Grade will be awarded. That is, if the student earns a mastery grade, then the student must rewrite the paper (Draft #2) by (ideally) the next class meeting or two to correct any
grammatical mistakes/misspellings, problems with logical flow and coherency, etc.

Please save all your reaction papers and evaluative reports in case there is a discrepancy about how many masteries and passes you have.

Some tips in writing a reaction paper or evaluative report:

1) Do not write a summary of the lecture or text material. Merely summarizing the material is the quickest way to get a Nonmastery grade on an Evaluative Report for the unit or a Nonpass on a Reaction Paper.

2) Your paper should not merely be your opinion about the material (e.g., "I like this theory because I want to become a developmental psychologist and so I am interested in how children learn."). and should not merely include an example of a phenomenon (e.g., "This theory of phobias relates to everyday life because it reminds me of my brother’s phobia for spiders").

3) If you receive a Nonmastery grade on an Evaluative Report, then ask yourself, "How much thought did I put into the issues in the reading?""How much time did I spend on the paper—not including reading time?" "Did I try to crank out the paper quickly the night before it was due? If you answer "A lot, three hours, and No" to these 3 questions, then see the instructor or TA for help on how to do better on a paper for the next unit.

4) Do not try to use the same "idea" to write more than one paper (although a reaction paper can be turned into an evaluative report for the same unit and can be based on the same idea)

You will receive a mastery grade if you describe your ideas (that is, those pertaining to learning issues) with respect to what you learn in the course, or how you feel the material ties in with other issues in learning. Your report may be based on ideas presented in the reading or lecture or discussion. The length of your paper is not as important as providing evidence that you thought about the issues in the reading/lecture. Anyone caught plagiarizing someone else’s paper or a paper from the internet or a student who took the course in an earlier semester will receive an "F" in the course.

The professor and TA reserve the right to give some type of extra credit if they so decide, although such things are very rare. Credits will be used if a person has several nonmastery ERs or Quizzes (such as 3 or 4) that were "on the fence" with respect to earning an "M" or "NM") or may even be substituted for a Reaction Paper at the instructor's discretion or they may assign a "plus" for a final grade if a student writes a few extra reaction papers or masters an eighth unit. Also, if a paper is so poorly written that the instructor or T.A. cannot understand the conceptual flow of the ideas from one sentence to another, then a nonmastery or nonpass grade can be given or the student can be asked to rewrite it to attempt to earn a passing grade or mastery.

Other Questions:

If I get a Nonmastery grade on a unit, can I redo that unit? No. You have one shot to obtain mastery for a unit. Also, if you add the class late in the
semester, then you will not be able to obtain mastery for units that you missed. Let's say I obtain masteries for all the units that I need for the grade that I want by sometime in late October or early November, then what? You have completed the course! You are done! What if I put things off and/or do poorly on units so that I complete only 1 or 2 units by mid-November or so when there are only 3 or 4 units left in the course? You have hand-cuffed yourself and, at best, prevented yourself from being able to get a high grade in the class. By putting things off and not studying seriously, you have forced yourself to need to obtain mastery in at least a few of these final units to avoid an "F".

What are the lectures and discussions for? The instructor or TA will be in the classroom every class period. For some class meetings, the instructor will give a lecture on a particular unit. On other occasions, quizzes will be given and papers will be due at this time. Finally, other occasions will be set aside for discussions, practice sessions for writing papers, and sessions for peer feedback on reaction papers. These discussions and meetings will also provide a chance to talk to the instructor about any questions you have on the readings or to find out if your idea is suitable for a particular paper topic. The discussions will have an informal format in which students ask the instructor questions.

Should I decide to obtain mastery for the units by quiz or evaluative report? Go with your particular strength. If you like to write and you like thinking about the particular topic, then write a paper. Also, consider the feedback you receive on a reaction paper as a clue as to whether you are good at an ER (expressing your ideas on material). It will obviously help you if you read the material ahead of time and allow yourself a day or two to ponder the material so that you will have something to write about. If you leave the reading to the last minute, then you will probably not be able to think about the material constructively under time pressure. The biggest mistake you can make is to leave the material for the last minute without even leaving time to study for the quiz, and try to "wing a paper" under such time pressure. It will be hard to obtain mastery for a unit with an effective paper in that kind of situation.

More Hints: Read the readings 2 or 3 days before the due date for a unit (in some cases, this will require that you start reading right after the last quiz!). This will allow you to: 1) decide whether to do a paper ahead of time so that you can decide whether attending the lecture might give yourself some ideas or whether an ER will be a good idea; 2) give yourself time to study for a quiz; 3) give yourself time to think about the readings for your paper; and 4) give yourself time to discuss your paper idea with the instructor during a discussion or in his office. Attempt to master units early so that you can cut yourself a break later in the semester. This will give you more freedom later and may even help you complete the course early. (tentative schedule below):
Unit 1: History and Introduction to the Study of Learning (lectures are mandatory for this unit).

Mon., 8/24: Introduction and Orientation; Lecture: General Principles and History of Learning

Wed., 8/26: LECTURE- General Principles and History of Learning
Fri., 8/28: LECTURE- General Principles and History of Learning
Mon., 8/31: LECTURE- General Principles and History of Learning

Wed., 9/2: QUIZ/EVALUATIVE REPORT DUE DATE

Reading: Chapters 1 and 2 in Hill

Unit 2: Pavlov, Guthrie, Thorndike

Fri., 9/4: LECTURE-Pavlov’s Theory
Wed., 9/9: LECTURE-Thorndike’s and Guthrie’s Theories
Fri., 9/11: Writing Feedback/Peer Review Session
Mon., 9/14: QUIZ/EVALUATIVE REPORT DUE DATE

Reading: Chapters 3 and 4 in Hill

Unit 3: Fears and Behavior Change*
(*no reading. Quiz only for this unit. No ER possible and quizzes may be graded a bit more strictly due to less material for this unit)

Wed, 9/16: LECTURE- Avoidance, Fear and Helplessness
Fri., 9/18: LECTURE-Phobias, Fear and Behavior Change
Mon., 9/21 QUIZ

Unit 4: Skinner

Wed, 9/23: LECTURE- Schedules of reinforcement
Fri., 9/25: LECTURE-Skinnerian Principles(RR)
Mon., 9/28 LECTURE: Schedules of reinforcement (cont.)
Wed., 9/30: QUIZ/EVALUATIVE REPORT DUE DATE

Reading: Chapters 6 and 7 in Hill

Unit 5: Mathematical Models-Part 1: Hull's Theory

Fri., 10/2: Hull's Theory
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon., 10/5</td>
<td>Two-Factor Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed., 10/7</td>
<td>Premack's Principle, Contrast Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri., 10/9</td>
<td>QUIZ/PAPER DUE DATE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading:** Chapter 5 in Hill

---

**Unit 6: Mathematical Models-Rescorla-Wagner***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon., 10/12</td>
<td>LECTURE: Rescorla-Wagner Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed., 10/14</td>
<td>LECTURE: Rescorla-Wagner Model (cont.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri., 10/16</td>
<td>no class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon., 10/19</td>
<td>no class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed., 10/21</td>
<td>QUIZ/PAPER DUE DATE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Reading: None for this Unit and quizzes will be graded more strictly due to less material for this unit

---

**Unit 7: Complex Classical Conditioning Phenomena***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri., 10/23</td>
<td>LECTURE: Complex conditioning phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon., 10/26</td>
<td>LECTURE: Complex conditioning phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed., 10/28</td>
<td>QUIZ/PAPER DUE DATE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading:** None for this unit and quizzes will be graded more strictly due to less material for this unit

---

**Unit 8: Gestalt & Piaget Theories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri., 10/30</td>
<td>LECTURE: Gestalt Theory (RR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon., 11/2</td>
<td>LECTURE: Piaget’s Theory (RR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed., 11/4</td>
<td>QUIZ/PAPER DUE DATE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading:** Chapter 8 in Hill

---

**Unit 9: Tolman's Theory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri., 11/6</td>
<td>LECTURE: Tolman's Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon., 11/9</td>
<td>QUIZ/PAPER DUE DATE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading:** Chapter 9 in Hill

---

**Unit 10: Motivation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed., 11/11</td>
<td>Opponent Process Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri., 11/13</td>
<td>Opponent Process Theory (cont.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mon., 11/16: QUIZ/PAPER DUE DATE
Reading: Chapter 13 in Hill

Unit 11: Behavior Change (Part 2)

Wed., 11/18: LECTURE: Behavior Therapy and Social Learning
Fri., 11/20: LECTURE: Behavior Therapy, Preparedness and Social Learning
Mon., 11/30: QUIZ/PAPER DUE DATE

Reading: Chapter 11 in Hill

Unit 12: Evolutionary Learning, Systems, Problem Solving, Concepts, Fuzzy Logic

Wed., 12/2: LECTURE: Concepts and Fuzzy Logic
Fri., 12/4: LECTURE: Problem Solving
Mon., 12/7: LECTURE: Systems Theory
Wed., 12/9: QUIZ/PAPER DUE DATE

Reading: Chapter 14