

SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

PSYCHOLOGY 289: Psychology of Adjustment
FALL 2007

- INSTRUCTOR:** Susan Henderson, MA
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- COURSE LOCATION:** Academic Building IV, Room 204
Monday 6:00-8:50pm
- OFFICE HOURS:** By Appointment
- REQUIRED TEXT:** Weiten, W. & Lloyd, M.A. (2003) Psychology Applied to Modern Life: Adjustment in the 21st Century. (8th Edition) Belmont, CA. Wadsworth.
- SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL (OPTIONAL):** A study guide and personal explorations workbook is available by going to the textbook website listed below. Select “book supplements” to view and purchase. You may also check with the bookstore.
- WEB RESOURCES:** **All resources for this class will be posted on blackboard.** In addition, there is an online site containing practice quizzes and links to other relevant sites. You can go directly to this website by going to *External Links* in Blackboard or access it from:
http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20bI&product_isbn_issn=0534608590&discipline_number=24

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to help you increase your understanding of human motivation, behavior, and how people adjust to different situations and events. You will become familiar with relevant theories and research findings relating to personality, stress management, anxiety, anger, and behavior modification. Psychological disorders, treatments, and stage of life issues are also discussed.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. The student will gain knowledge of different theories relating to personality, parenting, stress and stage of life issues.
2. The student will gain knowledge of psychological disorders, effects of unhealthy behaviors, and different modes of psychotherapy.
3. The student will gain knowledge of on-campus resources for individuals with college and career issues.
4. The student will gain a better understanding of the process involved in changing ones behavior.

CLASS FORMAT: The course will be composed of lectures, guest speakers, discussions, group activities, demonstrations, videos, etc. Students will be responsible for the material in the textbook, class lectures, and handouts.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Attendance and active participation in classroom discussions
2. Complete assigned readings before class
3. Complete assignments by dates due
4. Complete course examinations

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:

1. Because this course covers many topics in a short period of time, attendance is important. Therefore, I will take attendance at the beginning of each class meeting by having each student sign the attendance roster. It is your responsibility to let me know you are in class by signing this sheet. Attendance will determine the type of final exam you are required to take.
2. You should come to class prepared, having read the material listed for that day. Relevant personal examples will enhance the learning process.
3. On certain days, additional journal articles may be discussed. Each student needs to read the assigned article prior to class and come ready to discuss the material.
4. Two or more classes will be designated as “Team Teaching” days and will entail the student being assigned a portion of the chapter for that week, discussing it with other team members, and then teaching it to the class. Participation grades will be given.
5. Each student will be allowed two absences (6 hours). Any student absent more than two times (6 hrs) will have to take a comprehensive final exam. Otherwise, the final exam will consist of the two chapters of the textbook. No make-up tests or assignments will be allowed unless previously discussed with the instructor. Exceptions to this will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be considered only if there are extreme circumstances.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION PROGRAM:** Each student is required to design a behavior modification program, implement and record the results, and write a final paper discussing the results. **Please read the Application section in Chapter 4 for details.** The following is a breakdown of requirements and grading:

- **Part 1:** Turn in your ideas for a self-modification program. This will consist of a rough outline of what you intend to do. You will need to
 1. Specify the behavior that you want to increase or decrease
 2. What are your reinforcers? (What will encourage you to change)?
 3. The length of your program (4 weeks)
 4. How will you know if you met your goal?

I would suggest that you do not design anything that would include punishment. We are not very good at punishing ourselves and it is not as much fun as reinforcement. Also, only choose one or two things you want to change about yourself. It is too difficult to keep track of more than that. The purpose of this part is to get you thinking about the project and to get you started on the design of the project. I will review your ideas and offer suggestions on how to improve the design. Here are some suggestions to get you thinking and to show you how specific you need to be: (increase weight lifting to 4 times

per week for 30 minutes; drink 8 glasses of water a day; read for classes 5 days a week for 2 hours each day; decrease number of curse words each day to two).

- **Part 2:** Your finalized proposal for a self-modification project is due. This needs to be typed. You will need to submit the following:
 1. An unambiguous description of the behavior that you want to increase or decrease (if I made any changes to your program please include it in this portion).
 2. The reward(s) you plan to use
 3. The reinforcement schedule that you plan to adopt and the type of reinforcement system that will be in operation (i.e., token economy)
 4. A blank copy of the charts and graphs that you plan to keep to document your progress. These may be hand lettered.
 5. A copy of the contract that you have written, including signatures of the witnesses.
 6. The dates for the baseline collection period (This is the time watch yourself during this time to see what you are currently doing and how much you need to change).
 7. The dates for the duration of the project.

- **Part 3: The execution of the project is entirely in your hands.** You do not have to give me any progress reports. If you determine the project is not working, you may need to modify it in some way. Please feel free to consult with me about modifications that may be needed. It is a good idea to have someone monitor your progress. This will help keep you “honest”.

- **Part 4: The final report is worth a test grade.** A final typed report (this is a formal paper) should include the following:
 1. A thorough description of the project, including the chosen behavior, the rewards, the reinforcement schedule
 2. The completed contract
 3. Any modifications that you made to the design during the course of the project.
 4. Copies of the completed charts and graphs showing your progress over the course of the project. These may be hand lettered.
 5. An explanation of why you think the project did or did not work. **This is one of the most important parts of your project.** I want to see that you have thoughtfully considered your project, and if it was not completely successful, understand what you could change next time.

The project will be graded according to how well it was designed, executed, and written. Handwritten submissions will get an F. Neatness, spelling and grammatical correctness are important as well. While I am not an English professor, spelling errors and unnecessary or sloppy mistakes will result in a lower grade. As is obvious, all of the phases build on one another. Thus, the work done in Part 1 is used in Part II, etc. This means that the work for this project is spread out over the semester. If you keep up with the project, the majority of the work required for the write up will have already been accomplished.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: You must notify me within 48 hours for me to accept late assignments. Also, late assignments will result in an automatic deduction of 10 points every week the assignment is late. Thus, if you turn in the assignment 2 weeks late, 20 points will be deducted. If you DO NOT notify me, I will assume you are not planning to turn in the assignment and wish to receive a zero.

EXAMS: The format of the exams will be multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and fill in the blank. Students will be informed of the format prior to taking the exam.

MISSED EXAMS: Any missed exam that is not discussed with the instructor PRIOR to the exam will result in a zero. If you are sick on the day of the exam you need to contact me by phone. Exceptions to this will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be considered only if there are extreme circumstances.

MAKE-UP EXAMS: Scheduling make-up exams are the responsibility of the student and exams MUST be taken by the next class meeting. Make-up exams may be short answer and essay format if necessary.

EXTRA CREDIT: Each student will have the chance to earn up to 3 points on their final grade. Announcements will be made throughout the semester to earn points by either participating in research, on-campus programs or writing journal critiques. As the instructor, I have the right to add/delete opportunities, as I deem necessary.

GRADES: The course will consist of 3 exams plus a final exam, a behavior modification project, and group participation. If you miss more than 6 hrs of class (two days) you have to take a comprehensive exam. Grades will be weighted as followed:

Exams make up 75% of your grade.

3 exams (15% each)	45%
Final Exam	30%
Group Participation (5% x 2)	10%
Behavior Modification Project (Part 1 & 2)	5%
<u>Behavior Modification Project (Final Paper)</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total:	100%

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student caught being dishonest will result in a minimum of a zero on that assignment. Any student caught being dishonest more than one time will fail the course. See Student Syllabus Guidelines.

CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students are to treat faculty and students with respect. Students are to turn off cell phones while in the classroom. *Under no circumstances are cell phones or any electronic devices to be used or seen during times of examination.*

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS: Students are allowed to miss class and other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Students remain responsible for all work and must notify instructor in advance of missed days. See Syllabus Guidelines. <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should visit with the Office of Services

for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. See Syllabus Guidelines.

VISITORS: Only registered students may attend class.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC	READING
August 20	Instructor is at APA Conference: (NO CLASS) Read Syllabus, Chapter 1 and assigned journal article for the next class. Please see Blackboard assignments/announcements. Be ready for discussion.	
August 27	Syllabus, Adjusting to Modern Life, Journal Article	Chapter 1 & Article
September 3	Labor Day (NO CLASS)	
September 10	SAM Center Presentation (Meet at SAM Center AB4, 2 nd floor) Theories of Personality TEAM TEACHING Part 1 Due: Behavior Modification Program	Chapter 2
September 17	Stress and Its Effects Coping Processes	Chapter 3 Chapter 4
September 24	EXAM I (Chapters 1-4)	
October 1	The Self Social Thinking & Social Influences	Chapter 5 Chapter 6
October 8	Interpersonal Communication Friendship & Love	Chapter 7 Chapter 8
October 15	Marriage & Intimate Relationships	Chapter 9
October 22	EXAM II (Chapters 5-9) Part 2 Due: Behavior Modification Program	
October 29	Gender & Behavior Adolescent & Adult Development	Chapter 10 Chapter 11
November 5	Careers & Work Speaker/Presentation	Chapter 12
November 12	Psychology & Physical Health Possible Movie	Chapter 14
November 19	EXAM III: (Chapters 10-14; omit 13)	
November 26	Psychological Disorders Speaker TEAM TEACHING Part 4 Due: Final - Behavior Modification Program	Chapter 15
December 3	Psychotherapy Demonstration	Chapter 16
December 10	Final Exam: Ch 15 & 16 OR Comprehensive	
