PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING – Code 800143

Academic Year 2016-17

COURSE INFORMATION

Undergrad3uate Studies: 0812 – Degree in Psychology   (Studies Plan 2009-10)
Type: Compulsory
ECTS: 6.0
Module: Basic training
Area: Psychology
Year: First
Semester: 1

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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Office hours:

SYNOPSIS

COMPETENCIES

General competencies

GC1: Know and understand the functions, characteristics and limitations of the different theoretical models in psychology.
GC2: Know and understand the basic laws of the different psychological processes.

Transversal competencies

TC1: Analysis and synthesis.
TC2: Preparation and defence of properly reasoned arguments.
TC4: Application of knowledge to professional works.
TC3: Problem solving and decision making in Psychology.
TC5: Looking for information and data interpretation on social, scientific and ethical topics related to the field of Psychology.

Specific competencies

SC1: Identify needs and demands of the recipients of work performed by the psychologist in the different areas of application.

SC2: Be able to establish goals of basic psychological action in different contexts, proposing and negotiating goals with recipients and interested parties.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Theoretical classes: The lectures will be master classes that will include the topics exposed before. Each class will last one hour, three times per week.

Practical classes: The practical classes will reinforce and clarify specific concepts previously explained during the theoretical classes.

Presentations: the activities done by the students will be exposed in class

Tutorials: Individually or in group, attended virtually or in presence of the student. The main objective is the consolidation of knowledge.

ECTs break-down

TEACHING ACTIVITIES	Hours	% of total credits	Attendance
Class sessions	30	20%	100%
Practical sessions	15	10%	100%
Tutorials	5	3 %	50%
Students' work (class assignments and time of study)	95	64%	0%
Assessment activities	5	3%	100%

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Non associative learning. Classic conditioning. Instrumental conditioning. Social learning. Animal cognition.

PRE-REQUISITES

None.

OBJECTIVES

Understand the different research techniques used to study behaviour, behavioural and cognitive approaches to learning, use animals in psychological research, identify philosophical positions of interest.

Understand the different types of innate behaviour, explain and find examples of habituation and sensitization, explain the opponent-process theory and its application to emotional responses

Understand the basic principles of classical conditioning, stimulus substitution theory, conditioned inhibition, generalization, and discrimination. Comprehend how classical conditioning is applied in behavioural therapy

Understand the blocking effect and its significanc, the basic concepts of the Rescorla-Wagner model, the different types of associations that can form during classical conditioning, the role of classical conditioning in addictive behaviours and the physiological mechanisms of classical conditioning

Understand Thorndike's experiments, operant conditioning terms and procedures, the role of reinforcement with regard to superstitious behaviours, the procedure of shaping and its application in behaviour modification, the concepts of instinctive drift and autoshaping.

Understand the four simple reinforcement schedules, the difference between contingency-shaped and rule-governed behavioural, token economies and examples of operant conditioning in behaviour modification programmes. Understand the matching law, the optimization theory and compare it to the predictions of matching law and momentary maximization theory. Understand self-control.

Understand the relationship between reinforcement and response performance, the theories which predict what stimuli will become a reinforcement and the field of behavioural economic.

Understand generalization gradients, behavioural contrast, errorless discrimination learning, transfer of learning after discrimination training, concept formation and the ways stimulus control techniques are used in behaviour modification.

Understand extinction procedures, spontaneous recovery, reinstatement, renewal, paradoxical effects of reward and resistance to extinction.

Understand punishment and negative reinforcement, theories of avoidance, the theory of learned helplessness, the factors associated with the effectiveness of punishment and the types of behaviour decelerators and how to use them in behavioural therapy.

Understand short-term memory, long-term memory, rehearsal, retroactive and proactive interference and retrograde amnesia.

Understand animals' abilities to measure time, count and learn serial patterns. Understand the attempts to teach animals' language and research on animal's learning of object permanence and analogies

TOPICS

1. Background and rationale for the study of learning and behaviour.
2. Elicited behaviour, habituation, and sensitization.
3. Classical conditioning: foundations.
4. Classical conditioning: mechanisms.
5. Instrumental conditioning: foundations.
6. Schedules of reinforcement and choice behaviour.
7. Instrumental conditioning: motivational mechanisms.
8. Stimulus control of behaviour.
9. Extinction of conditioned behaviour.
10. Aversive control: avoidance and punishment.
11. Comparative cognition i: memory mechanisms.
12. Comparative cognition ii: special topics.

ASSESSMENT

Subject will be evaluated by an objective exam at the end of the course.

In accordance with the established article 5 from Real Decreto 1125/2003, the results obtained by the student will be graded according to the following numerical scale from 0 to 10, with an expression of one decimal, to which a corresponding qualification can be added:
0-4,9: Suspenso (SS). Failed.
5,0-6,9: Aprobado (AP). Passed.
7,0-8,9: Notable (NT). Remarkable.
9,0-10: Sobresaliente (SB). Outstanding.

RESOURCES

Handbooks:

Domjan, M. (2013). The Principles of Learning and Behavior. Andover, UK: Cengage Learning
Mazur, J.E. (2013). Learning and Behavior. London, UK: Psychology Press

Practice Workbook:

Krause, M. A. (2013) Workbook for Michael Domjan's The Principles of Learning and Behavior. Andover, UK: Cengage Learning

Other reference books:

Bouton, M.E. (2007) Learning and Behavior. Sunderland, USA: Sinauer
Klein, S.B. (2012) Learning. Principles and Applications. Thousand Oaks, USA: SAGE