

50603-CONTEMPORARY LEARNING THEORY

Spring Semester-2009

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MWF, 12:00-12:50, WSH 215.

Outline

Jan/12-23: Neuroscience of learning and memory.

Reading: Chapter 2

Jan/26, class discussion: What is the relationship between LTP and learning?

Leader: Charlotte Carp

Target article:

Abrari K, Rashidy-Pour A, Semnanian S, Fathollahi Y.

Post-training administration of corticosterone enhances consolidation of contextual fear memory and hippocampal long-term potentiation in rats.

Neurobiology of Learning and Memory, in press.

UG Assignment: Short essay 1.

Overall outline

Introduction (2 weeks)

Part I: Memory (3 weeks)

UG: First exam (Feb/18)

Part II: Nonassociative learning and Pavlovian conditioning (6 weeks)

UG: Second exam (Apr/8)

Part III: Instrumental conditioning and incentive processes (2 weeks)

UG: Third exam (May/4)

Grading

Gs:

3 leading discussions each = 90 points of final grade (each worth 30 points)

Class participation = total of 10 points.

UGs:

3 exams = 54 points of final grade (each worth 18 points).

12 short essays = 36 points of final grade (each worth 3 points)

Class participation = total of 10 points.

Scoring class participation

- The lowest score will be dropped, giving us a total of 11 meetings.
 - Class participation maximum score in the semester: 8.8 points (per class: 0.8 point)
 - Attendance maximum score in the semester: 1.2 points
 - Total maximum in the semester: 10 points
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- I will score 1 point for each quality participation, according to my own view of what “quality participation” means.
 - Each point I score = 0.2 point.
 - 4 quality participations will give you the maximum score for any given discussion session (0.8 point).
 - Additional participations will not add to the maximum.
 - You lose 0.2 point for every time you are absent. For example, 1 absence will yield: $1.2 - 0.2 = 1.0$.
 - The first absence counts as your lowest score and is therefore dropped.

Rule for grading short essays for students who cannot attend class on the scheduled day:

- You can turn in your essay the day before with no loss of points.
- You could have somebody else send me the essay on the scheduled date with no loss of points.
- Turning in the essay between the scheduled day and the next class will result in a loss of 0.25 points. Thus, if the essay is due on Friday and you turn it in on Friday after class, Saturday, Sunday or Monday in class your maximum score will be 2.75 (rather than 3).
- For every similar delay, there will be a 0.25-point loss. Thus, if you turn essay on Tuesday of the following week, your maximum score will be 2.50, and so on.
- Remember also that not being in class when papers are discussed would also reduce your chances of accumulating points for class participation.
- Please bring a copy of the target article to the class discussion.