

# Biology/Psychology 388/588: Animal Behavior Syllabus

## Spring 2021

### Course Overview:

#### *Course Description:*

At first glance, we may be amazed by eels that resist eating prey fish that are providing a dental cleaning service, or by the elaborate displays of male birds in their attempts to woo females, or by kangaroo moms that guard their toddler-like young in their own bodies. But at closer inspection, we realize that all these animals are facing similar challenges: All animals are driven to eat and not be eaten, to stay healthy, to make babies, and to keep their babies alive. And animals have developed behavioral tools to achieve these goals, such as ways of finding or making food and a place to live, ways to defend these things, techniques for attracting the opposite sex, and parental methods. The details are diverse across species, but the ultimate goals and many of the strategies are common. And amazingly, the brain and hormonal systems that regulate these behaviors are common too. In this course, we will explore what some of those challenges are, some alternative behavioral solutions to them, the physiological bases of these behaviors and the evolutionary pressures that have molded them.

Studying animal behavior, either as a Biologist or Psychologist, requires careful recording of observations and descriptions of behaviors. From these observations and descriptions of behaviors, both disciplines work towards explaining causes of behavior. These causes can be evolutionary (ultimate) or the immediate results of social interactions or changes in physiological functions (proximate). Through this course, we will gain experience making behavioral observations of animals and describing those behaviors as they occur in the context of an animal's habitat.

#### *Course Learning Objectives:*

- 1) Describe ultimate and proximate causes of a variety of animal behaviors
- 2) Collect animal behavior data using a range of techniques used in biological and psychological fields
- 3) Critically read and evaluate scientific journal articles in biology and psychology

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*Texts:* Animal Behavior: An Evolutionary Approach, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition by Rubenstein & Alcock (2018), Oxford University Press (required rental)

Measuring Behavior: An Introductory Guide, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition by Martin and Bateson (2007), Cambridge University Press (required rental)

*Other readings:* We will read and discuss several papers over the course of the semester. These are **required** reading and will be posted on Canvas.

*Key Dates:* Exam 1 = **February 19** (will include material presented prior to 1<sup>st</sup> exam)  
Exam 2 = **March 19** (will include material presented between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> exams)  
Exam 3 = **April 23** (will include material presented between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> exams)  
Exam 4 = **May 21** (will include material presented between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> exams)

Course Requirements and Grading:

*Point Distribution:*

Practical Assignments	2 X 20 points each = 40 points
Reading Assignment Notes	4 X 10 points each = 40 points
Participation Quizzes	12 X 10 points each = 120 points
Unit Exam 1	100 points
Unit Exam 2	100 points
Unit Exam 3	100 points
Unit Exam 4	100 points

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**Total** **600 points**

*Letter Grades:*

93-100% = A; 90-92.9% = A-; 87-89.9% = B+; 83-86.9% = B; 80-82.9% = B-;  
77-79.9% = C+; 73-76.9% = C; 70-72.9% = C-; 60-69.9% = D; 0-59.9% = F

Course Expectations:

*Practical Assignments:*

We will have two individual practical assignments for you to gain experience with animal behavior data collection methods in biological and psychological fields. More details on these assignments will be provided later. Briefly, the assignments will include:

- 1) **Create an ethogram for a captive, domesticated, or wild species:** Using observation strategies learned in class, describe and define the behaviors of a captive, domesticated or wild species based on lab or field observations.
- 2) **Recording methods for a single animal or a social group of animals:** Choose a sampling method, identify individuals, and collect behavioral data on a single animal or on multiple animals simultaneously using observation strategies learned in class.

*Journal Article Reading Assignments:*

Periodically we will have an assigned primary research paper to read and discuss in class. You will be assigned a set of questions prior to each paper discussion. Once answers to questions are completed, they should be uploaded to Canvas. Answers to each of these questions for each paper are fair game on the exams.

*Participation Quizzes:*

Participation quizzes serve as exam practice, to ensure you are engaging in the material in a timely manner, and that you are not getting behind in the course. Each quiz will be between 2-5 questions for a total of 10 points, and the content will focus on material covered in that week's modules. You may repeat these quizzes to get a better score.

*Exams:*

Unit Exams will focus on content from the assigned readings and lecture and will not be cumulative. The format of the exams will be a combination of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answer.

The exams will be open book, open note, but be sure to have well organized notes ahead of taking your exams, as they will be time-limited.

#### Absence Policy:

As this is an asynchronous online course, there is no formal attendance assessment. However, deadlines for completion of assignments, as listed in the syllabus schedule must be met. Per the Office of the Registrar, all UWSP instructors are required to take attendance once during the first eight days of a course by submitting an attendance through accessPoint. A student is considered present in an online course when they have taken academic action (completing an assignment, posting on a discussion board, taking a quiz, etc.) A student simply logging into the course or clicking on a resource is not sufficient action to determine student presence. Determination of student presence is always at the instructor's discretion. **If required to drop the course, it is the student's responsibility to officially drop the course through the Registration & Records Office or on the web.**

#### Exam Policies:

Everything covered in lecture is fair game on exams. Lecture recordings will be posted on Canvas. We advise you to take notes on the contents of the lectures to help in preparing for exams and participation quizzes. You may only make up exams if you provide evidence of personal or medical emergencies. If this occurs, you must contact us *prior to* the exam, and you will have 5 days in which to complete the exam.

#### Use of Recorded Course Materials and Information Posted on Canvas

Lecture materials and recordings for Bio/Psyc 388 Animal Behavior are **protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point**. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, **you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1]** Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. **Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.** In addition, you are not allowed to record/photograph exam/quiz questions from the course. Doing so is an act of academic misconduct.

#### UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities:

UWSP values a safe, honest, respectful and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive leaning environment at UWSP. For more information go to <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. So don't do it!! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the

*Rights and Responsibilities document*, Chapter 14, which can be accessed at the following site:  
<http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/CommunityRights.pdf#page=11>

Accommodations:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, we will make every effort to honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. If you have a disability and require accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (6<sup>th</sup> floor Learning Resource Center in the Library) and *let us know as soon as possible*. Requests for accommodation can be responded to most effectively if we receive the requests early in the semester. Such requests are confidential.

For more information about UWSP’s policies with respect to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), check here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

You can also find more information on services provided at: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

Title IX:

Under several federal and state laws, and according to several university guidelines, we are required to report acts of a criminal or offensive nature. This includes acts of sexual harassment and assault, bias and hate crimes, illicit drug use, and acts of violence. Any disclosure or description of these incidents – both current and in the past – may be reported to the Dean of Students office (<http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/>) or the local authorities.

Weekly Schedule of Reading Assignments and Tasks to Complete

WEEK	TASKS
<b>1</b> <b>1/25-1/29</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 1: Introduction to Animal Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 2: The Integrative Study of Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 1 (due 1/29)
<b>2</b> <b>2/1-2/5</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Discussion Paper 1 and Submit Discussion Question answers (due 2/3) <input type="checkbox"/> Read Martin & Bateson Ch 1-3: Methods 1: Defining Behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 2 (due 2/5)
<b>3</b> <b>2/8-2/12</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 3: The Development and Genetic Bases of Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 3 (due 2/12)
<b>4</b> <b>2/15-2/19</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Ethogram Assignment (due 2/17) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Complete Exam 1</b> (due 2/19)
<b>5</b> <b>2/22-2/26</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Martin & Bateson Ch 4-7: Methods 2: Measuring Behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 4 (2/26)
<b>6</b> <b>3/1-3/5</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 4: The Neural Basis of Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 5 (3/5)
<b>7</b> <b>3/8-3/12</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 5: The Physiological Basis of Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Read Discussion Paper 2 and Submit Discussion Question answers (due 3/10) <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 6 (3/12)
<b>8</b> <b>3/15-3/19</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Behavior Data Collection Assignment (due 3/17) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Complete Exam 2</b> (due 3/19)
<b>3/22/3/26</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>

<b>9</b> <b>3/29-4/2</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 12: Principles of Social Evolution <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 7 (due 4/2)
<b>10</b> <b>4/5-4/9</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 13: Social Behavior and Sociality <input type="checkbox"/> Read Discussion Paper 3 and Submit Discussion Question answers (due 4/7) <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 8 (due 4/9)
<b>11</b> <b>4/12-4/16</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 8 & Ch 14 pages 512-523: Principles of Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 9 (due 4/16)
<b>12</b> <b>4/19-4/23</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Complete Exam 3</b> (due 4/23)
<b>13</b> <b>4/26-4/30</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 9: Reproductive Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Read Discussion Paper 4 and Submit Discussion Question answers (4/28) <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 10 (due 4/30)
<b>14</b> <b>5/3-5/7</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 10: Mating Systems <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 11 (due 5/7)
<b>15</b> <b>5/10-5/14</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Alcock Ch 11: Parental Care <input type="checkbox"/> Watch All Lectures and Complete Participation Quiz 12 (due 5/14)
<b>16</b> <b>5/17-5/21</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Complete Exam 4</b> (due 5/21)