

## SYLLABUS

### 1. Program details

1.1 Higher education institution	West University of Timișoara
1.2 Faculty / Department	Psychology and Educational Sciences
1.3 Department	Psychology
1.4 Field of study	Psychology
1.5 Cycle of studies	Bachelor's degree
1.6 Study program / Qualification	Psychology - Cognitive Science

### 2. Discipline details

2.1 Discipline name	<b>Learning and Behavior Modification</b>						
2.2 Tenured teacher - course activities	Professor Florin Alin SAVA, PhD						
2.3 Tenured teacher – seminar / laboratory activities	Darian FAUR, PhD candidate						
2.4 Study year	2	2.5 Semester	1	2.6 Type of assessment	Exam	2.7 Discipline regime	DO
2.5 Google Classroom code	<b>b45zcvlr</b>						

### 3. Estimated total time (hours per semester) of teaching activities

3.1 Number of hours per semester	3	Of which: 3.2 course	2	3.3 seminar/laboratory	1
3.4 Total hours from the curriculum	42	Of which: 3.5 course	28	3.6 seminar/laboratory	14
Time fund distribution:					hours
Study based on the textbook, course material, bibliography, and notes					22
Additional documentation in the library, on specialist electronic platforms / in the field					12
Preparing seminars/labs, homework, papers, portfolios, and essays					10
Tutoring					10
Examinations					4
Other activities					
3.7 Total hours of individual study	<b>58</b>				
3.8 Total hours per semester	<b>100</b>				
3.9 Number of credits (ECTS)	<b>4</b>				

### 4. Prerequisites (where necessary)

4.1 for curriculum	• none
4.2 for competencies	• none

### 5. Conditions (where necessary)

5.1 for conducting the course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% attendance</li> </ul>
5.2 for conducting the seminar/laboratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70% attendance (for non-working students), 50% attendance (for working students)</li> </ul>
5.3 for using generative artificial intelligence tools (genAI) within the lecture or seminars	<p>Within this course, the use of genAI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Copilot, etc.) is permitted only under the conditions established by the course/seminar instructor and in compliance with academic integrity rules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Permitted uses:</b> idea brainstorming, support for writing and structuring, translations, linguistic revisions, generation of images, charts, diagrams, illustrations, video or audio materials, avatars, and other digital objects, created exclusively for didactic purposes.</li> <li>• <b>Prohibited uses:</b> full generation of assignments (essays, reports, projects, scientifically validated guides) or presenting genAI-created content as being exclusively personal.</li> </ul> <p>For any assignment, the student is required to complete a <b>transparency declaration form</b> (available on the course platform). This document must specify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the tool used and its version,</li> <li>• the type of support provided by genAI,</li> <li>• how the content was verified and integrated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Failure to declare the use of genAI will be considered a violation of academic integrity rules and will be addressed in accordance with WUT regulations.</b></p> <p>Students are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• verifying the accuracy and relevance of the generated content,</li> <li>• respecting confidentiality and copyright,</li> <li>• critically and personally integrating the results obtained with genAI.</li> </ul> <p>Details on how these usage conditions are applied will be presented and discussed during the first course and seminar meeting.</p>

### 6. Discipline objectives - expected learning outcomes to which the discipline's study and promotion contributes

Knowledge	<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe logically and coherently the basic principles underlying the science of learning and behavior modification, within current professional practice.</li> <li>• Describe the main theories of individual behavior, as well as those of change and modification, within a psychological research or intervention project.</li> <li>• Explain the important elements of assessment within the process of operationalizing behavior.</li> <li>• Identify the main quantitative and qualitative research methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data in behavior assessment and modification interventions.</li> </ul>
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Skills	<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out the necessary steps to interview the clients and observe their behavior within the framework of interaction with them.</li> <li>• Select the methods and their implementation strategies, taking into account the objectives of the behavioral modification program, the state of the clients, their context, and individual differences within the framework of a functional behavioral analysis.</li> <li>• Detect and analyze notable details, carry out critical reflection, and adapt the assessment to ensure the quality of the behavioral modification process.</li> <li>• Adequately negotiate the needs, objectives, process, and outcomes of the behavior modification program conducted with the client.</li> </ul>
Responsibility and autonomy	<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use empirically-based behavioral assessment procedures (such as functional analysis).</li> <li>• Work flexibly with the data collected during the behavioral assessment process, considering the objectives of the behavioral modification program.</li> <li>• Demonstrate reflexivity by being willing to reflect critically, hypothesis-oriented, and apply reasoning in the decision-making processes within the process of behavioral assessment and modification program.</li> </ul>

## 7. Contents

7.1 Course	Teaching methods	Observations
1-2. Introduction / Orientation. What is learning? On behaviorism and behavior modification. Its relevance in real-life (4 hours)	lecture, conversation	Martin & Pear (2020) (Ch.1&2), Miltenberger (2019) (Ch.1) De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Introduction)
3. Applied learning. Behavior modification. Defining, measuring, and recording target behavior (2 hours)	lecture, conversation	Martin & Pear (2019) (Ch.3) Miltenberger (2019) (chapters 2 & 3)
4. Effects of regularities in the presence of a single stimulus (2 hours)	lecture, conversation	De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 1)
5. Classical (respondent) conditioning (effects of regularities in the presence of multiple stimuli) (2 hours)	lecture, conversation	Martin & Pear (2020) (Ch.5) De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 2)
6-8. Operant conditioning (effects of regularities in the presence of stimuli and behavior) (6 hours)	lecture, conversation	Martin & Pear (2020) (Ch.6-10, 15-16) De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 3)
9. Complex learning. Relational learning (2 hours)	lecture, conversation	De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 4)
10-13. Behavior modification in special education, health, and clinical psychology/ psychotherapy (8 hours). (i.e., functional assessment, exposure, token economy, modelling etc.)	lecture, conversation	Martin & Pear (2020) (Ch.19-27) De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 5) Miltenberger (2019) (Chapters 20-25)

14. On animals' behavior and behavior modification (2 hours)	lecture, conversation	To be communicated
<i>References (will be provided via Google Classroom):</i> Martin, G., & Pear, J. (2019). <i>Behavior Modification. What it is and how to do it</i> . 11th edition. Routledge: NY. De Houwer, J., & Hughes, S. (2020). <i>The psychology of learning: An introduction from a functional-cognitive perspective</i> . MIT Press. Miltenberger, R. G. (2019). <i>Behavior modification: Principles and procedures</i> . 6 <sup>th</sup> edition. Cengage Learning.		
<b>7.2 Seminar / laboratory</b>	<b>Teaching methods</b>	<b>Observations</b>
1. Applications. What is learning? On behaviorism and behavior modification. Its relevance in real life (2 hours)	Conversation, demonstration	Martin & Pear (2020) (Ch.1&2) Miltenberger (2019) (Ch.1) De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Introduction)
2. Applied learning. Behavior modification. Defining, measuring, and recording target behavior (2 hours). Applications. AI implications.	Conversation, demonstration	Martin & Pear (2019) (Ch.3) Miltenberger (2019) (chapters 2 & 3)
3. Effects of regularities in the presence of a single stimulus (2 hours). Applications.	Conversation, demonstration	De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 1)
4. Classical (respondent) conditioning (effects of regularities in the presence of multiple stimuli) (2 hours). Applications.	Conversation, demonstration	Martin & Pear (2020) (Ch.5) De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 2)
5. Operant conditioning (effects of regularities in the presence of stimuli and behavior) (2 hours). Applications.	Conversation, demonstration	Martin & Pear (2020) (Ch.6-10, 15-16) De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 3)
6. Complex learning. Relational learning (2 hours). Applications.	Conversation, demonstration	De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 4)
7. Behavior modification in special education, health, and clinical psychology/ psychotherapy (2 hours). (i.e., functional assessment, exposure, token economy, modelling etc.). Applications.	Conversation, demonstration	Martin & Pear (2020) (Ch.19-27) De Houwer & Hughes (2020) (Chapter 5) Miltenberger (2019) (Chapters 20-25)
<i>References (will be provided via Google Classroom):</i> De Houwer, J., & Hughes, S. (2020). <i>The psychology of learning: An introduction from a functional-cognitive perspective</i> . MIT Press. Miltenberger, R. G. (2019). <i>Behavior modification: Principles and procedures</i> . 6 <sup>th</sup> edition. Cengage Learning.		

## 8. Correlation of discipline contents with the expectations of the representatives of the epistemic community, professional associations and representative employers in the field related to the program

The applied part is linked with the idea of designing behavior modification programs and providing practical skills in health, clinical psychology, and (special) education. These are in line with employers' expectations to be able to design interventions that change behaviors.

## 9. Assessment

Activity type	9.1 Assessment criteria	9.2 Assessment methods	9.3 Weight of final mark
9.4 Course	Quiz	25 multiple-choice questions will be available. Each correct answer earns 2 points.	50%
9.5 Seminar / laboratory	Practicum	Each group member of a practicum group earns a maximum of 20 points for adequate completion of the exercise. There will be 2 assignments. One assignment ( <b>midterm</b> ) will ask students to identify, observe, and record a target behavior, while the second one ( <b>final term</b> ) will require them to implement behavior modification principles in order to modify it.	40%
	Default points	The grading system is from 10 to 100, everyone gets 10 points as default.	10% default
	Bonus points for participating in research as volunteers	Enrolled as a volunteer in data collection (psychological research conducted by SocPers Lab). ( <a href="https://socpers.psihologietm.ro/">https://socpers.psihologietm.ro/</a> ). It will provide bonuses between 5 and 20 points per research participation. These bonuses are provided only when students accumulate a minimum of 41 points from the other tasks.	5%-20%
9.6 Minimum performance standard			
<p>The sum of gathered points will be transformed into a final grade as following:</p> <p>10 – 91 points and above            9 – from 81 to 90 points            8 – from 71 to 80 points            7 – from 61 to 70 points            6 – from 51 to 60 points            5 – from 41 to 50 points            4 – 40 points or below</p> <p><b>B session assessment</b></p> <p>Students who fail to meet the minimum attendance requirement will take the multiple-choice test in the B session.</p> <p>Students who either fail to submit their seminar assignments (midterm or final) on time or do not earn at least 15 points from both assignments will be required to take a multiple-choice test on the seminar materials during the B session. Only if they score at least 15 points on this test will they be allowed to participate in the B session of the lecture multiple-choice test.</p>			

**Attendance recovery**

Extra tasks will be required for attendance recovery. This procedure is available if the student has at least 3 attendances. If this requirement is not met, the student will take the exam in the B session.

**Consequences of improper AI use**

If, after verification, it is found that the activity was mostly (>60%) completed with the help of AI tools or by copying, the student will be required to attend a one-on-one evaluation meeting with the instructor and defend their work to demonstrate personal contribution and understanding of the material. If the student does not attend or is unable to answer questions regarding the paper, the work will be canceled, and the student will be required to take the seminar multiple-choice test in the B session.

Date of completion  
15.09.2025

Tenure teacher  
Professor Florin Alin SAVA, PhD  
Darian Faur, Ph.D. Candidate

Date of approval in department

Head of Department  
Delia VÎRGĂ, PhD  
Professor