

Neuroethology - Syllabus
Department of Biological Sciences - Marshall University

Professor: Dr. Brian L. Antonsen

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 9:00 – 9:50 AM and 11:00-12:30PM, or by appointment.

*I make every effort to keep scheduled office hours. Please note that conflicts may arise that require my absence.

Other Materials: Handouts to be given in lecture. We will use Blackboard to distribute images or slides from the lectures, supplementary material or exercises, study aids, or additional material you may find interesting or useful.

Computer Requirements: Access to and the ability to print documents from MUOnline and online scientific search engines is required. Access to word processing and presentation software (e.g. Word and PowerPoint) is also required. Official course communication will be through your Marshall email account, it is expected that you will check it regularly.

Lecture: R 5-7PM, room S311.

Course Description:

In depth group discussion of current research areas in the neural control of animal behavior.

The goals of this course are to provide you with an overall view of classical and hypothesis based animal behavior research, and apply this knowledge towards understanding current, cutting edge, problems in neuroethology.

Responsibilities: By enrolling in this course, you agree to all policies in this syllabus, and all relevant University policies as outlined in this syllabus and on the Academic Affairs website (www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs, click on “Marshall University Policies”).

Expected Learning Outcomes:

We expect that during this course you will develop into a skilled in discussing the neural control of animal behavior. Fundamental to this is a good understanding of basic and applied behavior research. You will be asked to read primary and secondary literature, and communicate what you learn in the form of written and oral assignments. You will work with me and your peers to form your own style that meets the criteria of effective communication for each type of writing or speaking we ask you to perform.

Course student learning outcomes	How students will practice each outcome in this course	How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed in this course
Students will describe basic principles of neuroethology	Classroom discussions, small assignments	Class presentations
Students will apply knowledge of neuroethology to current research questions	Classroom discussions, sample exercises, small assignments	Class presentations
Students will enhance their communication skills and ability to relate their knowledge in a manner that emphasizes well rounded thoughts, and at the same time brevity and simplicity.	Practice presentations, classroom discussions.	Class presentations

Assessment:

All assignments in this class are designed with the goal of developing your skills as an effective communicator and evaluator of the neuroethology literature, and to develop your skills in interpreting neuroscience-related phenomena. Details of these assignments will be given to you as the class progresses.

Grading Policy:

Your grade will be based on the scores you receive for a number of assignments and exams. I will use this scale to determine final grades: 100-90 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; <59 = F. I round up if your score is X.5 to X.9. There will be no extra credit or bonus points.

Late assignments will only be accepted with a university approved excuse.

Undergrad

Small Assignments (bring research to a class discussion)	20%
Presentations (2)	40%
Participation in class discussions:	40%
Total:	100%

Attendance:

Missed or late assignments or exams can be made up only in the case of a University approved absence. Marshall's policy on excused absences can be found in the academic calendar. It is your responsibility to be familiar with University policy. In cases of inclement weather, the University's policy will again be followed; it can be found on the web at: <http://www.marshall.edu/ucomm/weather.html>

Academic Honesty:

We take scientific integrity very seriously, and will not tolerate any form of dishonest conduct. You are responsible for knowing the University's policies on academic honesty, which can be found in the student handbook or on the web at this location:

http://www.marshall.edu/muonline/Academic_Dishonesty_Policy.pdf

For all assignments, we expect that all references or borrowed material used in your reports or talks are properly cited, and that you work independently. Exceptions to independent work will only be allowed in cases where you are expressly instructed to work in groups. Duplication or improper use of work will not be tolerated. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, use of borrowed ideas or material in figures or slides without proper reference, copying of another's word with or without the use of quotes, **any duplication** of material between students in talks or written reports, and any incidence of plagiarism as defined by the university (see link above).

Any incidence of dishonest conduct will result in a grade of ZERO for that assignment, and possible failure or dismissal from the course. Every case will also be referred to Academic Affairs for further action. **Students found guilty of academic dishonesty may be placed on academic probation, suspended, or dismissed from the University.**

Other Aspects of Conduct:

We will expect everyone to act in a professional and courteous manner. Disruptive, abusive, or offensive behavior directed at anyone involved in the class will not be tolerated. Cell phones and other communication devices should be turned off or set to silent ring. If you absolutely must answer a phone call, quietly leave the class before doing so. Text messaging is not allowed. Use of computers or personal electronic devices is not allowed, unless their use is directly involved with class activities **and** has been approved by your instructors. If you are late, enter quietly and avoid disturbing the class.

Social Justice:

Absolutely NO student will be discriminated against based on race, ethnicity, sex, age, sexual orientation, social class, abilities, health condition, or religion. Every student is an integral and essential member of this class, and their opinions and discussion will be treated with value and respect.

Students with Disabilities:

Marshall University is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with physical, learning and psychological disabilities. University policy states that it is the responsibility of students with disabilities to contact the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS) in Prichard Hall 117, phone 304 696-2271 to provide documentation of their disability. Following this, the DSS Coordinator will send a letter to each of the student's instructors outlining the academic accommodation he/she will need to ensure equality in classroom experiences, outside assignment, testing and grading. The instructor and student will meet to discuss how the accommodation(s) requested will be provided. For more information, please visit <http://www.marshall.edu/disabled> or contact Disabled Student Services Office at Prichard Hall 11, phone 304-696-2271.

Tentative Schedule*

Week of	General Topic
Jan. 11.	Introduction to course, animal behavior as an interdisciplinary study.
Jan. 18.	Approaches to the study of animal behavior I. Historical approaches, natural selection.
Jan. 25.	Approaches to the study of animal behavior II. Physiological analysis and theoretical modeling.
Feb. 1.	Approaches to the study of animal behavior III. Learning and development.
Feb. 8.	Survival behavior I. Mechanisms of orientation and navigation, biological clocks.
Feb. 15.	Survival behavior II. Spatial distribution and foraging.
Feb. 22.	Survival behavior III. Antipredator behavior.
Feb. 29.	Student Presentations/discussion
Mar. 7.	Student Presentations/discussion
Mar. 14.	Intraspecific interactions I. Reproductive behaviors, parental care.
Mar. 21.	BREAK
Mar. 28.	Intraspecific interactions II. Communication and the evolution of communication.
Apr. 4	Intraspecific interactions III. Conflict.
Apr. 11	Intraspecific interactions IV. Group living.
Apr. 18	Student Presentations/discussion
Apr. 25	Student Presentations/discussion

*-Subject to change – keep in mind that we may start specific topics earlier or later than outlined here, depending on how things progress through the term.