

Syllabus for Hormones and Human Social Behavior (PSY 450/550)

Spring 2017, University of Oregon

Monday Wednesday: 12 – 1:20 PM, 245 Straub



Instructor:

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Course Goals

This course will expose students to contemporary research in the rapidly growing field of human social neuroendocrinology – research at the interface of neuroendocrinology and social psychology. You will learn about the reciprocal relationship between hormones and social behavior: how hormones modulate social behavior and how behavior and the social environment cause changes in hormone systems. The specific goals of the course are to:

1. Gain a basic understanding of the main endocrine systems relevant to social interaction (e.g., testosterone, cortisol, oxytocin) as well as the methods for measuring and manipulating these systems.
2. Apply this understanding of the neuroendocrine system to examine research questions relevant to human social behavior (e.g., social hierarchy, aggression, affiliation, stress, mating behavior).
3. Critically evaluate research on hormones and human social behavior by reading primary source articles and analyzing those articles through discussion questions, thought papers, and presentations.
4. Design studies to test research questions about hormones and human social behavior.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Required Readings: There is no textbook for this course (because an appropriate textbook focused on human social behavior does not exist). You will learn about hormones and human social behavior by reading original scientific articles. Required readings will be posted on Canvas. You must complete the required readings BEFORE coming to class because we will have active discussions about the readings in class. This class will only be successful if you complete the required readings and think about them before coming to class. A required readings list will be shared with students and will be updated throughout the term.
2. Attendance/Participation (5% of overall course grade): Because we will discuss required readings in every class, attendance and class participation are critical to your learning. I will not take attendance in every class, but I will take attendance periodically to assess this portion of your grade. Further, we will complete some in-class activities periodically that will count toward your participation grade. These activities will be included to help you learn the course material. You are allowed to miss two classes without penalty. If you miss more than two classes on days in which I record student attendance/participation, then your attendance/participation grade will suffer unless you (a) have an approved excuse ahead of time, or (b) have a family/medical emergency with appropriate documentation. Your best option for learning the material is to do the readings ahead of time and then come to class to participate in discussions and activities.
3. Discussion Questions (10% of overall course grade): You must think critically about the readings, and you must submit **at least one discussion question for each class period in which there are required readings of original scientific articles. You are allowed to skip discussion question submissions for two class periods without penalty. Discussion question submissions will start in Week 3 and continue through Week 10.** The goal of your question(s) should be to stimulate lively and thought provoking discussion on the readings/topic for that week. If you don't prepare thoughtful discussion questions, this class won't be fun or useful for anyone. You should come to class ready to ask your discussion questions(s) during the discussion period. For each class period, I will post a link on Canvas for discussion question submissions. Discussion questions must be submitted by 11 AM on the day of class to receive credit. Discussion questions submitted after 11 AM but before noon will receive half credit. Discussion questions submitted after 12 PM on the day of class will receive no credit. You should still submit a discussion question for credit even if you are not planning to attend class.
4. Thought Papers (10% of your overall grade): Twice during the term, once before the midterm exam and once after the midterm exam, you will be required to submit a short thought paper focused on one of the required readings. Some of our required readings will be review or theory papers, and some will be papers about a scientific study. Your thought paper should focus on one of the readings about a scientific study, not on one of the review or theory papers. The thought paper should be approximately 2 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. The purpose of the thought paper is

to get you to think critically about one of the scientific studies that you read. For example, what did you like or dislike about the study? Was there something that you did not understand? Were there any major limitations that the authors did not point out? Do you think the authors interpreted their findings correctly? Were there any problems with the design and/or analyses that the authors did not point out? Do you see some important future directions for new research that the authors did not point out? Are there some real-world applications of the results that you think are particularly important? The thought paper should be your own thoughts, not the thoughts of the authors who wrote the study or someone else's analysis. You are required to submit the thought paper by midnight on the night prior to class before we discuss the paper in class. Your first thought paper should be submitted in Weeks 3, 4, 5, or 6, BEFORE the midterm exam. Your second thought paper should be submitted by Monday June 5th in Week 10. Your first thought paper will be penalized 10% per day late after the midterm exam date (Wednesday May 10th). Your second thought paper will be penalized 10% per day late after Monday June 5th.

5. Oral Presentation (10% of overall course grade): You will be required to complete an oral presentation on an additional reading that is not one of the required readings. You will be provided with a reading list, and you can select one article off of the list for your oral presentation provided no one else has chosen that article to present. You can also choose another article not on the reading list, but you must get approval from Prof. Mehta or the TA ahead of time. **You must prepare an oral presentation that you will give in class. The presentation should be no more than 10 minutes long, and you should be prepared for up to a 5-minute question and answer period after your presentation.** The goal of the presentation is to summarize the research you read about (introduction, methods, results, and discussion), critically evaluate it (provide your own thoughts on the paper), and answer questions about the reading. You are the instructor during the time you are presenting. Although you can use any format that you think is most appropriate (creativity is welcome such as interpretive dances ☺, but not necessary), a PowerPoint presentation format is fine. Handouts are also fine. Undergraduate students will present in pairs, and graduate students will be required to present individually. For students presenting in pairs, all students are required to speak during the presentation. It is also critical that all students are involved in the preparation of the presentation. You should practice the presentation ahead of time to make sure it is no more than 10 minutes long. You may be cut off after exactly 10 minutes, even if it is in the middle of your presentation. This rule is necessary to make sure we make it through all student presentations.
6. Quizzes (20% of overall course grade): There will be five quizzes throughout the term. The format will be multiple choice primarily. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Four out of five quizzes will count toward your course grade. Each quiz will assess knowledge gained from content covered since the prior quiz.

7. Midterm Exam (25% of course grade): There will be one midterm exam that will be primarily multiple-choice questions. The midterm will assess your knowledge and understanding of content covered in class (e.g., lectures, activities) and required readings.
8. Final Paper (20% of your overall grade): You are required to submit a final paper, approximately **4-6 pages in length, 1 inch margins, 12-point font, double spaced**. You are strongly encouraged to solicit feedback about your paper topic from Prof. Mehta or the TA. The paper should take one of the following forms:
 - A. Study Proposal**: If you choose this option, you should write a **study proposal** that builds on previous research in social neuroendocrinology.
 - B. Theoretical Paper**: If you choose this option, you will write a theoretical paper that integrates various theories of hormones and social behavior.
 - C. Real-World Applications Paper**: If you choose this option, you will write a paper that discusses a real-world application or several applications of a specific area of research within hormones and social behavior.

Your final paper will be due via Canvas submission by **Tuesday, June 13th at 5 PM**. Late final papers will be penalized 10% for every day late. No work of any kind will be accepted after Friday, June 16th at 12 PM.

Grading

The final grade assigned for the course should reflect the student's overall performance in the course, as described by the following guidelines:

- A *excellent* work, complete mastery of course material
- B *good* work, grasps most of the important concepts
- C *average* work, grasps many but not all aspects of course material
- D *poor* work, insufficient understanding of material
- F failing

Grades will be assigned based on your total percentage points in the course:

GRADE	PERCENTAGE	GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A+	98-100%	C	72-77%
A	92-98%	C-	70-71%
A-	90-91%	D+	68-69%
B+	88-89%	D	62-67%
B	82-87%	D-	60-61%
B-	80-81%	F	59% and Below
C+	78-79%		

Course Philosophy and Expectations

Active Learning and Work Outside of Class: Doing well in this class requires an active involvement with the course content; merely reading the material and showing up for class are not enough. It is important to think about what you are reading, watching, and discussing, and relate it to experiences in your own life, rather than just remembering facts. As a 4-credit class, you are expected to spend **12 hours per week outside of class** working on relevant material.

Canvas: Canvas will be used in this course as an online resource for the syllabus, lecture materials, required readings, and assignments. Please note that while you may have access to the course materials, attending class will be crucial to doing your learning. The materials alone will not teach you the core concepts required for this course. The Canvas site for this course can be found at: <http://canvas.uoregon.edu>.

Preparation: It is also expected that you will come prepared to class. This means keeping up with the readings as well as having spent some time reflecting on the readings. The discussion questions and thought paper submissions are designed to help you reflect on the readings. We also require that you check your UO email and the Canvas website often (a minimum of once a day during the week), as we will post important class information. This course has been designed to comply with the psychology department's guidelines for teaching and learning. Please review these guidelines at <http://psychology.uoregon.edu/undergraduate/academics/>

Organization and communication: Your success in this course will rely in large part on your ability to stay organized and stay on top of communication. You should expect to be in frequent communication with your class and TAs, as well as with your classmates. If you are not already in the habit of checking e-mail every day, start now.

Classroom expectations include:

- Arriving on time, prepared for class
- Attending for the duration of class and being an active learner
- Participating in class activities and discussions
- Respecting the diversity of cultures, opinions, viewpoints in the classroom
- Listening to fellow students, professors, and lecturers with respect
- Not reading other materials, books, newspapers, or using laptops for other activities
- Turning off cell phones and other electronic devices

Diversity and Inclusion: It is the policy of the University of Oregon to support and value diversity. Further, an important scientific value is that knowledge gained through the scientific method is a public good accessible to everyone. I strive to create a classroom environment consistent with these values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, one in which all students are respected and one in which all students feel safe to explore difficult topics and learn. If you have any suggestions or concerns regarding diversity and inclusion, I will always listen to you with great respect and a goal to provide you with the best educational environment possible.

Academic Honesty: All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. Cheating is defined as providing information to, or receiving information from, another person. Plagiarism is defined as passing off the work of another as your own without properly giving credit. This includes, but is not limited to, directly copying others' writing (in whole or in part) or paraphrasing others' writing or ideas without citing properly. In these cases "others" can include other students in the class, other students or non-students not in the class, and authors of scholarly or mass media work (journal articles, chapters, newspaper articles, blogs, Wikipedia). Rely mostly on your own ideas and words, and support them with properly cited scholarly sources (journal articles, textbooks, book chapters) or popular press media (websites, newspapers). If you are unsure about what is appropriate or allowed, please ask! The UO library website has a helpful page that describes when you need to give credit: <http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>

All instances of cheating and plagiarism will have serious consequences. At a minimum, you will receive a zero on the assignment or exam and be reported to the university's student conduct coordinator, even if it is your first offense. If the offense is serious, you may also receive an "F" in the course. Repeat offenders will fail the course. Turning in work that is not your own is not acceptable. Copying or paraphrasing information from any source - print or electronic - without citation is plagiarism. The use of sources must therefore be properly acknowledged and documented. The consequences of academic dishonesty will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues, please come and speak with your professor or the teaching assistant.

Student Accommodations

Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me. Also, please request that the Accessible Education Center (164 Oregon Hall, <http://aec.uoregon.edu/>) send me a letter verifying your disability. The phone number for AEC is 541-346-1155 and the email address is uoaec@uoregon.edu

Students for Whom English is Not Their Native Language: If you are a non-native English speaker and think you may have trouble in this course due to language difficulties, please see the instructor within the first two weeks.

Course Calendar

- Discussion Questions should be submitted starting on Monday, April 17th (Week 3) and will continue through Monday, June 5th (Week 10).
- Your first thought paper should be submitted Weeks 3, 4, 5, or 6, BEFORE the midterm exam. Your second thought paper should be submitted by Monday, June 5th in Week 10.

Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Planned Number of Student Presentations
1	M ~ April 3 W ~ April 5	Syllabus Overview and Course Introduction Methodological Foundations	
2	M ~ April 10 W ~ April 12	An Overview of the Endocrine System QUIZ 1 ; Designing Social Neuroendocrinology Studies	
3	M ~ April 17 W ~ April 19	Status Hierarchies, Dominance, and Aggression Part 1 Status Hierarchies, Dominance, and Aggression Part 2	2
4	M ~ April 24 W ~ April 26	QUIZ 2 ; Replication “Crisis” and Power Poses Attachment and Social Affiliation Part 1	2 2
5	M ~ May 1 W ~ May 3	Attachment and Social Affiliation Part 2 QUIZ 3 ; Stress and Social Threat Part 1	2 2
6	M ~ May 8 W ~ May 10	Stress and Social Threat Part 2 MIDTERM EXAM	2
7	M ~ May 15 W ~ May 17	Mating Behavior and Sexual Motivation Decision Making	3 3
8	M ~ May 22 W ~ May 24	QUIZ 4 ; Social Cognition Prejudice and Intergroup Behavior	3 3
9	M ~ May 29 W ~ May 31	MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY: NO CLASS Puberty and Adolescence	3
10	M ~ June 5 W ~ June 7	QUIZ 5 ; Sexual Orientation Student Presentations	3 6
FINALS WEEK		FINAL PAPER DUE, Tuesday June 13th at 5 PM ; No work of any kind will be accepted after Fri. June 16 th 12 PM	