
BZ/VS 479 BEHAVIOR AND BIOLOGY OF DOGS

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Jennie Willis

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Communication Policy: Please communicate through Canvas (preferred) or include BZ/VS479 in the subject line of emails. I will respond within 48 hours.

PREREQUISITES FOR COURSE

BZ 220 or Junior Standing

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

Together we will explore how aspects of physiology, neurobiology, development and genetics influence the behavior of domestic dogs. We will learn how dogs learn and how we can teach new behaviors and modify undesired behaviors. The relationship between evolution and domestication influenced behavioral traits will become more clear. You will begin to understand how abnormal and problem behaviors develop and how dog cognition compares to other species. The rich relationship between health, nutrition, experience and learning history will become clearer as we look at expression of behavior. You will realize how dogs are connected to our communities in a variety of ways and you will explore your connection with dogs in a deeper way.

My emphasis will be on interpreting scientific literature related to dogs. There are a lot of popular wrong myths and more and more correct information emerging into popular culture. We will be focusing on correct science information and unpacking conventional wisdom. Get ready to reconstruct what you know about dogs!

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:
1. Compare and contrast evidence related to the evolution and domestication of the domestic dog
2. Apply genetic principles in analyzing morphology, behavior and disease in dogs.
3. Identify and explain expressions of communication in social relationships of domestic dogs and wild relatives
4. Analyze the relevance of physical and social milestones in development to adult behavior

5. Compare and contrast evidence in nutrition and hormonal imbalance to behavior.
6. Describe the role of sensory perception in relationship to behavior in the domestic dog
7. Relate the principles of learning theory to the domestic dog
8. Describe how the parts of the brain and various neurotransmitters affect changes in behavior
9. Describe how learning disturbances take place, how behavioral disorders develop and how to apply learning principles to change behavior
10. Describe and relate dogs to our community in terms of sheltering, law, and careers.
11. Explain research that support the importance of the human-animal bond and interactions and implications of research illustrating cognitive abilities of domestic dogs.
12. Synthesize and interpret research and generate conclusions, design and implement a research question and interpret results and implications

TEXTBOOK / COURSE READINGS

There is no required textbook for this course. You will read textbook chapters and scientific papers as part of this course. Your readings will be provided online in each module.

COURSE MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT

You will need a computer and access to high speed internet for viewing online content and videos.

PARTICIPATION/BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Each module will contain:

- An introduction overview of with learning objectives, assessments and resources
- Readings from chapters or scientific papers
- Video links to lectures, video examples of disease or behavior or topic tutorials
- Lectures to guide your thinking on the material presented in other ways
- A discussion prompt to enable you to engage your fellow students and deepen your ideas
- Case studies to allow you to apply your knowledge.
- Assignments to allow your demonstrate your knowledge and reflect.
- Quizzes to enable you to show mastery of the material

IMPORTANT-Please read.

Plan to spend 3-4 hours per module learning through video and readings, and an additional 1-4 hours per week studying and completing assignments and assessments.

Expectations:

Stay caught up: The biggest way to fail in an online course is to get behind. The modules are structured to allow you to know what you need to accomplish each week. Treat this like a face-to-face class and complete the material each week. There are weekly deadlines for discussions, quizzes, case studies and assignments to help keep you on track. You will get more out of this class if you keep up, since information builds on itself over the semester.

Take notes on all presented materials, they all will be represented on your weekly quiz. Don't think you will be able to read through all the chapters again or re-watch lectures once you open the quiz. You will only have one opportunity to take the quiz each week, so once you click on it, plan to take it! Don't click until you are ready.

Ask questions: A big part of a healthy upper division class is discussion and question asking. I appreciate and welcome questions. We will be exploring topics together online, and an important aspect of this is bringing your participation in the discussion boards. I think this is a valuable part of the learning experience and really helps personalize the information. I would like you to offer logical conjectures and ask relevant questions. I want to make sure you come away with a full and complete understanding of this information. The goal of this class is to present the accurate scientific information as we know it to date, so please ask your questions!

Contacting me: My email is jennie.willis@colostate.edu. Please put BZ 479 in the title of emails. I am reachable through the course shell with just a click. Be aware that Canvas deletes threads, so you writing in reply your previous email, it will not copy our thread.

Please review the [core rules of netiquette](#) for some guidelines and expectations on how to behave in an online learning environment.

COURSE POLICIES (LATE ASSIGNMENTS, MAKE-UP EXAMS, ETC.)

No late work will be accepted unless there is a University excused absence.

GRADING POLICY

Grade	Range
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

As a student enrolled in this course, one of your responsibilities is to submit course work by the due dates listed in Canvas. With that said, I take my role as your instructor very seriously, and, in fact, I care about how well you do in this course and that you have a satisfying, rewarding experience.

To that end, it is my commitment to you to respond individually to the work you submit in this class and to return your work in a timely manner. Smaller, weekly assignments and quizzes will be returned within 1 week and major assignments will be returned 2 weeks.

ASSIGNMENT	GRADE POINTS	GRADE PERCENTAGE
Discussions (20 points per week)	320	26.7%
Case Studies and Assignments (20 points per week)	320	26.7%
Weekly Quizzes (20 points per week)	320	26.7%
Research Project (Proposal, Rough Draft and Final Paper_	240	20%
Total:	1200	100 %

*Keep a copy of all work created for the course, including work submitted through Canvas course learning management system.

Research Project (240 points) You will research an area of interest in dog behavior or biology and develop a hypothesis that you can test using observation or survey information. You will design a study where you will take your own data, either through observation of events already occurring (dog park, vet office, trail etc) or through survey (owners, professionals, veterinarians). We will talk more about this in Module 1 . You will take data, and analyze your data in a results section of your final paper. In addition, you will conduct a literature review in this area (citing at least relevant 10 peer reviewed journal articles) and provide discussion as to your insights, critical thinking and thoughts for next steps in this area.

Breakdown of points:

Project proposal: 20 points

Statement of progress : 20 points

Research project paper (2500 words or max 10 pages) 100 points

Discussion

Each week you will be responsible for finding a piece of information or reading an article and or watching a video and writing a response. Discussion topics are meant to explore ideas or concepts and cement learning.

Assignments and Case Studies:

Each week you will have the opportunity to do critical thinking and personalize your learning with completion of assignments. They are meant to allow you to explore an area a little deeper, learn what you would do in a real-life situation and integrate information to support a course of action.

You will also have one assignment EACH WEEK clearly labeled as extra credit. This means you can get additional points for completing these assignments but not lose points if you don't. You can turn these in to help improve your grade throughout the semester. You can complete as many as you would like. There should not be a reason not to get an A if you want one!

Quizzes

Quizzes replace mid-terms and a final exam in this class. Quizzes are your way to see how you are mastering terms, concepts and ideas. You will have one quiz each week of the 15 weeks of the semester. You will have enough time to complete the quiz if you have read the required

readings (and took notes), watched lecture (and took notes) and watched other required videos (and took notes). A good set of notes would include: terms and definitions, dates/time periods, locations in the world, scientific names as appropriate, number of chromosomes, shared or different characteristics between breeds or species etc. There will be big idea concepts on quizzes, but this is our chance to recognize your hard work in studying the details.

Quizzes are open note, open classroom resource but not open phone a friend. Please plan ahead to ensure you have adequate wi-fi to complete your quiz. Do not open the quiz until you have completed everything else in the module, written your notes and studied them. Once you click on the quiz, plan to take it.

CANVAS INFORMATION & TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Canvas is where course content, grades, and communication will reside for this course.

- Login: canvas.colostate.edu
- Support: info.canvas.colostate.edu
- For passwords or any other computer-related technical support, contact the [Central IT Technical Support Help Desk](#).
 - (970) 491-7276
 - help@colostate.edu

The [Technical Requirements](#) page identifies the browsers, operating systems, and plugins that work best with Canvas. If you are new to Canvas quickly review [the Canvas Student Orientation](#) materials.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & CSU HONOR PLEDGE

This course will adhere to the CSU [Academic Integrity/Misconduct](#) policy as found in the General Catalog and the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Academic integrity lies at the core of our common goal: to create an intellectually honest and rigorous community. Because academic integrity, and the personal and social integrity of which academic integrity is an integral part, is so central to our mission as students, teachers, scholars, and citizens, I will ask that you affirm the CSU Honor Pledge as part of completing your work in this course.

Further information about Academic Integrity is available at CSU's [Academic Integrity - Student Resources](#).

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING/ACCOMMODATION OF NEEDS

I am committed to the principle of universal learning. This means that our classroom, our virtual spaces, our practices, and our interactions be as inclusive as possible. Mutual respect, civility, and the ability to listen and observe others carefully are crucial to universal learning.

If you are a student who will need accommodations in this class, please contact me to discuss your individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner. A verifying memo from [The Student Disability Center](#) may be required before any accommodation is provided.

The Student Disability Center (SDC) has the authority to verify and confirm the eligibility of students with disabilities for the majority of accommodations. While some accommodations may be provided by other departments, a student is not automatically eligible for those accommodations unless their disability can be verified and the need for the accommodation confirmed, either through SDC or through acceptable means defined by the particular department. Faculty and staff may consult with the SDC staff whenever there is doubt as to the appropriateness of an accommodative request by a student with a disability.

The goal of SDC is to normalize disability as part of the culture of diversity at Colorado State University. The characteristic of having a disability simply provides the basis of the support that is available to students. The goal is to ensure students with disabilities have the opportunity to be as successful as they have the capability to be.

Support and services are offered to student with functional limitations due to visual, hearing, learning, or mobility disabilities as well as to students who have specific physical or mental health conditions due to epilepsy, diabetes, asthma, AIDS, psychiatric diagnoses, etc. Students who are temporarily disabled are also eligible for support and assistance.

Any student who is enrolled at CSU, and who self-identifies with SDC as having a disability, is eligible for support from SDC. Specific accommodations are determined individually for each student and must be supported by appropriate documentation and/or evaluation of needs consistent with a particular type of disability. SDC reserves the right to ask for any appropriate documentation of disability in order to determine a student's eligibility for accommodations as well as in support for specific accommodative requests. The accommodative process begins once a student meets with an accommodations specialist in the SDC.

THIRD-PARTY TOOLS/PRIVACY

Please note that this course may require you to use third-party tools (tools outside of the Canvas learning management system), such as Skype and others. Some of these tools may collect and share information about their users. Because your privacy is important, you are encouraged to consult the privacy policies for any third-party tools in this course so that you are aware of how your personal information is collected, used and shared.

COPYRIGHTED COURSE MATERIALS

Please do not share material from this course in online, print, or other media. Course material is the property of the instructor who developed the course. Materials authored by third parties and used in the course are also subject to copyright protections. Posting course materials on external sites (commercial or not) violates both copyright law and the CSU Student Conduct Code. Students who share course content without the instructor's express permission, including with online sites that post materials to sell to other students, could face appropriate disciplinary or legal action.

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT SUPPORT

Any CSU student who faces challenges or hardships due to their legal status in the United States and believes that it may impact their academic performance in this course is encouraged to visit [Student Support Services for Undocumented, DACA & ASSET](#) for resources and support. Additionally, only if you feel comfortable, please notify your professor so they may pass along any additional resources they may possess.

TITLE IX/INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

For the full statement regarding role and responsibilities about reporting harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and the retaliation policy please go to: [Title IX – Sexual Assault, Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment](#).

If you feel that your rights have been compromised at CSU, several resources are available to assist:

- Student Resolution Center, 200 Lory Student Center, 491-7165
- Office of Equal Opportunity, 101 Student Services, 491-5836

A note about interpersonal violence: If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence and/or stalking, know that you are not alone. As instructors, we are

required by law to notify university officials about disclosures related to interpersonal violence. Confidential victim advocates are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide support related to the emotional, physical, physiological and legal aftermath of interpersonal violence. Contact the Victim Assistance Team at: 970-492-4242.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

CSU does not discriminate on the basis of religion. Reasonable accommodation should be made to allow individuals to observe their established religious holidays. Students seeking an exemption from attending class or completing assigned course work for a religious holiday will need to fill out the [Religious Accommodation Request Form](#) and turn it in to the Division of Student Affairs, located on the second level of the Administration building.

Once turned in, the Division of Student Affairs will review the request and contact the student accordingly. If approved, the student will receive a memo from the Dean of Students to give to their professor or course instructor.

Students are asked to turn in the request forms as soon as the conflict is noticed. Similarly, unanticipated conflicts requiring a religious observance, such as a death in the family, can also be reviewed.

CSU COVID POLICY 2023

All students are expected and required to report any COVID-19 symptoms to the university immediately, as well as exposures or positive tests from a non-CSU testing location.

If you suspect you have symptoms, or if you know you have been exposed to a positive person or have tested positive for COVID, are directed to fill out the COVID Reporter (<https://covid.colostate.edu/reporter/>). If you know or believe you have been exposed, including living with someone known to be COVID positive, or are symptomatic, it is important for the health of yourself and others that you complete the online COVID Reporter. Do not ask your instructor to report for you. If you do not have internet access to fill out the online COVID-19 Reporter, please call (970) 491-4600. You may also report concerns in your academic or living spaces regarding COVID exposures through the COVID Reporter. You will not be penalized in any way for reporting. When you complete the COVID Reporter for any reason, the CSU Public Health office is notified. Once notified, that office will

contact you and, depending upon each situation, will conduct contact tracing, initiate any necessary public health requirements and notify you if you need to take any steps.

For the latest information about the University's COVID resources and information, please visit the **CSU COVID-19 site**: <https://covid.colostate.edu/>.

CSU PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

Inclusion: We create and nurture inclusive environments and welcome, value and affirm all members of our community, including their various identities, skills, ideas, talents and contributions.

Integrity: We are accountable for our actions and will act ethically and honestly in all our interactions.

Respect: We honor the inherent dignity of all people within an environment where we are committed to freedom of expression, critical discourse, and the advancement of knowledge.

Service: We are responsible, individually and collectively, to give of our time, talents, and resources to promote the well-being of each other and the development of our local, regional, and global communities.

Social Justice: We have the right to be treated and the responsibility to treat others with fairness and equity, the duty to challenge prejudice, and to uphold the laws, policies and procedures that promote justice in all respects.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The [Mission, Vision, and Focus](#) webpage of the Vice President for Diversity includes a comprehensive statement of CSU's commitment to diversity and inclusion.