SELF-MODIFICATION FOR PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT

Instructor: David Polson, PhD  
Email: dpolson@uvic.ca  
Office: COR A214  
Office Hours: TBA

Course Website: Accessible through Coursespaces.  
Lecture Room / Day / Time: HHB 116 / MWR / 3:30-4:20 pm

Course Content  
This course “is designed to acquaint you with a general theory of behavior, to guide you through exercises for developing skills in self-analysis, and to provide you with concrete information on how to achieve the goals you hold for yourself….The vehicle for learning will be your own self-analysis, your own program for implementing your values. Throughout the course you will be required to accompany your reading with your own self-directed behavior change project. There will be a consistent focus on collecting data about your own behavior and on evaluating those data. In a sense, your daily life will become the laboratory in which you will study and develop your own behavior.” (Watson & Tharp, 2014, p. viii).

Course Objectives  
There are four main objectives you will be working to achieve in this course:

1. To acquire increased self-knowledge by conducting research on yourself.
2. To advance and refine your research skills by conducting research on yourself.
3. To advance and refine your knowledge of behavior analysis by applying the principles and procedures of the discipline to your own self-selected behaviors.
4. To meet personal goals by applying the principles and procedures of behavior analysis to your own self-selected behaviors.

Course Materials  
2. Malott, R. I'll stop procrastinating...when I get around to it. (Selected chapters and objectives.) (http://old.dickmalott.com/students/undergradprogram/psy4600/selfmanage/)
3. Mastering the Basics of Visual Analysis (online tutorial; cost = $9).

Course Overview  
The course is generally divided into three parts. Part 1 is concerned mostly with learning the textbook material. For each chapter, there is a corresponding online quiz, which you are to complete at least 30 minutes before the class for which that chapter is required reading. Mastering the textbook material should equip you with the skills needed to get started on your major self-directed behavior change project. At the end of Part 1, you will have a proposal meeting with me, during which you will formally outline the details of your plan for your major project. Once approved, you will begin collecting data on your target behavior(s). Part 2 is concerned mostly with me teaching you about the basic theory, principles, and procedures of applied behavior analysis. Advanced notice will be given if any additional readings are required for those classes. At the end of Part 2, you and I will meet again to review your progress thus far. Armed with a new knowledge of behavior analysis, you might propose some amendments to your ongoing major project, in particular, to your planned intervention. Pending approval, you will begin the intervention phase of your project. Part 3 is concerned mostly with reviewing the applied literature in areas related to the various student projects. The reviews will be in the form of student presentations that will summarize, analyze, and evaluate journal articles documenting successful interventions for specific types of target behaviors.
Course Components

In-Class Activities. On at least some class days you will be asked to submit some type of written work at the end of class, for credit. For example, you might be prompted to answer a question about the lecture content at various points during the lecture. Whatever the activity, the protocol will be informal in that working with other students is fine, even encouraged. Not every submission will be graded. For those that are, a score will be assigned out of 10, based on the quality of your submission. Overall, this component counts 100 points toward your final grade.

Pre-Class Quizzes. There is an online quiz to accompany each of the 10 chapters in the Watson & Tharp textbook. When a certain chapter is the required reading for a class, you must complete its corresponding quiz at least 30 minutes before that class starts. Quizzes will typically consist of about 15 multiple choice items. Learning objectives will be provided for each chapter to give you a better idea of what to focus on for the quiz. Overall, this component counts 150 points toward your final grade.

Personal Objectives Assignment. You will prepare a set of (a) one-year and (b) five-year personal objectives, separated into major life categories (e.g., work, health, recreation, family, etc.). This exercise is a first step in identifying potential target behavior(s) for your major project. Overall, this component counts 30 points toward your final grade. Guidelines will be provided.

Mini-Project Homework. In the first few weeks of the course, you will complete a small project as a precursor to your major self-directed behavior change project. This mini-project is designed to give you practice choosing a goal, collecting data, implementing an intervention, and making sense of the data afterwards. There are two parts to this assignment, and overall it counts 30 points toward your final grade. Guidelines will be provided.

Malott Homework. There are two required readings (three small chapters each) from Dick Malott’s entertaining online booklet called “I’ll Stop Procrastinating... When I Get Around To It.” The homework assignment for each of the two readings entails completing a set of objectives corresponding to each chapter. Overall, this component counts 40 points toward your final grade.

Presentation. You will be required to give a PowerPoint presentation to the class about a journal article dealing with an application of the principles and procedures of behavior analysis to an area of interest to you. (The time limit—currentlly set at about 20 minutes—and whether or not you will do this with a partner will be determined by enrolment numbers.) You might choose the article because it relates specifically to your major self-directed behavior change project, but this is not a requirement. Overall, this component counts 120 points toward your final grade. Guidelines will be provided.

A component of each presentation will be a short quiz administered by the presenter(s) at the end of the presentation. Your score on these quizzes will contribute toward your in-class activity grade.

Meetings. You and I will meet twice during the semester. In the first, proposal meeting, you will present to me the details of your planned major self-directed behavior change project. In the second, progress meeting, you will share with me your data collected thus far; if need be, you will propose amendments to your project based on any new insights acquired since the first meeting. The proposal meeting counts 60 points toward your final grade, while the progress meeting counts 30 points. Guidelines will be provided for exactly what is expected of you at these meetings.

Major Project Homework. Once your major project starts, you will be required to submit on a weekly basis updated charts of your data and a brief report of your progress to that point. There will be six opportunities to do so, and this component counts 60 points toward your final grade. Guidelines will be provided.

Major Project Report. You will be required to submit a major report about your self-directed behavior change project. Your report should follow APA guidelines for documenting an experiment. The minimum is 10 double-spaced pages (minus charts, Reference section, and appendix-appropriate materials). This report counts 350 points toward your grade. Guidelines will be provided.
**Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Activities</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Class Text Quizzes (10)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Objectives Assignment</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastering Visual Analysis Assignment</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Project Homework (2)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malott Homework (2)</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal Meeting</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Review Meeting</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Project Homework (6)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>120</td>
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<td>Major Project Report</td>
<td>350</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
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**Final Grade / Percentage Equivalents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>&gt; 90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-64</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>50-59</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 50</td>
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**Notes**

- Your scores will be frequently updated on the course website. You should check them regularly to ensure that they have been recorded correctly.
- Final grades that end with a decimal point of 0.5 or above will be rounded to the next higher whole number, and grades that end with a decimal point below 0.5 will be rounded to the next lower whole number. For example, if a final percentage grade is 89.5 – 89.9, the grade will be rounded to 90. The rounding criteria will only be used on the final assignment of the letter grade.
- All class work must be completed by the deadlines indicated in the Class Schedule. It is not fair for some students to do work later than others, unless there is a valid excuse. Therefore, except in cases meeting the criteria for an academic concession (see below), there will be zero credit and no make-up opportunities for any work not turned in on time. **Travel plans will not be accepted as an excuse.**
- Students who do not complete requirements on schedule due to extenuating circumstances (i.e., personal illness or accident, family affliction, official university activities) must contact me immediately upon their return to make arrangements for substitute work. Late contact (e.g., after the tentative final grades are posted) is unacceptable. Typically, I will require documentation of the circumstance.
### Class Schedule

#### Week 1

**Jan 4 (M)**  
Introduction to course format

**Jan 6 (W)**  
Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 1—The Skills of Self-Direction
- Chapter 1 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

**Jan 7 (R)**

#### Week 2

**Jan 11 (M)**  
Read: Malott, Chapters 1, 2, 3
- submit corresponding Homework Objectives (hardcopy, before class)

**Mini-Project**
- after-class homework: start recording daily data

**Jan 13 (W)**  
Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 2—Forethought: Planning for Success
- Chapter 2 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

**Jan 14 (R)**  
★ Personal Objectives assignment due

#### Week 3

**Jan 18 (M)**  
Read: Malott, Chapters 4, 6, 10
- submit corresponding Homework Objectives (hardcopy, before class)

**Mini-Project**
- submit chart of data, along with analysis (online; before class)
- after-class homework: start intervention

**Jan 20 (W)**  
Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 3—Self-Knowledge: Observation and Recording
- Chapter 3 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

**Jan 21 (R)**

#### Week 4

**Jan 25 (M)**  
★ Mastering Visual Analysis assignment due

**Mini-Project**
- submit chart of data, along with analysis (online, before class)

**Jan 27 (W)**  
Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 7—Consequences
- Chapter 7 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

**Jan 28 (R)**

#### Week 5

**Feb 1 (M)**

**Feb 3 (W)**  
Read, Watson & Tharp, Chapter 5—Antecedents
- Chapter 5 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

**Feb 4 (R)**

#### Week 6

**Feb 8-12**  
**READING BREAK**
Week 7  Feb 15 (M)  Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 8—Developing a Successful Plan
  - Chapter 8 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

**Major Project**
  - scheduled proposal meetings (individual; no class)
  - start recording baseline data (pending approval at meeting)

Feb 17 (W)  **Major Project**
  - scheduled proposal meetings (individual; no class)
  - start recording baseline data (pending approval at meeting)

Feb 18 (R)  **Major Project**
  - scheduled proposal meetings (individual; no class)
  - start recording baseline data (pending approval at meeting)

Week 8  Feb 22 (M)  Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 4—The Principles of Self-Direction: Theory & Practice
  - Chapter 4 Online Quiz (pre-class)

Feb 24 (W)

Feb 25 (R)  Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 6—Behaviors: Actions, Thoughts, and Feelings
  - Chapter 6 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

Week 9  Feb 29 (M)  Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 9—Problem Solving and Relapse Prevention
  - Chapter 9 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

**Major Project**
  - submit updated chart(s) and analysis (Week 1+; online, before class)

Mar 2 (W)  Read: Watson & Tharp, Chapter 10—Staying in Control
  - Chapter 10 Online Quiz (pre-class) due

Mar 3 (R)  **Major Project**
  - scheduled data review meetings (individual; no class)
  - start intervention (pending approval at meeting)

Week 10  Mar 7 (M)  **Major Project**
  - submit updated chart(s) and analysis (Weeks 1-2; online, before class)
  - scheduled data review meetings (individual; no class)
  - start intervention (pending approval at meeting)

Mar 9 (W)  **Major Project**
  - scheduled data review meetings (individual; no class)
  - start intervention (pending approval at meeting)

Mar 10 (R)  Student Presentations (2)

Week 11  Mar 14 (M)  Student Presentations (2)
**Major Project**
  - submit updated chart(s) and analysis (Weeks 1-3; online, before class)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 16 (W)</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 17 (R)</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 12</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 21 (M)</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Major Project</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- submit updated chart(s) and analysis (Weeks 1-4; online, before class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 23 (W)</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<td>Mar 24 (R)</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 13</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 28 (M)</td>
<td>EASTER MONDAY</td>
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<td><strong>Major Project</strong> (due Mar 29)</td>
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<td>- submit updated chart(s) and analysis (Weeks 1-5; online, before class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 30 (W)</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<td>Mar 31 (R)</td>
<td>Student Presentations (2)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 14</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 4 (M)</td>
<td><strong>Major Project</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- submit updated chart(s) and analysis (Weeks 1-6; online, before class)</td>
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<td>- intervention stops; relapse prevention begins</td>
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Prerequisites

Students who remain in courses for which they do not have the prerequisites do so at their own risk. Students who complete courses without prerequisites ARE NOT exempt from having to complete the prerequisite course(s) if such courses are required for the degree program.

Program Requirements

For more information see pages 220-222 of the UVic Calendar 2015-16.

Registration Status

Students are responsible for verifying their registration status. Registration status may be verified using My Page, View Schedule. Course adds and drops will not be processed after the deadlines set out in the current UVic Calendar.

Commitment to Inclusivity and Diversity

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

In the Event of Illness, Accident or Family Affliction (See UVic Calendar, 2015-16, p. 36)

- What to do if you miss an exam other than one scheduled during the formal examination period

Do not apply at Records Services for a “Request for Academic Concession”. Instead submit documentation of the illness, accident or family affliction directly to your course instructor (or designated teaching assistant).

- What to do if you miss an exam scheduled during the formal exam period

Apply at Records Services for a “Request for Academic Concession”, normally within 10 working days of the end of the formal examination period. Records Services will forward the form to the instructor. If the concession is granted the instructor will determine how to deal with the situation (for example, a deferred exam). Where a concession is not applied for or where such application is denied, an N grade will be entered on the student’s academic record. OR, you can download the Request for Academic Concession form here: http://www.uvic.ca/registrar/assets/docs/record-forms/rac.pdf

- What to do if you require additional time to complete course requirements

Apply at Records Services for a “Request for Academic Concession”, normally within 10 working days of the end of the formal examination period. Records Services will forward the form to the instructor. If the concession is granted the instructor will determine how to deal with the situation. Where a concession is not applied for or where such application is denied, an N grade will be entered on the student’s academic record. OR, you can download the Request for Academic Concession form here: http://www.uvic.ca/registrar/assets/docs/record-forms/rac.pdf
Policy on Academic Integrity including Plagiarism and Cheating

The Department of Psychology fully endorses and intends to enforce rigorously the Senate Policy on Academic Integrity (http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2015-09/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcl.html, p. 33-35, UVic Calendar 2015-16). It is of utmost importance that students who do their work honestly be protected from those who do not. Because this policy is in place to ensure that students carry out and benefit from the learning activities assigned in each course, it is expected that students will cooperate in its implementation.

The offences defined by the policy can be summarized briefly as follows:

1. **Plagiarism.** You must make sure that the work you submit is your work and not someone else’s. There are proper procedures for citing the works of others. The student is responsible for being aware of and using these procedures.

2. **Multiple Submission.** Only under exceptional circumstances may a work submitted to fulfill an academic requirement be used to satisfy another similar requirement. The student is responsible for clarifying this with the instructor(s) involved.

3. **Falsifying Materials Subject to Academic Evaluation.** This includes falsification of data, use of commercially prepared essays, using information from the Internet without proper citation, citing sources from which material is not actually obtained, etc.

4. **Cheating on Assignments, Tests, and Examinations.** You may not copy the work of others in or out of class; you may not give your work to others for the purpose of copying; you may not use unauthorized material or equipment during examinations or tests; and you may not impersonate or allow yourself to be impersonated by another at an examination. The Department of Psychology has a policy of not making old examinations available for study purposes. Therefore, use of old exams without the express written permission of the instructor constitutes cheating by the user, and abetting of cheating by the person who provided the exam.

5. **Being an Accessory to Offences.** This means that helping another student to cheat (for instance, by showing or communicating to them answers to an assignment, or by allowing them to view answers on an exam) is an academic offence.

Instructors are expected to make every effort to prevent cheating and plagiarism. This may include the assignment of seating for examinations, asking students to move during examinations, requests to see student identification cards, and other measures as appropriate. Instructors also have available to them a variety of tools and procedures to check for Internet and electronic media-based cheating. In instances of suspected or actual plagiarism or cheating, instructors, following prescribed procedures, are authorized to take steps consistent with the degree of the offence. These measures will range from a zero on the test or assignment or a failing grade for the course, probation within a program to temporary or even permanent suspension from the University.

Rights of Appeal are described in the Policy on Academic Integrity in the University calendar (on p. 33-35 in 2015-16).

The definitive source for information on Academic Integrity is the University Calendar (p. 33-35 in 2015-16) (http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2015-09/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcl.html)

Other useful resources on Plagiarism and Cheating include:

2. The Ombudsperson’s office: http://www.uvss.uvic.ca/ombudsperson/pubsguides/plagiarism.pdf
3. The English Department: http://web.uvic.ca/wguide/Pages/CitPlagiarism.html