

Nature and Basis of Motor Performance

APK6205 | Class # 20925 | 3 Credits | Fall 2025

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Course Info

INSTRUCTOR

Stephen Coombes, PhD
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Office Phone: 352.294.1768
Email: scoombes@ufl.edu
Preferred Method of Contact: Canvas/e-mail

OFFICE HOURS

2 hours per week. Time will be posted on Canvas.

MEETING TIME/LOCATION

Access course through Canvas on UF e-Learning
(<https://elearning.ufl.edu/>) & the Canvas mobile app by Instructure

COURSE DESCRIPTION

University of Florida Course Description: Principles relating to development of motor skill, with emphasis on conditions affecting its development and retention in activities.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Students must hold Graduate Student classification based on the UF Registrar's class Student Classifications system (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/student-classifications/>). Or, students must acquire instructor approval.

MINIMUM TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

The University of Florida expects students entering an online program to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to his or her degree program. Most computers are capable of meeting the following general requirements. A student's computer configuration should include:

- Webcam
- Microphone
- Broadband connection to the Internet and related equipment (Cable/DSL modem)
- Microsoft Office Suite installed (provided by the university)

Individual colleges may have additional requirements or recommendations, which students should review prior to the start of their program.

MINIMUM TECHNICAL SKILLS

To complete your tasks in this course, you will need a basic understanding of how to operate a computer, and how to use word processing software, and how to download and install software.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

The following book is recommended but not required: RA Schmidt and TD Lee. Motor Control and Learning. A Behavioral Emphasis. 5th edition. Human Kinetics. ISBN 0-7360-7961-0. Additional papers will be provided for specific topics and made available on canvas. **Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor. The instructor is only responsible for these instructional materials.**

COURSE FORMAT

The course includes 14 modules. All lectures have been recorded and will be available online. The course is paced based on a 1 or 2 module per week schedule (although there is the ability to move through the first half and the second half of the course more quickly - which is detailed at the end of this paragraph). In general, every module includes recorded lectures and a quiz, and some modules also include labs that can be completed online. For example, for module 1, the online lectures and materials will be made available on Monday of the first week of the semester. A yellowdig discussion will also be active throughout the semester and you can earn points each week by interacting through the yellowdig community. More details can be found in the Yellowdig assignment instructions. The quiz for module 1 will be completed online through canvas and will be available until Sunday at midnight. Feedback for the quiz will then be available all day on Monday. Module 2 will then be made available on Monday at 1am and will follow the same timeline. While this pacing has been implemented to help keep students on a weekly schedule, I also open up modules 1-6 at the beginning of the semester, so you can move ahead if you like. The only drawback is that quiz feedback will not be released until the Monday after the quiz is due. Also note that modules 7-14 will not open up until the midterm is complete.

TIMELINE: A timeline that includes the dates of each module, required lab assignments, optional lab assignments, the mid-term and the final exam is available here and shown at the bottom of the syllabus.

LABS: Please go to the "Lab" page here for more specific instructions. In brief, for the online laboratory experiments you will need to:

1) Download and install the Motorlab software from the following website: <https://motorlab.ca/download/> (Links to an external site)

You will be e-mailed a unique license code after the drop add period has finished. The license code can only be used once by you.

2) Download and extract the zipped file which has the instructions, activity, and analysis file for ALL labs. You can download that directly from here . You only need to download once.

Note: You do not need to turn anything in for the lab but you must complete it. There will be questions on the quiz and exams related to the required labs.

Note: "Labs: Optional" are also listed and you are free to complete these as you wish. There will not be questions from optional labs on quizzes/exams.

There will be a mid-term after module 6 and a final exam after module 14.

CAPSTONE: Student will also be required to complete a capstone project. Specific details for the project are below and can also be found [here](#).

Students are responsible for checking announcements and course postings on Canvas, which may include updates to the course schedule.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Differentiate and explain learning theories applicable to skill acquisition and retention
2. Apply knowledge of instructional strategies for skill acquisition
3. Appraise current evidence and trends in motor learning and motor control
4. Recognize general (classic) research paradigms used in motor learning and control research

Course & University Policies

Details on UF University Syllabus Policy can be found here: <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to watch every lecture and read and watch all additional materials provided online through the course shell. No points are offered for attendance or participation. Quizzes are offered after the completion of each module and are taken via honorlock on Canvas via a portable electronic device.

PERSONAL CONDUCT POLICY

University of Florida students are bound by the Honor Pledge. On all work submitted for credit by a student, the following pledge is required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Student Honor Code and Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code, as well as the process for reported allegations and sanctions that may be implemented. All potential violations of the code will be reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. If a student is found responsible for an Honor Code violation in this course, the instructor will enter a Grade Adjustment sanction which may be up to or including failure of the course

APPROPRIATE USE OF AI TECHNOLOGY

The UF Honor Code strictly prohibits *cheating*. The use of any materials or resources prepared by another person or Entity (inclusive of generative AI tools) without the other person or Entity's express consent or without proper attribution to the other person or Entity is considered *cheating*. Additionally, the use of any materials or resources, through any medium, which the Faculty / Instructor has not given express permission to use and that may confer an academic benefit to a student, constitutes *cheating*.

Netiquette and Communication Courtesies: All members of the class are expected to follow [rules of common courtesy](#) in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats.

EXAM MAKE-UP POLICY

Make-up quizzes and exams will be given at the discretion of the instructor. Unexcused missed quizzes and exams will result in a zero on that item (this includes contacting the instructor after the exam if you are ill). Please make travel arrangements accordingly, as this is not an excusable activity. A student experiencing an illness should visit the UF Student Health Care Center or their preferred healthcare provider to seek medical advice and obtain documentation. If you have an illness, family emergency or death, please contact the Dean of Students Office (www.dso.ufl.edu) and follow the DSO Care Team procedures for documentation and submission of a request for make-up assignment (<https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications/>). The DSO will contact the instructor. Do not provide any documentation to the instructor regarding illness or family emergency. This is your personal and protected information. The DSO is qualified to receive and verify the documents you provide. The instructor will follow the recommendations from the DSO. **Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with**

university policies that can be found in the online catalog at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.”

As this is an online class, you are responsible for observing all posted due dates, and are encouraged to be self-directed and take responsibility for your learning.

ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting their Get Started page at <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. Accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways: (1) The email they receive from GatorEvals, (2) Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or (3) The central portal located [here](#). Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at [the gator evals site](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are also available at [the gator evals site](#).

Getting Help

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>
- (352) 392-HELP (4357)
- Walk-in: HUB 132

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues should be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You should e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the [Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the [Student Health Care Center website](#).
- University Police Department: Visit [UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; or visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

- **E-learning technical support:** Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- [Teaching Center](#): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- **Student Complaints & Grievances:** Students are encouraged to communicate first with the involved person(s), but [here](#) is more information on the appropriate reporting process.

APK ADMINISTRATORS

For suggestions or concerns related to APK courses or programming, please reach out to any of the following:

- Dr. David Vaillancourt (he/him), APK Department Chair, vcourt@ufl.edu
- Dr. Demetra Christou (she/her), APK Department Vice Chair, ddchristou@hnp.ufl.edu
- Dr. Steve Coombes (he/him), APK Graduate Coordinator, rachaelseidler@ufl.edu

Grading

Quiz and exam scores will be uploaded directly into canvas following the completion of each assessment. Labs will not be graded directly, but quiz and exam questions will be directly related to the laboratory experiments. Any discrepancies with points displayed in the gradebook must be brought to the attention of the instructor as soon as possible. There is no curve for this course and final grades will not be rounded up.

More detailed information regarding current UF grading policies can be found here:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>.

Any requests for additional extra credit or special exceptions to these grading policies will be interpreted as an honor code violation (i.e., asking for preferential treatment) and will be handled accordingly.

COURSE GRADING POLICY

Assignment	Points
Midterm Exam	20
Final Exam	25
Quizzes (x14)	35
Yellowdig	10
Capstone Assignment	10
Total Points	100

Midterm: Questions will be based on modules 1-6. The midterm exam will consist of 40 multiple-choice and true-false questions, each worth 0-5 points, for a total of 20 points. Students are not permitted access to any kind of materials or notes during this assessment. Questions are generated by the course instructor and the majority of focus should be given to the lecture notes when studying. All assessments will be taken through canvas using the honorlock function. Students will be allowed 90 minutes to complete the midterm exam.

Final Exam: Questions will be based on modules 7-14. The final exam will consist of 40-50 multiple-choice and true-false questions, each worth 0.25 to 1.0 point for a total of 25 points. Students are not permitted access to any kind of materials or notes during this assessment. Questions are generated by the course instructor and the majority of focus should be given to the lecture notes when studying. All assessments will be taken through canvas using the honorlock function. Students will be allowed 90 minutes to complete the final exam.

Quizzes: There will be a total of 14 quizzes. There will be a quiz after each module is completed. Each quiz will consist of 5-10 questions, for a total of 2.5 points per quiz. Questions will be multiple choice and true/false. Students are not permitted access to any kind of materials or notes during these assessments. Questions are generated by the course instructor and the majority of focus should be given to the lecture notes and labs when studying. All assessments will be taken through canvas using the honorlock function. Students will be allowed 10 minutes to complete the quiz.

Yellowdig: Points for the Yellowdig assignment are accrued throughout the semester and derived from engagement in the Yellowdig community on a weekly basis. Each week your goal should be to maximize the point earning goal. Engagement might consist of asking questions related to the course, answering peer's questions, creating and engaging in your own debates, sharing media and commentary as it relates to the course. Points are accumulated weekly (Monday - Sunday). The weekly point goal is 1,000 points in Yellowdig. Students can earn up to 1,300 points per week to "get ahead" or "catch-up." Your grade in the e-Learning gradebook will update periodically and will show the % of points you have earned in Yellowdig up to that point in the semester. You will notice your percentage on this assignment will drop a bit every Monday and will increase again as you engage in the platform throughout the week. Point earning is based on the following:

Creating a new post: 30

Reaching text length goal: 240 (Text Length Goal = 73)

Commenting on another user's Post: 15

Reaching text length goal: 120 (Text Length Goal = 37)

Receiving a Comment from another User: 50

Adding a video in a post or comment: 75

Receiving a Reaction (e.g. emoji): 5

Capstone Assignment: Create a motor learning plan for an individual. The plan must be at least 1500 words (double spaced, font size = 12) and include a minimum of 10 references of published research articles. You must

design a 10-week program with a maximum of 30 hours of contact time with the individual spread over the 10 weeks as you choose. The capstone assignment is worth 10 points. Specific details and rubric for the project follow and can be found [here](#).

	"A" Paper	"B" Paper	"C" Paper	"D" Paper
Evidence and Support	- Chapter has thoughtful consideration for why programming choices are being made - Claims and programming choices are coherent, measured and supported by relevant evidence and citations - Builds upon information provided in module - Reader finishes chapter feeling that topic was carefully considered and thoroughly researched	- Chapter contains some citation and support but lacks thorough explanation for why programming choices were made - Barely builds upon information provided in module - Reader finishes chapter wanting more information or better clarity	- Chapter deploys vague or inconsistent evidence/citation for claims and why programming choices were made - Does not build upon information provided in module - Chapter contains examples from personal experience instead of cited works - Reader must read chapter more than once to understand what is being explained	- Chapter does not explain why programming choices were made - Claims and programming choices are not supported by citations - Does not reference information covered in module - Chapter contains examples from personal experience instead of cited works - Reader finishes chapter feeling confused
Style and Structure	- Chapter flows logically to create an overall cohesive argument - Reader finishes chapter feeling that careful consideration was taken to craft a chapter with logical and effective sequencing of ideals	- Chapter has ok flow and cohesion - Reader finishes chapter feeling that writing is not as well organized as it should be.	- Chapter has occasional flow and cohesion - Reader finishes chapter with difficulty understanding information due to lack of organization and logical flow	- Chapter is poorly organized, has no flow, rambles, and appears to follow no order - Reader finishes chapter feeling confused
Grammar and Citations	- Chapter is free of grammatical errors including spelling and punctuation - Includes complete works cited and proper in text citations - Reader's progress through chapter is not slowed by cumbersome wording, grammatical or citation errors.	- Chapter is mostly free from grammatical errors with just occasional typos - Almost complete work cited and proper in text citation - Reader's progress through chapter is slowed by grammatical or citing errors	- Chapter exhibits a few grammatical/syntactical problems, but is otherwise well written - Works cited/in text citation are wrong or inconsistent - Reader's progress through chapter is difficult due to grammatical or citing errors	- Chapter exhibits numerous grammatical errors, and is difficult to read - No works cited or in text citation - Reader's progress through chapter is impossible due to grammatical or citing errors

Extra Credit – No extra credit is offered in this course

GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	Percent of Total Points Associated with Each Letter Grade	GPA Impact of Each Letter Grade
A	94.00-100%	4
A-	90.00-93.99%	3.7
B+	87.00-89.99%	3.3
B	84.00-86.99%	3
B-	80.00-83.99%	2.7
C+	77.00-79.99%	2.3
C	74.00-76.99%	2

C-	70.00-73.99%	1.7
D+	67.00-69.99%	1.3
D	60.00-66.99%	1
E (F)	0-59.99%	0

More detailed information regarding current UF grading policies can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>.

Weekly Course Schedule

		Discussion board				
		Module				
		Quiz/exam				
Month	Module	available from	available until (and due)		Online Labs - required	Online Labs - Optional
Aug						
	1	Orientation - practice quiz	1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 8/31/25	None	
		Motor Neuroscience Methods	1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 8/31/25	None	
Aug	2	Cortical and Subcortical Motor System	1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 9/7/25	None	
Sep	3	Skill classification	1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 9/14/25	Error calculation	
Sep	4	Motor Learning Concepts	1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 9/21/25	Probe reaction time	Stimulus-intensity effect
Oct	5	Information Processing: Stimulus identification	1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 9/28/25	Memory	Simon Effect
Oct	6	Information Processing: Response Selection and Programming	1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 10/5/25	Donders subtractive method	Stimulus-response compatibility
Oct		Mid-Term (open from Aug 21 - Oct 12)	1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 10/12/25	None	Henry & Rogers response complexity
Oct	7	Feedback Control I	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 10/19/25	Visual-auditory RT	Hicks law
Oct	8	Feedback Control II	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 10/26/25	Visuomotor adaptation	
Nov	9	Feedforward Control	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 11/2/25	Slater-Hammel Anticipation timing	
Nov	10	Coordination	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 11/9/25	Fitts law	
Nov	11	Augmented Feedback	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 11/16/25	feedback/KR	
Nov	12	Conditions of Practice	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 11/23/25	Contextual interference	Practice variability
Dec	13	Pain and Movement	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 11/30/25	None	
Dec	14	Prosthetics	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 12/7/25	None	
Dec		Final (open from Oct 13 - Dec 12)	1:00am 10/13/25	11:59pm 12/12/25	None	
Assignment	Due Dec 10		1:00am 8/21/25	11:59pm 12/10/25		

SUCCESS AND STUDY TIPS

Taking a course online can be a lot of fun! Here are some tips that will help you get the most of this course while taking full advantage of the online format:

- The suggested (but not required) textbook can be helpful to some but is not required for success in the course. All quizzes and exams will be based on material provided in lectures, discussions, and articles.
- Engage with your peers and engage in yellowdig. We are one another's greatest resources for learning.
- Look up material that inspires you. If we are talking about internal versus external feedback and you want to apply it to your sport of choice – look it up and read about it or watch a video clip! Chances are, this will add to your depth of learning and better allow you to apply the principle to your future endeavors and interests!
- Check Canvas for announcements.
- Schedule "class times" for yourself. Do not watch the lectures last minute. Watch them in advance and use the discussion forum to ask questions and prepare for the quiz/exams. The goal of the quiz is to encourage you to stay on top of the material so you are well prepared for the mid-term and final.
- Print out the Course Schedule located in the Course Syllabus and check things off as you go.
- Take full advantage of the online discussion boards. Ask for help or clarification of the material if you need it.
- Do not wait to ask questions! Waiting to ask a question might cause you to miss a due date.
- To be extra safe, back up your work to an external hard drive, thumb drive or through a cloud service.
- Things happen. That's life. If there are some majorly overwhelming things happening during your semester, send me an email; we'll work together to figure out what steps you should take to help get you through the course.

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

For information about the privacy policies of the tools used in this course, see the links below:

- Instructure (Canvas)
 - [Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Accessibility](#)
- Zoom
 - [Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Accessibility](#)
- YouTube (Google)
 - [Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Accessibility](#)
- Microsoft
 - [Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Accessibility](#)
- Adobe
 - [Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Accessibility](#)
- Honorlock
 - [Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Accessibility](#)