

## Agricultural Science 252: Horse Training Techniques

**Lecture: 3:30-4:20 W, Lab: 3:30-4:20 M Th, 3:30-5:20 T, Spring 2006**

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### Description and Objectives

This course is meant to be a basic introduction to techniques used for training young horses. In lecture we will primarily discuss learning behavior and its modification as well as other related subjects. We will also discuss characteristics that are desirable in horse trainers. In the laboratory portion of the course, students will gain hands-on experience with the training of young horses. For the lab, Mrs. Sorhus and I will attempt to gauge student ability level and pair that with an appropriate horse.

### Text

None required; assigned readings and handouts will be provided for both lecture and laboratory.

### Lecture Schedule

1/18	Course introduction	
1/25- 2/8	Basic learning principles important to training	<i>Applying Behavior to Horse Training (Mackenzie); Applying Principles of Psychology to Horse Training (Yeates); Learning abilities in yearling horses (McCall et al.); Discrimination reversal learning in yearling horses (Fiske &amp; Potter)</i>
2/15	University Planning Day	<i>No lecture</i>
2/22	Basic learning principles (con't)	
3/1	Reinforcement, punishment and learning	<i>Review of learning behavior in horses (McCall)</i>
3/8	Perception	
3/15	Midterm Break	<i>No lecture</i>
3/22	MIDTERM EXAM	
3/29	Perception (con't)	
4/5	Natural, artificial aids, special training equipment	
4/12	Aids (con't)	
4/19	Vices of horses: Causes, management	
4/26	Focus on Ray Hunt	<i>Think harmony with horses</i>
5/3	Desirable qualities of horse trainers	<i>The trainer</i>
5/10	Reading Day	
5/08	FINAL EXAM, 3:30-5:20 pm	

### Examinations and Grading

#### **Lecture** (250 points total)

Midterm (3/17)	100 pts	material from lecture <u>and</u> lab
Comprehensive final (5/06)	150 pts	material from lecture <u>and</u> lab

#### **Lab** (450 points total)

Major practicals (2):	Midterm	75 pts
	Final	90 pts
Daily points (3 per day)		111 pts
Stalls (total)		100 pts
Training journal (2 per entry)		74 pts

Grades will be determined as a percentage of the 700 points possible for the class. Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

90 - 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
Below 60	F

### **Objectives for Project Horses**

Weanlings/Yearlings: At the conclusion of the semester, the weanling/yearling will:

1. be easily caught, haltered, and tied
2. respond well to voice commands while being led at the walk, trot, and halt
3. stand and set up quietly and on command
4. back in a straight line on command
5. pivot on command
6. pick up his feet without resistance
7. stand quietly while being bathed
8. stand quietly and tolerate clipping
9. be completely accustomed to sacking out
10. stand quietly while feet are trimmed
11. stand quietly for grooming and handling
12. load easily into a trailer
13. be able to show in a showmanship class
14. longe in a round pen, responding to voice commands (walk-trot-canter-whoa)
15. free-longe in a round pen, responding to voice commands (walk-trot-canter-whoa)

Two-year-olds: In addition to the above, at the conclusion of the semester, the two-year-old will:

1. be accustomed to and respond appropriately to bridle and bit while being longed
2. stand quietly while being tacked and cinched up
3. be accustomed to saddle while longing
4. be accustomed to driving lines
5. demonstrate acceptance of the bit while being ground driven
6. be accustomed to weight and movement in the saddle
7. walk with rider on cue in a balanced, uninhibited frame
8. canter on both leads with rider on cue in a balanced, uninhibited frame
9. develop a correct and comfortable headset
10. develop a feel for and response to leg, body and hand pressure
11. be able to make clean, collected gait transitions
12. stand still while rider is mounting and dismounting
13. stand still while rider is adjusting stirrups, cinch, body position, etc.
14. be able to halt, back up and stand quietly with rider on command
15. be able to bend easily at turning
16. yield to leg pressure

Older horses: In addition to the above, at the conclusion of the semester three-year-olds will:

1. walk and trot quietly over ground poles
2. walk quietly over a tarp
3. be able to perform a simple reining pattern
4. be able to perform a clean, simple lead change
5. be able to pivot 360 degrees
6. be able to be ridden inside and outside with the same degree of control
7. yield to leg pressure to a higher degree than the two-year-old at all gaits

8. be able to bend well
9. perform at all gaits and exercises with a correct and consistent headset
10. be relaxed and controllable on a trail ride
11. go willingly into a collected transition on a loose rein
12. give easily to light bit pressure
13. be able to perform a figure eight with a simple lead change
14. be able to perform a serpentine, displaying correct bending of the body

Students: Throughout the semester, the STUDENT will:

1. enjoy themselves
2. understand the importance of consistency with their horse
3. understand the significance of training aids used
4. allow the horse to advance at a comfortable pace for the horse
5. be sure that each area covered is done so in a thorough manner
6. THINK before each training session about goals for the horse, and if one method does not work, implement another
7. keep a daily journal of each training session, including goals for the day and the results of each, as well as any questions or problems he/she might encounter

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>YEARLINGS</b>	<b>2 &amp; 3 YEAR-OLDS</b>	<b>OLDER HORSES</b>
<b>1</b> (1/16)	Facilities, equipment requirements, safety, grooming, halter breaking, assignment of project horse No class Monday	Facilities, equipment requirements, safety, grooming, halter breaking, assignment of project horse No class Monday	Facilities, equipment requirements, safety, grooming, halter breaking, assignment of project horse No class Monday
<b>2</b> (1/23)	Punishment/reward, gentling techniques, sacking out, grooming	Punishment/reward, sacking out, grooming, round pen work	Punishment/reward, sacking out, grooming, round pen work
<b>3</b> (1/30)	Hoof care & handling	Lunge line and saddling	Collection at walk and trot
<b>4</b> (2/06)	Yielding from the ground	Introduction to bits, ground driving and biting up	Yielding from the ground, cantering in saddle
<b>5</b> (2/13)	Showmanship techniques	Mounting	Yielding from the saddle
<b>6</b> (2/20)	Introduction to bits	Beginning riding, turns and halting	Yielding from the saddle, hobble training
<b>7</b> (2/27)	Introduction to round penning	Walking through obstacles	Refining walk, trot, canter
<b>8</b> (3/06)	MIDTERM PRACTICAL	MIDTERM PRACTICAL	MIDTERM PRACTICAL
3/13	Midterm break	Midterm break	Midterm break
<b>9</b> (3/20)	Walk/trot/halt on lunge line	Refresh on beginning riding	Forehand turns
<b>10</b> (3/27)	Saddling and bridling	Trotting	Haunch turns
<b>11</b> (4/03)	Lunge line	Suppling exercises and collection	Simple lead changes
<b>12</b> (4/10)	Loading in trailer	Loading in trailer, cantering	Loading in trailer, continue lead changes
<b>13</b> (4/17)	Ground driving No class Monday	Basic performance maneuvers, obstacles	Flying lead changes
<b>14</b> (4/24)	Overflow	Overflow	Overflow

### **Equipment Requirements**

Yearlings	yearling halter (flat nylon) 9 foot heavy cotton lead rope with heavy snap 25 foot cotton longe line with snap longe whip gloves
Two-year-olds	horse halter (flat nylon) 9 foot heavy cotton lead rope with heavy snap two 25-30 foot cotton longe lines with snaps longe whip training bridle with snaffle bit gloves
Three-year-olds	same as two-year-olds

Students will be allowed to use saddles and saddle pads that belong to the University. However, Horse-manship classes have first priority, and so you may have to take what's left. Students will also be allowed to use the University's grooming supplies excluding shampoo, conditioner, show sheen, hoof polish, etc. Brushes, combs, etc. will be available for use under the condition that students maintain and keep track of what they use. If any of these privileges are abused, they will be taken away and students will be responsible for purchasing these items as well. Helmets are provided by the school and must be used when mounted on a horse. You may use your own helmet provided it is approved.