

**Grand Valley State University**  
**ABA Graduate Certificate Program**  
**Psy 522: Applied Behavior Analysis I (ABA): Foundational Concepts and Principles**

**Instructor:** Amanda Karsten, PhD, BCBA-D

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**Phone:** 616-331-2388

**Meeting location:** Online through Blackboard/Zoom

**Office location:** 2139 Au Sable Hall

**Office hours:** Wednesdays 5-6PM (Zoom) and by appointment (Zoom or on campus)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Students will study the foundational concepts, principles, and practices of applied behavior analysis. Students will gain an understanding of factors that govern behavior, processes for measuring behavior, and methods for minimizing behavioral problems and improving learning and performance.

**Course Objectives**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of concepts and principles of behavior and define key behavior analytic terms.
2. Describe respondent and operant conditioning and their relationship to the practice of applied behavior analysis.
3. Define and provide examples of behavioral principles including reinforcement, punishment, extinction, stimulus control, and motivating operation.
4. Examine reinforcement schedules and how they apply to behavior analytic practice.
5. Demonstrate the use of measurement as it applies to the understanding of behavioral concepts and principles.

<b>BACB 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Task List</b>		
<b>Section 1: Foundations</b>	<b>Task List Items</b>	<b>Content Hours</b>
B: Concepts and Principles	B-1-12	45 hours

**READING MATERIALS**

Book

Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heward, W. L. (2020). *Applied behavior analysis* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Pearson Education. ([digital or print version available here](#) from Pearson)

*\*You will use this book in multiple classes.*

Lane, K., & Menzies, H. M. (2015). *Supporting behavior for school success: A step-by-step guide to key strategies* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). New York: Guilford Press. Ch. 3

*\*You will use this book in multiple classes.*

## **COURSE LOGISTICS**

### **What do I need to know about my instructor?**

It is the goal of your instructor to foster a learning environment that is welcoming, fair, and productive for each individual student. Toward this goal, students can expect the instructor to:

- Provide materials and activities to help you develop key understandings in each unit
- Answer your questions and partner with you in navigating any challenges that arise
- Model effective teaching practices and professional conduct
- Provide thoughtful feedback on your posts and assignments
- Check GVSU email daily (Monday-Friday) and respond to email within 48 hours
- Maintain the Blackboard page with accurate, accessible information and promptly address any errors or concerns that a student brings to my attention

### **What do I need to know about ABA I and ABA as a science?**

Applied behavior analysis (ABA) is a behavioral science with a strong conceptual and empirical foundation that is used in a variety of settings to make a socially significant impact on people's lives. ABA I is the first course in a sequence of seven courses that leads to a deep understanding of how behavior analysis is applied systematically and with fidelity. In ABA I, we focus on terminology and core principles that will guide how you eventually develop and implement behavior analytic practices. This course is a bit like what you might experience in an introductory class in healthcare, law, or engineering, which also require a technical understanding of concepts before engaging in practices using those concepts. You cannot practice effectively without a strong foundation. Mastering the basics can be the most difficult part of launching into a new field, but it is worth it if you want to use behavior analysis to have a socially important impact on your students or clients and collaborators.

You might notice that what you learn in this course sequence goes beyond just learning a field of study. When you understand human behavior change, it may cause a shift in your perspective and actions across multiple contexts (i.e. work, school, home, and community). For most people, developing a working knowledge of the principles and concepts of learning is a continual process that will extend well beyond graduate school. This course is the first set of building blocks; you will keep adding layers when you take additional courses and begin to apply what you are learning. Challenge yourself to take what you are learning beyond the classroom or the workplace by noticing how the principles of learning are everywhere, and how considering those principles has practical value for you and for the people you serve.

### **BCBA Certification Information**

This course is one of seven courses in the 21-credit Applied Behavior Analysis Graduate Certificate Program at GVSU. Successful completion of the course sequence results in the GVSU Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis. The ABA Graduate Certificate is a Verified Course Sequence (VCS) by the Association of Behavior Analysis International (ABAI). The BACB has approved the GVSU course sequence as meeting the 5<sup>th</sup> edition Task List 315-hour coursework requirements for eligibility to pursue certification as a BCBA. Additionally, the BACB

requires that you show proof of a master's degree and evidence that you have accrued the required number of supervised experience hours before you can register to take the BCBA exam. You are responsible for ensuring that you meet all of the current BACB standards. For more information about the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, go to [www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com).

*\*Once you begin the ABA course sequence, the BACB considers you eligible to start accumulating supervised fieldwork experience hours.*

### **Required Equipment (owned or accessible)**

- High-speed internet access
- Operating system that meets current Blackboard browser requirements (see below)
- Computer with a sound card and speakers
- Microphone (built in or external)
- Computer camera for synchronous meetings (most laptops have a camera)

### **Blackboard is the Course Management System**

To access Blackboard, go to <https://mybb.gvsu.edu/> and enter your network login and password.

This course utilizes Blackboard, GVSU's online course management system. Take a look at the GVSU Online Learning pages to find numerous materials about using Blackboard and online learning <http://www.gvsu.edu/online/>.

Use of Blackboard is integral to this course and students must log on a few times each week in order to complete course requirements, receive important announcements and updates, and communicate with instructors and other students about course content.

Check the current [technical requirements](#) to use Blackboard and [preferred browser information](#).

### **Technical difficulties with Blackboard**

If you experience technical problems with Blackboard, contact the help desk by email or phone - [helpdesk@gvsu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@gvsu.edu) or 616-331-3513. The help website is <http://www.gvsu.edu/it/learn/>

### **Accessing the Library**

Many of GVSU's library resources can be accessed online [Distance and Off-Campus Learning Services](#) with many journal articles available on demand. You must have an active GVSU student account to take advantage of the library's resources and services. Some courses may have reading materials in [course reserve](#).

### **Graduate Writing Resources**

The [Graduate Writing Resources](#) available to assist with all kinds of writing tasks and they will give feedback on writing assignments. It is not just for students who struggle with writing. They can help any student improve writing skills.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you are in need of accommodations due to a learning, physical, or other disability you must present a memo to me from Disability Support Resources (DSR), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested reasonable accommodations. If you have not already done so, please contact the [Disability Support Resources](#) office (4015 JHZ) by calling 331-2490 or email to dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received a copy of the DSR issued memo. All discussions will remain confidential.

### **COURSE ORGANIZATION and ASSIGNMENTS**

*The learning activities for this course take a few different forms, but the instructor has scheduled each activity in a predictable rhythm within each unit. Please contact the instructor early in the semester if you have questions about expectations for the course or how to establish a work pattern that fits both our course calendar and your unique schedule and responsibilities.*

#### **Learning Units** (two week modules)

The learning units will be a foundational part of the course and this is where you will find directions for each two-week segment of the course including reading assignments, course content presentations, practice activities, and assignments. Units will open up two weeks at a time and all unit activities (e.g., assignments, discussion boards) will be due before the end of the two-week period. All previously completed units will be open throughout the course so you can refer back to them at any time.

Most units will have guided notes to fill in while you watch the lectures, practice activities, or supplemental resources and readings. These are ungraded activities. Benefits of completing these activities include solidifying your understanding of information covered by assignments and exams as well as stretching your thinking in technical or practical ways.

#### **Synchronous Meetings** (participate in 3 synchronous meetings)

Early in the course, we will have a synchronous meeting with everyone logging onto Zoom to get an introduction to the course. Subsequent synchronous meetings will provide an opportunity to talk about course objectives and assignments. The dates and times for these meeting are listed on Blackboard.

#### **Readings** (weekly)

You will have book chapters and articles to read weekly. It is critical to stay up on the readings. This is where you will learn much of the content along with the ABA terminology, which is cumulative over the course of the ABA sequence. It is important for course exams and the BCBA exam. Most importantly, the reading content is necessary for your work as a practitioner.

#### **Study Products** (submitted bi-weekly, starting unit 2)

Active study and review strategies will help you to learn material faster, retain it longer, and apply it with greater ease in the future. You will earn a small number of points for turning in evidence of your study activities in each unit. Option 1 is to submit a term fluency graph, and

option 2 is to submit your notes on readings and objectives. You are welcome and encouraged to engage in both of these study practices, however, you only need to turn in evidence of one study activity per unit. More information about the reading notes option, the term fluency option, and flashcards will be available in the Study Products folder on Blackboard. You can also use Quizlet to access the terms, practice the terms, and quiz yourself at any time.

<http://quizlet.com>

**Discussion Board** – (each learning unit)

Discussion board questions are posted with each unit to help you deepen your understanding of readings and topics. Discussion boards are a great venue for you to communicate with others about ABA terminology and applications, and to learn from one another’s examples. More information about discussion board and a grading rubric are provided on the Blackboard site.

**Practice Quizzes** – (each learning unit)

You will complete a practice quiz for each unit. These short quizzes are worth a small number of points and the grade is based on submission, not your score on the quiz. These questions provide a quick check to know if you are understanding general concepts in the chapter. More information about the practice activities will be posted on Blackboard.

**Assignments** – (each learning unit)

You will have an assignment associated with each unit of material. These will vary in type and length, but most will involve generating examples from your own experience or responding to hypothetical scenarios. Assignments will constitute an important part of your learning and grade for the course. All written work should be prepared in a professional manner (typed, and free from spelling/grammatical errors). More information about each unit assignment will be provided on Blackboard.

**Exams** – (3 proctored exams)

You will have 3 exams scheduled throughout the semester, each covering 4-6 weeks of course content. The exams will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions, and will constitute a major portion of your grade. The multiple-choice questions will mirror the types of questions on the BCBA exam. The final exam will cover the last two units of the course and will include questions from the previous units (i.e. a cumulative exam).

**Note: We will use Respondus Lockdown and Monitor for all exams. This will allow you to take the exam off campus. More information will be provided on Blackboard.**

**POINTS AND GRADING**

Assignment	Points	Total Points for Semester
Synchronous meetings	5	15
Scavenger hunt	2	2

1-on-1 Check-In	3	3
Study Products (7)	3	21
Practice Quizzes (7)	3	21
Discussion Board (6)	8	48
Assignments (7)	20	140
Exams (3)	60/60/80	200
TOTAL POINTS		450

### Final Grade Requirement

Students seeking the ABA Graduate Certificate must complete all courses with a B- or higher in each course and finish with a minimum 3.0 grade point average in the course sequence.

Letter Grade	Percentage Range
A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	70-76%
D	61-69%
F	0-60%

## COURSE POLICIES

[GVSU Student Code regarding Integrity of Scholarship and Grades:](#)

### **Section 223.00: Integrity of Scholarships and Grades**

Truth and Honesty. The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing protect the validity of University grades. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid of any kind. Instructors, for their part, will exercise care in the planning and supervision of academic work, so that honest effort will be positively encouraged.

### **Section 223.01: Plagiarism**

Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, speeches or the writings of other students. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment also is considered plagiarism. Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.

"This course is subject to GVSU's general requirements for courses. A full list with pointers to resources may be found at [www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies](http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies)."

### **Attendance Policy**

In the event of an unavoidable absence from a synchronous meeting or exam window (e.g., illness, family emergency, weather-related disruption), students will have the opportunity to complete an alternative activity or to reschedule the exam as soon as possible, ideally within 48 hours. Please notify your instructor of any planned, non-emergency scheduling conflicts within the first week of the semester.

### **Makeup/Late Work Policy**

Students will not have the opportunity to make up points lost due to late or missing discussion posts, assignments, or practice quizzes. Please notify your instructor if you are aware of circumstances that could affect your timely completion of assigned work in this course.

### **Religious Observances**

Your instructor is dedicated to maintaining the rights of students to observe religious holidays. If you need to miss a class to observe a religious holiday, please contact your instructor a week in advance to discuss any arrangements.

### **Student Support**

GVSU and your instructors are dedicated to helping you meet your academic and career goals. Please do not hesitate to contact your instructors if you wish to discuss your course performance or other academic issues. Additionally, if you would like to talk to a professional counselor about mental health concerns, phone the GVSU Counseling Center during normal business hours at 616-331-3266. If you are experiencing a crisis or are considering suicide you can call 1-800-273-TALK at any time.

Psy 522: Applied Behavior Analysis I (ABA): Foundational Principles  
Schedule 2022

Session Dates	Learning Unit	Readings	Assignments
<b>Unit 1</b> Aug 29- Sept 11	<b>1: Foundational principles and concepts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defining ABA</li> <li>Respondent conditioning</li> <li>Operant conditioning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooper (2020) Ch. 2</li> <li>Mayer (2019) Ch. 2</li> <li>Daniels &amp; Lattal (2017) -- Ch. 1 and Ch. 2</li> </ul>	Synchronous meeting 8/31 Practice quiz Discussion board Assignment 1
<b>Unit 2</b> Sept 12-25	<b>2: Reinforcement I</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive reinforcement</li> <li>Negative reinforcement</li> <li>Automatic and socially-mediated contingencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooper Ch. 11 &amp; 12</li> <li>Graff (2012)</li> <li>Lane et al. (2015) – Ch. 3</li> </ul>	Cooper quizzes Study product Discussion board Assignment 2
Wednesday, Sept 28			<b>Exam 1</b>
<b>Unit 3</b> Sept 26- Oct 9	<b>3: Reinforcement II</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedules of reinforcement</li> </ul> <b>Connecting Principles to ABA Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooper Ch. 13</li> <li>Torelli et al. (2017)</li> <li>Lee &amp; Belfiore (1997)</li> <li>Mayer et al. (2019) Ch. 3</li> </ul>	1-on-1 Check-In Practice quiz Study product Discussion board Assignment 3
<b>Unit 4</b> Oct 10-23	<b>4: Punishment -</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stimulus presentation</li> <li>Removal of a stimulus</li> </ul> <b>Defining behavior</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooper Ch. 14 &amp; 15</li> <li>Maag (2001)</li> <li>Cooper Ch. 3</li> </ul>	Synchronous meeting 10/19 Practice quiz Study product Discussion board Assignment 4
<b>Unit 5</b> Oct 24- Nov 6	<b>5: Extinction</b>  <b>Measurement</b> <i>Extended Assignment, Quiz, and Product Deadline for Fall Break (see Blackboard)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooper Ch. 24</li> <li>Madden, Reed, &amp; DiGennaro-Reed Ch. 2</li> <li>Lee et al. (2011)</li> <li>LeBlanc (2016)</li> </ul>	Practice quiz Study product Discussion board Assignment 5
Wednesday, Nov 9			<b>Exam 2</b>
<b>Unit 6</b> Nov 7- Nov 20	<b>6: Stimulus control: Discrimination and generalization</b>  <b>Intro to analyzing behavior change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Miltenberger Ch. 7 &amp; 19</li> <li>Milata et al. (2019)</li> <li>Cooper Ch. 6</li> </ul>	Study product Discussion board Assignment 6
<b>Unit 7</b> Nov 21- Dec 11	<b>7: Motivating operation and Stimulus control</b> <i>Extra week for Thanksgiving</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Madden, Reed, &amp; DiGennaro-Reed Ch. 9</li> <li>Langthorne &amp; McGill (2009)</li> <li>Rispoli et al. (2011)</li> </ul>	Synchronous meeting 12/7 Practice quiz Study product Discussion board Assignment 7



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carbone et al. (2010)</li></ul>	
Wednesday, Dec 14	Finals Week		<b>Exam 3</b>

## Additional Readings

\*alphabetical order

- Cammilleri, A. P., Tiger, J. H., & Hanley, G. P. (2008). Developing stimulus control of young children's requests to teachers: Classwide applications of multiple schedules. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 41*, 299-303.
- Carbone, V. J., Morgenstern, B., Zecchin-Tirri, G., & Kolberg, L. (2010). The role of the reflexive-conditioned motivating operation (CMO-R) during discrete trial instruction of children with autism. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 25*(2), 110-124.
- Friman, P. C. (2021). There is no such thing as a bad boy: The Circumstances View of problem behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 54*(2), 636-653.
- Graff, R. B., & Karsten, A. M. (2012). Assessing preferences of individuals with developmental disabilities: A survey of current practices. *Behavior analysis in practice, 5*(2), 37-48.
- Langthorne, P., & McGill, P. (2009). A tutorial on the concept of the motivating operation and its importance to application. *Behavior Analysis in Practice, 2*(2), 22-31.
- LeBlanc, L.A. Raetz, P.B., Sellers, T.P., & Carr, J.E. (2016). A proposed model for selecting measurement procedures for the assessment and treatment of problem behavior. *Behavior Analysis in Practice, 9*, 77-83.
- Lee D. L., & Belfiore, P. J. (1997) Enhancing classroom performance: A review of reinforcement schedules in the use of behavioral terms. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 7*(2), 205-217.
- Lee, D. L., Vostal, B., Lylo, B., & Hua, Y. (2011). Collecting behavioral data in general education settings: A primer for behavioral data collection. *Beyond Behavior, 20*(2), 22-30.
- Maag, J. W. (2001). Rewarded by punishment: Reflections on the disuse of positive reinforcement in schools. *Exceptional children, 76*, 173-186.
- Madden, G. J., Reed, D. D., Digennaro-Reed, F. D. (2021). An introduction to behavior analysis. (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Jon Wiley & Sons, Ltd. (assigned chapters)
- Mayer, G. R., Sulzer-Azaroff, B., & Wallace, M. (2019). *Behavior analysis for lasting change* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Sloan Publishing. (assigned chapters)
- Milata, EM, Reeve, SA, Reeve, KF, Dickson, CA. A blueprint for general-case procedures illustrated by teaching adolescents with autism spectrum disorder to use a chip-debit card. *Behavioral Interventions*. 2020; 35: 346- 371. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bin.1719>
- Miltenberger, R. G. (2012). *Behavior modification: Principles and procedures* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. (assigned chapters)
- Rispoli, M., O'Reilly, M., Lang, R., Machalicek, W., Davis, T., Lancioni, G., & Sigafos, J. (2011). Effects of motivating operations on problem and academic behavior in classrooms. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 44*(1), 187-192.
- Torelli, J. N., Lloyd, B. P., Diekman, C. A., & Wehby, J. H. (2017). Teaching stimulus control via class-wide multiple schedules of reinforcement in public elementary school classrooms. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 19*(1), 14-25.

## Thoughts on a Successful Online Learning Experience

Taking an online course is different from traditional classroom courses. For example, you will play a larger role in organizing your time and guiding your own learning. The role of the instructor becomes facilitator, guide, and resource to help you learn the course material and apply it in your personal and professional life. I am here to assist you, but I can only do that effectively if you communicate early and often when you encounter challenges or barriers to your success in the course.

As a successful online learner, you will interact with the course materials regularly; manage your time; share thoughts and experiences with others; ask questions when something is unclear; critically reflect on material; and apply what you are learning. Active engagement and open communication with the instructor are great strategies for online learning AND for lifelong learning.

Much to the surprise of many students, online courses are not easier than traditional courses. Quite the contrary. You may have more flexibility and less travel, but the content is the same. Online courses like this one have all the essential features to support learning, but it's ultimately your choice whether to engage with those features, with me (the instructor), and with others so we can maximize growth and enjoyment this semester.

### Online Learning Tips Checklist

- Read the syllabus and all preparatory information on Blackboard
- Stay organized and track due dates
- Schedule weekly study and reading times early in each unit so we can address any questions before the assignment and exam deadlines for that unit
- Log onto Blackboard at least 3 times per week to check announcements, discussion board, and to interact with course material
- Get to know the other students in the class and help each other practice terms and apply concepts
- Study the course terminology and monitor your progress (e.g., practice quizzes, term fluency graph)
- Post questions, comments, and ideas on discussion board (unit discussion board and open forum)
- Ask questions of the instructor. Not just questions about logistics or grades, but content questions and personalized questions that can help your instructor present content in a way that is relevant and engaging for you (e.g., related to your career goals, interests, values, and prior experience)

*\*Although these might seem obvious and simple, past students have found they make a tremendous difference in your online learning experience.*