

Grand Valley State University
ABA Graduate Certificate Program
Psy 527 – Ethics and Diversity in Professional Practice

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Meeting location: Online through Blackboard/Zoom

Office location: 2139 Au Sable Hall

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays (Zoom or on campus) and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the ethical guidelines that govern practice in applied settings, particularly in schools. The BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts will be covered in detail with an emphasis on practical implications. This course will also incorporate ethical guidance from the National Association of School Psychologists and Council for Exceptional Children.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe and apply the ethical guidelines from the Behavior Analysis Certification Board, National Association for School Psychologists, and Council for Exceptional Children
2. Utilize ethical guidelines in decision making related to a variety of case scenarios
3. Discuss ethical issues commonly encountered in practice
4. Apply ethical guidelines to decision making in practice (e.g., practicum sites)
5. Describe and apply ethical guidelines while working with diverse populations

BACB 5th Edition Task List		
Section 2: Applications	Task List Items	Content Hours
E: Ethics	E-1 to E-7	45 hours

READING MATERIALS

I will post PDF copies of all required readings for each unit, including selected chapters from the following books.

Bailey, J., & Burch, M. (2022). Ethics for behavior analysts (4th ed.). Routledge.

Connors, B. M. & Cappell, S. T. (2021). Multiculturalism and diversity in applied behavior analysis. Routledge.

LeBlanc, L. A. & Karsten, A. M. (in preparation). A proactive and practical approach to ethical decision making in behavior analysis. Sloan.

Additional *required* readings will be posted on Blackboard. You may also follow this link to access and save the [BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts \(2020\)](#).

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:

- Prepare for class and enthusiastically facilitate activities
- Answer your questions and help you solve any problems you may experience
- 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 problems that a student brings to my attention

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 5th 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.

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 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)

This course is organized into seven learning units. The unit folders on Blackboard contain instructions regarding reading assignments, recorded lectures, assignments, and other resources. Units will open up two weeks at a time and all unit activities 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.

Synchronous Meetings (participate in 3 synchronous meetings)

The purpose of synchronous meetings is to unpack the most useful or challenging ideas addressed by this course, to work through any problems or misunderstandings together, and to

prepare you for continuous, post-graduate learning as part of a professional community of practice. The dates and times for these meeting are listed on Blackboard.

Readings (each learning unit)

Assigned readings contain most of the foundational information we will discuss and apply in this course. I will provide unit objectives to help guide your engagement with those materials and I will generally post a unit overview lecture to introduce key ideas. While the best learning strategies can vary between students, I recommend scheduling time to thoroughly read and take notes on all materials as early as possible during the first ~7-9 days of a new unit. Online discussions, synchronous meetings, and assignments will be most productive and fun if you've already made meaningful contact with the readings.

Discussion board – (each learning unit)

Discussion boards in this course create opportunities to collaborate, to work through nuances of difficult material together, and to make connections between course content and field experiences. I will post instructions for the unit discussion board on Wednesday of Week 1. More information about discussion board and a grading rubric are provided on Blackboard.

Practice Quizzes – (each learning unit)

You will complete a practice quiz for each unit that includes close approximations of the short answer and essay questions you can expect on your exams. Quizzes are worth a small number of points and the grade is based on submission, though a rubric for evaluating your performance will also appear after you submit your answers. Approaching the practice quizzes like a graded exam (e.g., take the quiz without notes after completing all readings and most assigned activities for the unit) will help you predict your readiness for the exam and, most importantly, your readiness to practice new knowledge and skills in everyday situations. More information about quizzes will be posted on Blackboard.

Assignments – (each learning unit)

Assignments in this course are designed to help you either connect personally with key concepts from class or prepare you to transfer your knowledge and skills to new situations within and beyond the course. All written assignments must be prepared in a professional manner (typed, and free from spelling/grammatical errors). More information about each of these assignments will be provided on Blackboard. *Please note, the instructor will drop one missed or low-scoring assignment from each student's final grade; students remain accountable for all unit objectives, whether or not they skip the unit assignment.*

Exams – (3 proctored exams)

You will have 3 exams scheduled throughout the semester focused on 4-6 weeks of course content. The exams will consist of short answer and essay questions, and will constitute a major portion of your grade. All questions will be heavily based on unit objectives. This course does not include a cumulative final exam, however, the units build on one another and overlap in major themes (e.g., interpreting ethical and unethical behavior in terms of circumstances).

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
1-on-1 check in	5	5
Study products (7)	3	18 <i>(drop low score)</i>
Practice quizzes (7)	5	35
Discussion board (7)	8	56
Unit Assignments (1-4 & 6)	20	80 <i>(drop low score)</i>
Final Assignment	40	40
Exams (3)	30/30/30	90
TOTAL POINTS		339

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 Scholarship 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."

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 course-related event 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.

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Session Dates	Learning Unit	Materials	Other Events/Deadlines
Unit 1 Jan 9- Jan 22	History and Evolution of Professional Ethics	L&K Ch. 1-2 Barrett et al. (1991) ABAI Position Statement (you pick 1)	Synchronous meeting 1/16 Discussion Board Practice Quiz Study Product Assignment
Unit 2 Jan 23- Feb 5	Proactive Approach & Comparison of Ethical Codes and Enforcement Systems	L&K Ch. 3 Britton et al. (2021) Overton et al. (2013) STATE blog post	Discussion Board Practice Quiz Study Product Assignment
Feb 4-6			Exam 1 (extended window for NASP travel)
Unit 3 Feb 6- Feb 19	Systematic Approach to Ethical Decision Making BACB Code Section 1: Competence, Cultural Responsiveness, and Non-Exploitative Relationships	L&K Ch. 4 Inside the BACB podcast Brodhead et al. (2018) Kornack et al. (2019) Dubay et al. (2018)	1-on-1 Check In Discussion Board Practice Quiz Study Product Assignment
Unit 4 Feb 20- March 5	BACB Code Section 2 (Part 1): Providing Safe and Effective Services	Konrad et al. (2020) ABA Inside Track episode Browder et al. (1986) Newton et al. (pp. 557-576) Kennedy (2020)	Synchronous meeting 2/27 Discussion Board Practice Quiz Study Product Assignment
March 6-12	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES		
Unit 5 March 13- March 26	BACB Code Section 2 (Part 2) & Section 6: Ensuring the Social Validity of Service Goals, Methods, and Outcomes	Bannerman et al. (1990) Marchant et al. (2012) Hanley (2010) Drogin et al. (2010) L&K Ch. 10 (Ethics in Research)	Discussion Board Practice Quiz Study Product Introduce Final Scenario + Peer Review Assignment
March 27			Exam 2
Unit 6 March 27- April 9	BACB Code Sections 3 & 5: Documenting Professional Activities, Ensuring Continuity of Services, and Communicating with the Public	L&K Ch. 7 L&K Ch. 9 Inside the BACB podcasts Continuity of Care Toolkit	Discussion Board Practice Quiz Study Product Assignment
Unit 7 April 10- April 23	BACB Code Section 4: Supervising or Training Others and Delegating Tasks	L&K Ch. 8 Wong et al. (2015) Ch. 7 (Gavoni & Weatherly) Carr et al. (2012) Ch. 13 (LeBlanc, Sellers, Ala'i)	Synchronous meeting 4/10 Discussion Board Practice Quiz Study Product Final Scenario + Peer Review
April 25	Finals week		Exam 3

Thoughts on a Successful Online Learning Experience

Taking an online course is different from traditional classroom courses. You will take a larger role in organizing your time and assessing 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. Plan to regularly share your progress and questions with me, and I will be happy to assist you.

As a successful online learner, you will interact with the course materials throughout each week; 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 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 and you have a greater responsibility to let me know when something is not working for you. 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 apply concepts
- Post questions, comments, and ideas on both the unit discussion board and the open forum
- Ask questions of the instructor. Not just clarification questions about logistics, but content questions and personalized questions (e.g., related to your career goals, interests, curiosities)

**Although these might seem obvious and simple, they will make a tremendous difference in your online learning experience.*