



Psy 523: Applied Behavior Analysis II: Application to Behavior Change Winter 2025

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Office hours: By appointment
Meeting location: Online through Blackboard

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will study the philosophical underpinnings of applied behavior analysis and explore the applications of behavior analytic principles and practices to behavior change, including strengthening and weakening behaviors. Selection and application of strategies to different contexts, populations, and age groups will be discussed.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss the historical foundations, philosophical underpinnings, and current issues related to the practice of behavior analysis.
2. Describe behaviorism, the experimental analysis of behavior, and applied behavior analysis and distinguish it from other theories of human behavior.
3. Show the relationship between behavior change procedures and basic behavioral principles.
4. Analyze function-based relationships and their application to behavior change.
5. Apply methods for strengthening behaviors.
6. Explain and demonstrate the process of using interventions for instruction and prevention for challenging behaviors.

READINGS

Listed in Course Readings below the course schedule and posted on Blackboard.

COURSE INFORMATION

Blackboard is the Course Management System

To access Blackboard, go to <https://lms.gvsu.edu/> and enter your log in and password. The GVSU Online Learning pages have numerous materials about using Blackboard and online learning <http://www.gvsu.edu/online/>.

If you experience technical problems, check the help website <http://www.gvsu.edu/it/learn/>. If you need further assistance, contact the help desk by email or phone - helpdesk@gvsu.edu or 616-331-3513.

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. General library [help site](#).

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

Learning Units (two-week units)

The learning units will be a foundational part of the course, and this is where you will find instructions for each two-week segment of the course including reading assignments, course content presentations, practice activities, and assignments. Units will open two weeks at a time and an assignment will be due at the end of the two-week period. All previous units will be open throughout the course.

Synchronous Meeting (3 synchronous meetings)

Synchronous meetings will provide an opportunity to talk about course materials and assignments, as well as prepare for exams. The date and time for these meetings 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 and is important for course exams and the BCBA exam. Most importantly, the reading content is necessary for your work as a practitioner.

Discussion – (each learning unit)

Discussion board will be posted with each unit to promote discussion related to the topics covered in the unit. It is important to have interactions with others around the ABA terminology and application. A grading rubric is provided on the Blackboard site under Course Information.

Assignments – (each learning unit)

You will have an assignment associated with each learning unit. These will vary in type and length, but most will involve practice or application of concepts from the unit content. These are graded and will constitute an important part of your learning and grade for the course. All written assignments must be

prepared in a professional manner. More information about each assignment will be provided on Blackboard.

Practice Quizzes – (each learning unit)

You will complete a practice quiz for each unit. These short quizzes are worth a small number of points. Although you may use notes for the quiz, I encourage you to answer the questions without the use of materials or notes. You can take the quiz an unlimited number of times and the highest grade will be recorded. These questions tend to be easier than the questions on the course exams; however, they do provide a quick check to know if you are understanding general concepts in the unit.

Study Products – (each learning unit)

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. This can be a document, a photo of your study product, or a link to the product. More information is provided on Blackboard under Course Information.

Exams – (3 exams)

You will have 3 exams scheduled throughout the semester focused on 2-3 units of course content. The exams will be multiple choice and short answer. The multiple choice questions will mirror the types of questions on the BCBA exam. The final exam will include questions from all units but will be more heavily weighted on the last two units.

POINTS AND GRADING

Assignment	Points	Total Points for Semester
Synchronous meetings (3)	8	24
Study Products (6)	3	18
Practice Quizzes (7)	5	35
Discussion (6)	10	60
Assignments (7)	20	140
Exams (3)	50/50/70	170
TOTAL POINTS		447

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%

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.

Makeup/Late Work Policy

With exceptions for personal illness or emergencies, 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

If you need to miss a class to observe a religious holiday, please contact your instructor at least a week in advance to discuss 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, you can call 1-800-273-TALK at any time.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

[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."

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Many faculty and students are exploring the ways that ChatGPT and other AI resources can facilitate their learning and communication. You may explore these options for this course, including the possibility of meeting with the Writing Center to learn more about best practices for leveraging AI in the development of your original work products. If you utilize ChatGPT for an assignment that you submit in this class, please follow [guidance from the American Psychological Association](#) for explaining the role of AI and citing any specific information from AI sources.

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Dates	Learning Unit	Readings	Assignments
Unit 1 Jan 6-19	Philosophical underpinnings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABA as a science History, definition, and dimensions ABA in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooper et al. (2020) – Ch. 1 Baer et al. (1968) Trump et al. (2018) 	Discussion Practice quiz Assignment 1
Unit 2 Jan 20 - Feb 2	Philosophical underpinnings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PBIS and ABA Antecedent-based approach Function-based approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miltenberger Ch. 16 (Anteced) Hieneman (2015) Reeves et al. (2017) Hershfeldt et al. (2010) 	Synchronous mtg 1/29 Discussion Study product Practice quiz Assignment 2
Unit 3 Feb 3-16	Developing new behaviors, I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modeling and imitation Behavior skills training (BST) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD – Modeling and Imitation DiGennaro Reed et al. (2018) Hogan et al. (2015) 	Discussion Study product Practice quiz Assignment 3
Exam 1 – Monday, February 17th			
Unit 4 Feb 17-Mar 2	Developing new behaviors II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prompting Task analysis Shaping Chaining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miltenberger - Ch. 10 (Prompt) TBD – Shaping and Chaining 	Discussion Study product Practice quiz Assignment 4
Mar 3-9	Spring Break		
Unit 5 Mar 10-23	Increasing behaviors with antecedent and reinforcement-based instruction and interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group contingencies Contingency contracts Token economies High P request 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood et al. (2018) Donaldson et al. (2011) Klaft et al. (2022) Coy & Kostewicz (2018) Majeika et al. (2020) VanMaaren et al. 2020 (opt) 	Synchronous mtg TBD Discussion Study product Practice quiz Assignment 5
Exam 2 – Tuesday, March 24th			
Unit 6 Mar 24-Apr 6	Differentially increasing and decreasing behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differential reinforcement Extinction Functional Communication Training (DRA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Austin & Bevan (2011) Wheatley et al. (2009) Wu et al. 2022 	Discussion Study product Practice quiz Assignment 6

Unit 7 Apr 7-20	Teaching strategies Generalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martens et al. (2015) • Archer & Hughes (2011) - Ch. 1 & 2 • Krueger et al. (2016) • Generalization article TBD 	Synchronous mtg TBD Discussion Study product Practice quiz Assignment 7
Exam 3 – Thursday, April 24th			

Course Readings

Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. (Ch. 1 & 2). New York: Guilford.

Austin, J. L., & Bevan, D. (2011). Using differential reinforcement of low rates to reduce children's requests for teacher attention. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 44(3), 451-461.

Baer, D. M., Wolf, M. M., & Risley, T. R. (1968). Some current dimensions of applied behavior analysis. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 1(1), 91-97.

Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heward, W. L. (2020). *Applied behavior analysis* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Pearson Education. (selected chapters)

Coy, J. N., & Kostewicz, D. E. (2018). Noncontingent reinforcement: Enriching the classroom environment to reduce problem behaviors. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 50(5), 301–309.

DiGennaro Reed, F. D., Blackman, A. L., Erath, T. G., Brand, D., & Novak, M. D. (2018). Guidelines for using behavioral skills training to provide teacher support. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 50(6), 373–380.

Donaldson, J. M., Vollmer, T. R., Krous, T., Downs, S., & Berard, K. P. (2011). An evaluation of the good behavior game in kindergarten classrooms. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 44(3), 605-609.

Hershfeldt, P. A., Rosenberg, M. S., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2010). *Dialogue guide. Function-based thinking: A systematic way of thinking about function and its role in changing student problem behavior*. TASN

Hieneman, M. (2015). Positive behavior support for individuals with behavior challenges. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, 8(1), 101-108.

Hogan, A., Knez, N., & Kahng, S. (2015). Evaluating the use of behavioral skills training to improve school staffs' implementation of behavior intervention plans. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 24(2), 242–254.

Kern, L., & Rui, C. (2019). Antecedent Interventions. In K. C. Radley & E. H. Dart (eds), *Handbook of Behavioral Interventions in Schools: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support* (pp. 250 -). New York.

Klaft, J. M., & Coddling, R. S. (2022). Promoting teachers' implementation adherence and quality of the good behavior game using behavioral skills training. *Journal of Educational & Psychological Consultation*, 32(2), 156–184.

Kruger, A. M., Strong, W., Daly, E. J., I., II, O'Connor, M., Sommerhalder, M. S., Holtz, J., . . . Heifner, A. (2016). Setting the stage for academic success through antecedent intervention. *Psychology in the Schools*, 53(1), 24-38.

Majeika, C. E., Wilkinson, S., & Kumm, S. (2020). Supporting student behavior through behavioral contracting. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 53(2), 132–139.

Martens, B. K., Daly, E. J., & Ardoyn, S. P. (2015). Applications of applied behavior analysis to school-based instructional intervention. In H. S. Roane, J. E. Ringdahl & T. S. Falcomata (Eds.), *Clinical and organizational applications of applied behavior analysis; clinical and organizational applications of applied behavior analysis* (pp. 125-150) Elsevier Academic Press, San Diego, CA.

Miltenberger, R. G. (2015). *Behavior modification: Principles and procedures* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. (selected chapters)

Reeves, L. M., Umbreit, J., Ferro, J. B., & Liaupsin, C. J. (2013). Function-based intervention to support the inclusion of students with autism. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 48(3), 379-391.

Trump, C. E., Pennington, R. C., Travers, J. C., Ringdahl, J. E., Whiteside, E. E., & Ayres, K. M. (2018). Applied Behavior Analysis in Special education: Misconceptions and guidelines for use. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 50(6), 381-393.

VanMaaren, V., Daniels, S., Ignacio, P., McCurdy, M., & Skinner, C. H. (2020). Reducing hallway disruptions in elementary students using a modified timely transitions game. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 22(1), 15-24. (optional)

Wheatley, R. K., West, R. P., Charlton, C. T., Sanders, R. B., Smith, T. G., & Taylor, M. J. (2009). Improving Behavior through Differential Reinforcement: A praise note system for elementary school students. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 32(4), 551–571.

Wood, C. L., Kisinger, K. W., Brosh, C. R., Fisher, L. B., & Muharib, R. (2018). Stopping behavior before it starts: Antecedent interventions for challenging behavior. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 50(6), 356–363.

Wu, J., Kopelman, T. G., & Miller, K. (2022). Using Functional Communication Training to Reduce Problem Behavior. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 57(5), 343-347.