

PSY 624 Behavioral Assessment & Intervention

Fall 2025

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Class Format: Online through Blackboard Ultra

Office Hours: By appt

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Course Description

This course introduces the theoretical foundations and practical applications of behavioral assessment and intervention. The focus is on evidence-based assessment and intervention strategies that lead to socially significant, durable outcomes for students, educators, and families. The course uses functional behavioral assessment as a framework for understanding behavior.

Course Objectives

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

- 1) Compare, contrast, and utilize indirect and direct methods of functional behavioral assessment
- 2) Individualize and implement direct observation systems to evaluate and assess changes in behavior
- 3) Summarize, interpret, and report functional behavioral assessment and intervention data with effective communication of results to teachers and parents, orally, graphically, and in written reports
- 4) Provide the rationale for conducting functional behavioral assessment and critique various methods in the process
- 5) Demonstrate competence in the administration of behavioral rating scales commonly used in schools, while critically reviewing the potential uses and limitations of such measures
- 6) Use assessment data to devise intervention plans to decrease challenging behavior and increase prosocial behavior
- 7) Develop intervention targets in conjunction with parents, teachers, school psychologists, and other school professionals
- 8) Adhere to and demonstrate understanding of school and professional policies surrounding assessment and service provision in schools (e.g., confidentiality, special education law, professional ethics, collaboration, and professionalism)

Reading Materials and Required Text

There is no required text - All readings will be placed on Blackboard

Course Access

Required Equipment (owned or accessible) for this course includes:

- High-speed internet access
- Computer with a sound card and speakers; operating system that meets current Blackboard browser requirements (see below)
- Microphone (built in or external)

This course utilizes Blackboard Ultra, GVSU's online course management system. To access Blackboard, go to <https://lms.gvsu.edu/> and enter your log in and password. Use of Blackboard Ultra is integral to this course and student must log on a few times each week in order to complete course requirement, receive important announcements and updates, and communicate with instructors and other students about course content and requirements.

- To find numerous materials about using Blackboard and online learning, take a look at the [GVSU Online Learning pages](https://www.gvsu.edu/library/km/tips-for-online-learning-53.htm) (<https://www.gvsu.edu/library/km/tips-for-online-learning-53.htm>)

- To check the current [technical requirements](https://www.gvsu.edu/online/technology-requirements-for-onlinehybrid-courses-8.htm) to use Blackboard Ultra (<https://www.gvsu.edu/online/technology-requirements-for-onlinehybrid-courses-8.htm>)
- If you experience technical problems with Blackboard Ultra, contact the help desk by email or phone - helpdesk@gvsu.edu or 616-331-2101. The help website is <https://www.gvsu.edu/elearn/help/blackboard-support-85.htm>

If you need specific accommodations and you have a documented disability, contact the Disability Support Resources Office at 616-331-2490 to coordinate accommodations. If you plan to request accommodations in this course, please let me know right away so that I can assist you.

Course Organization and Assignments

Learning Modules (7 units, 2 weeks per module)

There are seven modules in this course. Learning modules include lecture materials, readings, lecture videos, class engagement activities (in person or on Zoom), and assignments. All previous units will be open throughout the course.

Readings

You will have book chapters or articles to read for each module. Try to stay caught up on the readings. Even though you won't be quizzed on every article and chapter, the readings are designed to give you broad knowledge about the topics in this course and will help you to learn the terminology and process for completing Functional Behavior Assessments and developing Behavior Intervention Plans. Early units focus heavily on the foundations for FBA, while later units focus more on the process of conducting FBA and how that process relates to intervention. Because of the flow of content, there are some units where the reading load is heavier and others where it is lighter.

I have also included the Basic FBA-BIP modules in this course. These modules are a formal, web-based training on FBA-BIP.

Discussion and Engagement Activities

There will be 6 different discussion/engagement activities during the semester (units 2-6). These activities are meant to enhance your learning through discussion, small group activities, and demonstrations of specific assessment practices. Unit 2 and Unit 6 activities will be completed online. Unit 3, 4, 5 will be completed in-person.

FBA-BSP Module Post-Tests

After completing each of the 7 modules in the Basic FBA-BIP training, you will complete a post test. You will copy the post test results (a screen shot is fine) and submit. These will be graded based on completion rather than items correct.

Assignments

There are 6 assignments in this class (listed below). In general, you will complete 1 assignment each unit, but due to challenges with collecting data in schools, some may fall within the same unit. Detailed assignment descriptions are posted on Blackboard.

Take Home Exams

You will have 2 exams this semester. Each exam is considered "take-home" and open book, however they must be completed independently. The exams will focus on case studies, data analysis, and application of concepts. You will be given the exam 1 week prior to the due date.

Course Grading

Table 1. Points for Assignments

Assignment	Possible Points	Total Points for Semester
FBA-BIP Modules Post Tests		
Module 1	5	35
Module 2	5	
Module 3	5	
Module 4	5	
Module 5	5	
Module 6	5	
Module 7	5	
Discussion/Engagement Activities		
Unit 2: Discussion Board (online)	10	50
Unit 3: ABC data activity (in-person)	10	
Unit 4: FA demonstration (in-person)	10	
Unit 5: Case Studies (in-person)	10	
Unit 6: Case Study Feedback (zoom, online)	10	
Assignments		
Behavior Observations Assignment: Student Observations	30	290
Mock Teacher Interview	30	
Case Study Assignment 1: Functional Behavioral Assessment	50	
Final Case Study Report	100	
Group Presentation	50	
FBA Technical Adequacy Review	30	
Take home Exams		
Midterm	50	125
Final Exam	75	
		500

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.

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%

GVSU Policies and Academic Integrity

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies>.

- **Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities:** “Standards of conduct are established in order to foster a community and environment where the mission, vision and values of Grand Valley State University... can flourish. These standards are embodied within a set core of values that include integrity, community, inclusion & equity, respect, and responsibility. The University conduct process exists to protect the interests of the community and to challenge those whose behavior falls outside of these values and our policies.”
- **Academic Misconduct Policies and Procedures:** According to GVSU Code STU 5.1, “[Academic Misconduct](https://www.gvsu.edu/osccr/academic-misconduct-policies-and-procedures-14.htm) is defined as any action or behavior that misrepresents one’s contributions to or the results of any scholarly product submitted for credit, evaluation, or dissemination.” Academic misconduct procedures apply to any allegation of academic misconduct that happens in a course, program of study, or research. (<https://www.gvsu.edu/osccr/academic-misconduct-policies-and-procedures-14.htm>)

Schedule for PSY 624 – Fall 2025

Detailed Schedule of Activities will be placed on Blackboard for each unit

Session Dates	Unit Details	Readings	Activities (in-person or Zoom)	Assignments Due
UNIT 1 August 25 – Sept 7 <i>Introduction to Function Based Support</i>	What is Function-Based Support? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of function-based logic Types of FBA (brief, comprehensive, experimental) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iovannonne et al. (2013) PBIS Brief FBA guide (p. 5-9) Steege et al. (Chapter 1) FBA-BSP Module 1 	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Case Assignments and begin discussion with supervisor Submit Post Test Results from Module 1 (BFBA-BIP)
UNIT 2 Sept 8 – Sept 21 <i>FBA Process Part 1: Identifying Behaviors of Concern</i>	Identifying and Describing Behaviors of Concern: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying behaviors of concern through interviews Gathering additional indirect data to aid in planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McConaughy & Whitcomb – Chapter 7 Steege 4-6 FBA-BSP Module 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit Post Test Results from Module 2 (BFBA-BIP) Mock FACTS Interview Assignment (due sept 21)
UNIT 3 Sept 22 – Oct 5 <i>FBA Process Part 2: Gathering Data and Conducting Observations</i>	Gathering data and conducting observations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting, analyzing and summarizing ABC data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steege Chpt 8 Sigafoos & Sagger (Slaton, Hanley & Raftery (2017) FBA-BSP Module 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing ABC data group activity: Wednesday Oct 1 (12:00) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior Observations Assignment Due Submit Post Test Results from Module 3 (BFBA-BIP) FBA case study student should be selected by Sept 29

UNIT 4: Oct 6 – Oct 19 Experimental Methods	Experimental Methods in FBA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural Analysis • Types of Functional Analyses • Interpreting Data • Overview of FBA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steege et al - Chpt 9 • Gage & Lewis (2010) • Anderson & Long (2002) • Nkosi & Mueller (2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oct 8, 12:00: In person class demonstration of FA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study part 1 due Oct 19 • Take home midterm due Oct 11
UNIT 5 Oct 20 – Nov 2 Developing and Evaluating Function-based Supports: Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing Pathways • Antecedent & consequence-based interventions • Developing function-based, multicomponent interventions • Functional Communication Training (FCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steege Ch. 11 • Basic FBA-BIP modules 4-5 • Geiger et al (2010) • Grow et al (2009) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oct 29, 12:00: In person class: FBA case studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No assignments due (fall break) • Submit post test results for modules 4-5
UNIT 6 Nov 3 – Nov 16 Developing and Evaluating Function-based Supports: Part 2	Developing & Implementing Function-based Behavior Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration in developing behavior intervention plans • Developing an Intervention Checklist • Evaluating supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steege et al. Chpt 12, 13 • Basic FBA-BIP modules 6-7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer case study feedback (written and on zoom) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit post test result for modules 6-7 (BFBA-BIP) • Group presentations due (11/16)
Unit 7: Nov 17- Dec 8 Addressing complex challenges *note: 3 week unit	Addressing complex behaviors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of pre-cursor behavior • Safety planning and de-escalation • Improving FBA-BIP Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnahan & Rapport (Chpt for presentations) • TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 10 (12:00) In person case study presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final FBA Case Study Report Due (12/8) • FBA Technical Adequacy Review Due 12/8
Take home exam: Due Wednesday, December 10 at midnight				