

**George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education  
Course Syllabus, Spring 2011**

**ESDE 620, Section 5S1: Managing Severely Challenging Behaviors  
and Applied Behavior Analysis**

**Professor:** Vicky G. Spencer, Ph.D

**Office Hours:** By appointment

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**Course Times:** 7:20 – 10:00 p.m.

**Course Dates:** January 24, 2011 – May 16, 2011

**Course Location:** Kellar Annex

**Course Description:** The focus of this course is on the application of behavior analysis principles to increase learning of students with special needs. Emphasis is on single subject research designs.

**Student Outcomes:**

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

- Define behavior change terminology
- Define behaviors accurately and prepare behavioral objectives for a wide range of behaviors.
- Describe, demonstrate understanding, and apply single subject research design.
- Conduct functional analyses of behavior.
- Develop and implement behavior change programs.
- Describe strategies that increase behavior.
- Describe strategies that decrease behavior.
- Describe strategies for teaching new behavior.
- Collect and graph data.
- Describe strategies for promoting self-management behavior.
- Describe different reinforcement schedules.
- Demonstrate previously acquired research skills.

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:**

Course's Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program. This program complies with the standards for special educators established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization.

The CEC Standards are listed on the following web site: <http://www.cec.sped.org> . Look in the second column on the left, and click on "Professional Standards." On this page, to the right,

there is a red book pdf document titled “What Every Special Educator Must Know.” The CEC Standards are located in this document. The primary CEC standards that will be addressed in this class will be Standard 5 on Learning Environments and Social Interaction.

**Special Education Content Standard #5:  
Learning Environments and Social Interactions**

Special educators actively create learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. In addition, special educators foster environments in which diversity is valued and individuals are taught to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world. Special educators shape environments to encourage the independence, self-motivation, self-direction, personal empowerment, and self-advocacy of individuals with ELN. Special educators help their general education colleagues integrate individuals with ELN in regular environments and engage them in meaningful learning activities and interactions. Special educators use direct motivational and instructional interventions with individuals with ELN to teach them to respond effectively to current expectations. When necessary, special educators can safely intervene with individuals with ELN in crisis. Special educators coordinate all these efforts and provide guidance and direction to paraeducators and others, such as classroom volunteers and tutors.

Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

**Evidence Based Practice**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 2004 requires that practitioners utilize scientific, research based methodology during service delivery. Therefore, when completing assignments for this course, please use sources from scholarly journals (e.g. Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, Journal of Emotional and Behavior Disorders).

**Nature of Course Delivery**

Learning activities may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Class lecture and discussion
- Application activities and assignments
- Small group activities and assignments
- Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard
- Research and presentation activities
- Video and other media supports

**Required Texts:**

Alberto, P.A. & Troutman, A.C. (2003). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.), New Jersey: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Kerr, M.M. & Nelson, C.M. (2010). *Strategies for addressing behavior problems in the classroom*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson.

(Supplemental)

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

*APA Style:* The standard format for any written work in the College of Education. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) or to access one of the internet sites that provides a summary of this information.

### **Other Required Resources**

#### *Blackboard*

Check Blackboard weekly for additional course materials at <http://courses.gmu.edu>

#### *TaskStream*

The signature assignment required for this course must be submitted electronically to Mason's NCATE management system, TaskStream: (<https://www.taskstream.com>).

Note: Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Fall 2007 semester is required to submit signature assignments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective or part of an undergraduate minor). TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/>. Students who do not submit the required signature assignment to TaskStream will receive a grade of Incomplete (IN) in the course. The Incomplete (IN) will change to a grade of (F) if the required signature assignment has not been posted to TaskStream by the incomplete work due date listed in the current semester's Schedule of Classes.

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

### **Student Expectations**

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.
- Students need to make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through the special education program. You may wish to contact Jancy Templeton, GMU Special Education Advisor, at [jtemple1@gmu.edu](mailto:jtemple1@gmu.edu) or 703-993-2387. When contacting her, be prepared to provide your G number.

**Campus Resources**

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

**Attendance**

Students are expected to attend **all** classes, arrive on time, remain in class for the duration of each session, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom (see Professional Disposition Criteria), and complete all assignments with professional quality and in a timely manner. When absence from class is unavoidable, students are responsible for getting all class information (e.g., handouts, announcements, notes, syllabus revisions, etc.) from another class member prior to the class meeting that follows the absence. Please note that any points earned for participation in class activities during a time of absence will not be earned and cannot be reclaimed.

**Computers, Cell Phones, Blackberries, and Recording Devices**

Please do not use your computer during class. Notes will be shown during class and posted on Blackboard prior to class. Please keep your phones off or on vibrate during the class.

**Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria**

Your performance in the course will be rated upon the following:

Participation Activities	10%
Quizzes	30%
Applied Behavior Analysis Project	30%
Article Critiques	20%

Oral Presentation	10%
Total	100%

**Note:** *Points will be deducted for work submitted late.* This includes any items that are not submitted upon request due to class absence or tardiness.

It is recommended that students retain electronic and hard copies of ALL course assignments. Products from this class can become part of one’s individual professional portfolio used to document satisfactory progress towards licensure as based on the CEC standards.

## ASSIGNMENTS

**Participation in Class Activities: (10%)** Students are expected to attend class and actively participate in all assignments, group activities, and class discussions. Active participation includes the asking of questions and the presentation of one’s own understanding with regard to the readings and lectures as well as interactive discussion and participation in activities with other class members. Active participation also includes listening and respectful consideration of the comments of others. This will require all students to complete the required readings, activities, and assignments for that specific class meeting. Additionally, during each class meeting there will be opportunities to earn points for successful completion of in-class activities. If you are not in attendance and thus not able to participate when these activities occur, assigned points cannot be earned.

**Quizzes: (30%)** Students will complete three quizzes over the assigned readings. Each quiz is worth 10 points.

**Applied Behavior Analysis Project: (30%)** *Signature Assignment.* Guidelines for this project will be provided on Blackboard and discussed in class.

**Oral Presentation of ABA Project: (10%)** Prepare a 20 minute Powerpoint presentation of your ABA project to share with the class.

**Article Critiques: (20%)** The purpose of this assignment is to become more familiar with research on interventions that have been used to change a behavior or pattern of behaviors similar to the behavior you have identified as a possible target for your project. Students will read and critique two research studies in the area of applied behavior analysis. Read and respond with a three page summary. Please follow the format provided on Blackboard.

### Grading criteria\*\*

- 94 – 100% = A
- 90 – 93% = A-
- 87 – 89% = B+
- 80 – 86% = B
- 70 – 79% = C
- <70 = F

*\*\*Traditional rounding principles apply (i.e. .5 rounds up)*

## Course Schedule

<b>Class Session</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings and Assignments</b>
1.	1/24/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On Line Class – article critique</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Syllabus</li> <li>• Provide information requested on Blackboard</li> <li>• Complete article critique &amp; submit to Assignments on Blackboard (<b>due 1/30/11</b>) – for practice only</li> </ul>
2.	1/31/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roots of ABA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alberto – chapter 1</li> </ul>
3.	2/7/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of Effective Behavior Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr – chapter 1</li> </ul>
4.	2/14/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Intervention Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr – chapter 3</li> </ul>
5.	2/21/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment-Based Intervention Planning</li> <li>• Preparing Behavioral Objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr – chapter 4</li> <li>• Alberto – chapter 2</li> </ul>
6.	2/28/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring Student Progress</li> <li>• Procedures for Collecting Data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr – chapter 5</li> <li>• Alberto – chapter 3</li> <li>• <b>DUE Article Critique #1</b></li> </ul>
7.	3/7/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluating Intervention Effects</li> <li>• Graphing Data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr – chapter 6</li> <li>• Alberto – chapter 4</li> <li>• <b>DUE ABA Project Part #1</b></li> </ul>
8.	3/14/11	<b>GMU SPRING BREAK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research &amp; Writing</li> </ul>
9.	3/21/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-subject Designs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alberto – chapter 5</li> <li>• <b>DUE Article Critique #2</b></li> </ul>
10.	3/28/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arranging Consequences that Increase and Decrease Behaviors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alberto – chapter 7 &amp; 8</li> <li>• <b>DUE ABA Project Part #2</b></li> </ul>

11.	4/4/11	Classroom-wide Positive Behavior Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr – chapter 7</li> </ul>
12.	4/11/11	Addressing Disruptive Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr – chapter 8</li> <li>• <b>DUE ABA Project Part #3</b></li> </ul>
13.	4/18/11	<b>FAIRFAX SPRING BREAK</b>	
14.	4/25/11	Addressing Aggressive Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr - chapter 9</li> </ul>
15.	5/2/11	Developing Alternatives to Self-Stimulatory and Self-Injurious Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerr - chapter 10</li> <li>• <b>Oral Presentations</b></li> </ul>
16.	5/9/11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oral Presentations</b></li> <li>• <b>DUE ABA Project Part #4 (entire project put together as one document)</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>NOTE: Syllabus is subject to change as needed. Common sense and instructor discretion will be the governing forces in dealing with any circumstances that may arise that are not explicitly addressed in this syllabus.</i></p>			