



**College of Education and Human Development  
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

Spring 2013

EDSE 620 001: Managing Severely Challenging Behaviors and Applied Behavior  
Analysis

CRN: 17679, 3 - Credit(s)

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Jodi Duke	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 01/22/13 - 05/15/13
<b>Phone:</b> 703-993-6555	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Tuesdays
<b>E-Mail:</b> jduke4@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Times:</b> 4:30PM-7:10PM
<b>Office Hours:</b> By appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Fairfax, R A109

**Note:** This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.

**Course Description**

Focuses on applying behavior analysis principles and social learning theory to increase learning by students with special needs. Emphasizes single subject research designs.

**Prerequisite(s):** Graduate standing and permission of advisor

**Co-requisite(s):** Graduate standing and permission of advisor

**Advising Contact Information**

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703)993-3145 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

**Nature of Course Delivery**

*[Instructors, please revise in accordance with your specific course format]*

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments

4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

### **Learner 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 appropriate behavior.
- Describe strategies that decrease inappropriate behavior.
- Describe strategies for teaching appropriate behavior.
- Collect and graph data.
- Describe strategies for promoting self-management behavior.
- Describe different reinforcement schedules.
- Demonstrate knowledge of research skills.

### **Required Textbooks**

1. Alberto, P.A. & Troutman, A.C. (2013). *Applied Behavior Analysis for Teachers* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.), New Jersey: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
2. Vargas, J. (2009). *Behavior Analysis for Effective Teaching*, New York: Routledge.

### **Recommended Textbooks**

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

### **Required Resources**

None

### **Additional Readings**

TBA throughout course

### **Course Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

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

Standards are listed on the following website:

<http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/>. The CEC standard that will be addressed in this class is Standard 5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions.

### **GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:**

- a.* Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- b.* Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- c.* 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.
- d.* 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/>].
- e.* 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/>].
- f.* Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g.* 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/>].

### **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **CORE VALUES COMMITMENT**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. [See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>]

*For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].*

## **Course Policies & Expectations**

### **Attendance.**

Students are expected to: (a) attend all classes during the course, (b) arrive on time, (c) stay for the duration of the class time, and (d) complete all assignments. Attendance, timeliness, and professionally relevant, respectful and active participation are expected. Attendance and professional participation at all sessions is very important because all of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside the class session.

Understanding that you are individuals with full and active lives, who have made the commitment to regularly attend class, it is understood that there may be an instance when you are not able to attend. If this unlikely event should occur, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to obtain notes, handouts, and lecture details from another student. Students who are absent are held responsible for the material covered and assignments given and due. It is also recommended that you notify the instructor about absences in advance or within 24 hours after an absence.

Be aware that any points earned for participation in class activities during a time of absence will not be earned and cannot be made up. **Two or more absences will result in no credit for this course.**

**\*NOTE: It is impossible to fully participate in this class while texting, Facebooking, tweeting, grading papers, working on other documents, etc. Please be *fully* present in class☺**

### **Participation.**

You are expected to be present, prepared, and professional as you progress through this course. Activities resulting in points toward your final grade will be completed during class sessions. Quality of product and completion of the activity within class will impact points earned. **Points missed due to absences during class activities will NOT be made up.**

### **Late Work.**

All assignments must be submitted *on or before* the assigned due date. **In fairness to students who make the effort to submit work on time, 5% of the total assignment points will be deducted each day from your grade for late assignments.**

### **TaskStream Submission**

For student evaluation, program evaluation, and accreditation purposes, all students are required to submit an NCATE assignment from selected Special Education courses to TaskStream. The NCATE 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 NCATE 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 NCATE 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.

### **Grading Scale**

<b>A</b>	95 – 100 points
<b>A-</b>	90 – 94 points
<b>B</b>	80 – 89 points
<b>C</b>	70-79 points
<b>F</b>	69% and below

### **Assignments**

#### **NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.**

#### NOTES:

1. Please note that student and family privacy must be protected in all written and oral communication. Please refrain from including any information that would jeopardize compliance with FERPA regulations.
2. We will use *person-first language* in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice). We will also strive to replace the term “Mental Retardation” with “Intellectual Disabilities” in our oral and written communication in accordance with terminology choices in the disability community.

### **Assessment 1: Applied Behavior Analysis Project ( 30 points)**

Develop an applied behavior analysis project for an individual (PreK- 12 student) with whom frequent contact is available during this course. You will need to select your participant prior to the **third** class session.

This project is broken down into 4 sub-projects, which you will complete and submit for peer review and instructor review by the class sessions listed below. Next, you will combine all four

sub-projects, making edits recommended on your returned sub-projects, and submit this master document as your NCATE Assignment – Applied Behavior Analysis Project to Taskstream. Given this, should you make an error on a sub-project, you do have an opportunity to correct it prior to resubmitting that sub-project as part of your Signature Assignment.

**1. Complete ABA Project Part 3 and submit at the beginning of the 6th class.**

**Use this format:**

- *Competing behavior model.* Complete the competing behavior model form, using the information from the FAI data. You will need to identify one Alternative / Replacement behavior that already occurs sometimes (instead of the problem behavior) and is likely maintained by the same consequences maintaining the problem behavior – and one Desired behavior – this will be one that the participant doesn’t already do, but can be taught to do instead of the problem behavior. You’ll need to select a reinforcer for this behavior. (This information will be filled in on the competing behavior model worksheet).
- *Preventive Procedures.* Based on your FAI data and what was covered in your texts regarding preventing problem behaviors:
  - State what you think is reinforcing the problem behavior.
- *Instructional Procedures.*
  - *Target behavior and rationale.* Select the Alternative / Replacement behavior or the Desired behavior you identified as the behavior you’ll use to replace the problem behavior, and explain why you chose this.
- *Procedures.* Write step by step instructions on how you will teach the person to do / get the person to do more often.

**Blackboard:** On the course BB site, there is a folder labeled, “ABA Project.” This folder contains the assignment, rubric, and other useful materials for this assignment.

**Required Components:** The ABA project must include all of the components from the following rubric:

**ABA Project Grading Components and Rubric:**

<u>Evaluation Standards</u>	<u>Required Components</u>	<u>Points Earned</u>
APA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Correct citations and references (1 point)</li> <li>✓ APA style paper (1 point)</li> </ul>	/2
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Introduction provides general context and areas to be covered</li> <li>✓ Includes citations when appropriate</li> <li>✓ Final sentence in introduction states major components of the paper</li> </ul>	/1
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Participant:</i> Write a description of the participant in your project with specific and relevant examples that support the need for</li> </ul>	/6

of the participant	<p>ABA intervention. Do not include name or identifying information, but do describe gender, age, relevant medical or other diagnoses, school or vocational placement, and why this person was selected. (2 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Target Problem Behavior:</i> Write an operational definition of the behavior that you have selected to reduce. Provide a rationale for the social validity of the chosen behavior. (2 points)</li> <li>✓ <i>Behavioral Goal and Objective:</i> Write one goal and one behavioral objective, using the format provided in class, for the behavior you are targeting for change. (2 points)</li> </ul>	
Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Behavior Change Program:</i> Develops a sound behavior change program supported by research citations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Explains and implements ways to measure target behavior (1 point)</li> <li>○ States behavior plan in enough detail that the behavior plan could be exactly copied by a substitute teacher based only on what is written. For example, it is stated exactly what the student must do, how many times/how long etc., and exactly what she/he will earn. (1 point)</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ <i>Data Collection:</i> States type of data collection (e.g., fixed interval, event recording, latency), why this is the most appropriate means of data collection, and how this will be recorded (include data collection chart) (1 point)</li> <li>✓ <i>Recording form:</i> Make a recording form that will be used with your procedures. (1 point)</li> <li>✓ <i>Single Subject Research Design:</i> States exact design used (e.g., A-B-A, A-B-A-B) and why this is the most appropriate design (1 point)</li> </ul>	/5
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Functional assessment data.</i> Conduct the functional assessment (FAI), and submit your data (e.g., filled in interview, scatterplot, ABC forms, etc.) (2 points)</li> <li>✓ <i>Data Collection:</i> Collects baseline and intervention data (1 point)</li> </ul>	/3
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Graph includes the following components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Label and calibrate the horizontal and vertical axes. (1/2 point)</li> <li>○ Mark equal units of on each axis. (1/2 point)</li> <li>○ Indicate scale breaks where necessary</li> <li>○ Place a title on the each axis (1/2 point)</li> <li>○ Rather than labeling <i>Baseline</i> and <i>Intervention</i>, use the condition as a label (e.g., No Token Economy, Token Economy System) (1/2 point)</li> <li>○ Display baseline, intervention changes, major environmental changes, and interruptions in data collection. Designate changes in condition with a broken vertical line. (1/2 point)</li> <li>○ Do not record a data point if data were not collected or if</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	/5

	<p>the dependent variable had no opportunity to occur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do not connect data points across vertical lines or across breaks in the data. (1/2 point)</li> </ul> <p>✓ <i>Results:</i> Includes a brief summary of the information in the graph. It is not necessary to repeat everything in the graph. Just summarize and use things like averages, range of scores/percents (2 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Includes <b>NO</b> opinions or conclusions in results</li> </ul>	
Discussion	<p>✓ <i>Discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Briefly reviews salient (i.e., important) results (2 points) (i.e., was the intervention effective?) and limitations to the study (2 points)</li> <li>○ States conclusions based on research (e.g., Similar to Jones and Jones (2003) the use of a token system was effective in reducing the aggressive behaviors of a second grade student during recess) (1 point)</li> </ul>	/5
Style Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Avoids first person (i.e., using “I” or “We”) (1 point)</li> <li>✓ Each paragraph has a clear topic (first) sentence and the details of the paragraph relate specifically to the topic sentence (1 point)</li> <li>✓ Spelling and grammar are accurate (1 point)</li> </ul>	/3
Total Points Earned		/30

### Common Assignments.

#### Assessment 2: Oral Presentation of ABA Project: (15 points)

Prepare a 20 minute Powerpoint presentation of your ABA project to share with the class.

#### Assessment 3: Two Article Critiques (20 points)

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 locate and read *two peer-reviewed research studies* (published within the last 10 years) in the area of applied behavior analysis and write a critique *for each article*. These critiques will require you to evaluate each article and each author’s argument. You will need to look critically at what each author is claiming, evaluate the research methods, and look for possible problems with, or applications of, the researcher’s claims.

EACH OF THE TWO CRITIQUES should address all of the elements in the rubric below. The rubric will be used to grade each critique.



Element	Required Components for the Element	Points Earned	Comments
Introduction	1. Overview of the research questions 2. Overview of the author's main point and how the author supports his or her point.	/1	
Summary	1. Overview of methods & results must include a concise and accurate summary and synthesis of: ~research design ~subjects ~materials ~procedures ~results	/3	
Subjective Critique: Strengths and Weaknesses of the Article	1. Provides your own critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the study ~flaws in research methods ~what type of research was used? ~were there issues with the sample? ~applicability to special education (how useful is it) ~how could the study have been improved in your opinion? ~were there any issues with bias? ~was the writing clear and easy to follow? ~how useful are the visuals ~what further research might be conducted on this subject?	/2	
Conclusion	1. Synthesize the pieces of your critique to emphasize your own main points about the author's work, relating the work to your own knowledge or topics being discussed in the course.	/2	
Clarity of Writing	1. Follows format provided 2. Clearly written 3. Follows APA format with less than 2 errors 4. No grammatical or spelling errors	/2	

<b>TOTAL POINTS EARNED FOR CRITIQUE</b>	<b>/10</b>
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*\*THE TOTAL POINTS FOR CRITIQUE #1 AND CRITIQUE #2 WILL BE ADDED TOGETHER TO MAKE A TOTAL OF 20 POINTS.*

**Assessment 4: Quizzes (15 points)**

Students will complete three quizzes over the assigned readings. Each quiz is worth 5 points.

**Assessment 5: Regular Attendance and Participation (10 points)**

Active participation includes the asking of questions and the presentation of one’s own reflections regarding the readings and lectures, as well as interactive discussion. Listening and respectful consideration of the comments of others is a professional expectation. Students are to complete the required readings and assignments prior to the relevant class meetings. **Be aware that any points earned for participation in class activities during a time of absence will not be earned and cannot be made up.**

Points for class attendance and participation are positively impacted by:

- a. attending class and being psychologically available to learn,
- b. completing and handing in all class assignments,
- c. participating in class discussions/activities throughout the semester,
- d. thoughtfully contributing to class discussions,
- e. listening to the ideas of other peers, respectfully, and
- f. demonstrating an enthusiasm for learning.

Points are negatively affected by being late to class, demonstrating a disinterest in the material/discussions (e.g., reflection activities, small group activities, discussions, etc.), and/or absences. Also, points are deducted for **a lack of digital etiquette** during class sessions.

*\*All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar, as well as APA style guidelines. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will be required to document your work with the GMU Writing Center during this course to improve your skills.*

**Summary of Course Requirements:**

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
<b>1.</b>	ABA Project	40	May 7
<b>2.</b>	ABA Presentation	15	May 14
<b>3.</b>	Article Critiques	20	Mar. 19
<b>4.</b>	Quizzes	15	Throughout

<b>5.</b>	Attendance & Participation	10	Throughout
<b>Total Available Points: 100</b>			

**Other Assignments.**

**Schedule**

Meeting	Date	Class Topic & Reading Assignments	Readings Due for this Class
1	Jan. 22	Course Overview  Syllabus Review  Library Resources  Examining our Learners: Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (including behavior issues)	Student Information Sheet
2	Jan. 28	Roots of ABA  Science and Behavior	Alberto Chapter 1 Vargas Chapter 1
3	Feb. 5	ONLINE CLASS  Ethical Concerns Related to ABA	Alberto Chapter 2
4	Feb. 12	How We Learn  <i>In class activity: Partner activity to read and dissect a study.</i>	Vargas Chapter 3  <b>Bring in 2 copies of one study published in a peer reviewed journal. The intervention in the study should be aimed at changing a behavior.</b>
5	Feb. 19	Principles of Intervention Planning  Determining the Function of Behavior	Alberto Chapter 7 Vargas Chapter 2
6	Feb. 26	Assessment-Based Intervention Planning  Preparing Behavioral Objectives  <i>In class activity: Writing behavioral objectives</i>	Alberto Chapter 3 Vargas Chapter 4
7	Mar. 5	Monitoring Student Progress  Procedures for Collecting Data	Alberto Chapter 4 Vargas Chapter 5
8	Mar. 12	<b>GMU SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS</b>	
9	Mar. 19	Evaluating Intervention Effects  Graphing Data	Alberto Chapter 5 Vargas Chapter 6  <b>ARTICLE ABSTRACTS DUE</b>

10	Mar. 26	<b>FCPS SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS</b>  Classroom-wide Positive Behavior Supports	
11	Apr. 2	Single-subject Designs	Alberto Chapter 6 Vargas Chapter 7
12	Apr. 9	Arranging Consequences that Increase and Decrease Behaviors	Alberto Chapters 8 & 9
13	Apr. 16	Differential Reinforcement: Stimulus, Control and Shaping  The Role of Antecedents  <i>In class activity: Writing task analyses</i>	Alberto Chapter 10 Vargas Chapters 8 & 9
14	Apr. 23	Addressing Disruptive and Aggressive Behaviors	Vargas Chapter 11
15	Apr 30	Providing for the Generalization of Behavior Change  Teaching Students to Manage Their Own Behavior	Alberto Chapters 11 & 12
16	May 7	Developing Alternatives to Self-Stimulatory and Self-Injurious Behaviors	<b>ADD ARTICLE TO READ HERE</b>  <b>ABA PAPERS DUE</b>
17	May 14	<b>ABA PRESENTATIONS</b> Course Evaluations	

**NOTE:** This syllabus may change according to class needs.

## Appendix

