



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

Spring 2021

EDSE 625 001: Applied Behavior Analysis: Verbal Behavior

CRN: 22169; 3 – Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Theodore Hoch	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 03/01/2021 – 04/25/2021
<b>Phone:</b> 703-987-8928 (You may also text at this number)	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Online
<b>E-Mail:</b> thoch@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> NA
<b>Office Hours:</b> Flexible, by appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> NA
<b>Office Location:</b> Suite 100, Finley Building, GMU Fairfax Campus, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, Virginia, 22030 USA	<b>Skype:</b> drtheodorehoch <b>Go to Meeting:</b> gotomeet.me/TheodoreHoch

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

**Prerequisite(s):** EDSE 619 with a grade of B- or XS.

**Co-requisite(s):** None

### **Course Description**

Expands students' abilities to deal with more complex behavioral situations and enables students to relate to more sophisticated professional issues and environments.

### **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 teacher candidates/students should contact Student Services at (703) 348-5006 (Option 2) for assistance. All other teacher candidates/students should refer to their faculty advisor.

### **Advising Tip**

Are you ready to apply for graduation? Students completing their program can apply for graduation on Patriotweb. If you are graduating from a Masters and certificate, be sure to apply to graduate from each program. Visit <http://registrar.gmu.edu/students/graduation/> for more information.

## Course Delivery Method

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

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous via the Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available in accordance with the posted start date of the course.

**Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

## Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: [Browser support \(https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#supported-browsers\)](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see: [Tested devices and operating systems \(https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems\)](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
  - The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - [Adobe Acrobat Reader \(https://get.adobe.com/reader/\)](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
  - [Windows Media Player \(https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player\)](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player)

- [Apple Quick Time Player \(www.apple.com/quicktime/download/\)](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

## Expectations

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Tuesday, and finish on Monday at 11:59 pm. Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency:  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation:  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:  
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:  
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:  
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:  
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing

information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations:

Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

### **Learner Outcomes**

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

1. Define and describe characteristics of verbal behavior.
2. Distinguish between structural and functional approaches to verbal behavior.
3. Define, describe, identify, and exemplify basic verbal operants.
4. Describe, identify, and exemplify audience and other historic and contextual variables as they pertain to verbal behavior.
5. Describe and demonstrate assessment of verbal behavior repertoires using the ABLLS-R and the VB-MAPP.
6. Interpret verbal behavior assessment data and identify goals and objectives for instruction.
7. Develop instructional and intervention procedures based on verbal behavior assessment outcomes.
8. Develop behavioral data collection and data-based decision making systems to incorporate into instructional and assessment procedures based on verbal behavior assessment outcomes.
9. Describe philosophical and ethical aspects of verbal behavior assessment, instruction, and intervention.

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

This course is part of the George Mason University, School of Education (SOED), Special Education Program for Applied Behavior Analysis Graduate Certificate. The content of the courses in this program is derived from the Task List published by the national Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) as well as the Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts. The Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts is listed on the following website: <http://bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/160321-compliance-code-english.pdf>. For more information on the Board and the examination, please visit the Board's website at [www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com).

### **Required Textbooks**

Partington, J.W. (2007). *The assessment of basic language and learning skills (Revised) (ABLLS-R)*. Behavior Analysts, Inc.

Sundberg, M.L. (2008). *Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program*. AVB Press. ISBN 978-0-9818356-1-7 and 978-0-9818356-0-0.

Sundberg, M.L., and Partington, J.W. (1998). *Teaching language to children with autism or other developmental disabilities*. Behavior Analysts, Inc.

Winokur, S. (1976). *A primer of verbal behavior: An operant view*. Prentice-Hall, Inc. (NOTE: PURCHASE THIS ONLY FROM THE GMU BOOKSTORE!)

### **Recommended Textbooks**

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

### **Required Resources**

Given the possibility of computer or internet difficulties some students may experience from time to time, students must consider and identify alternative availability of computers and internet access (e.g., public libraries, their employer (if permissible by the employer), internet cafes, etc.) within the first week of this course to ensure that they will be able to complete their assignments in a timely manner.

Several assignments will require that you scan your work and upload it to Blackboard. Given this, you will need to have access to a scanner that will permit you to scan a multiple page document into a single document and save it as a pdf file. Many of our home printers do this. Scanners are also available at Fedex Office, Staples, and other, similar stores for your use. Some employers will also permit use of their scanners for this purpose. Scanned multiple page documents must be in pdf format, and must include all pages for the document in a single pdf file. Uploads of multiple, single page pdfs, and uploads of jpg files will not be accepted.

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

**Signature assessment.** The sum of the two Verbal Behavior Instructional Projects will be the signature assessment for this course. Scores on the exam will be used for program evaluation instead of a rubric. You will not need to make a VIA submission. Your instructor will submit this assessment score for you. Please submit your Verbal Behavior Instructional Projects as outlined below.

### **Assignments and/or Examinations**

**ABLLS-R based Verbal Behavior Instructional Project.** You will be provided with a completed ABLLS-R, a description of your learner, and a programming grid. On the basis of the ABLLS-R, you will:

1. Fill in the ABLLS-R Skills Tracking grids correctly (5 points)

2. Select five different targets for instruction (giving preference to cusps), across at least three operants. (Up to 5 points)
3. For each target, you will identify the procedure(s) you will use to teach the target, and
4. give the rationale for those procedure(s), (up to 5 points)
5. write step by step instructions for implementing the procedure(s), (Up to 10 points)
6. develop a data collection procedure (to include a recording form and step by step data collection instructions), (Up to 10 points)

**VB-MAPP based Verbal Behavior Instructional Project.** You will be provided with a completed VB-MAPP, a description of your learner, and a programming grid. On the basis of the VB-MAPP you will:

1. Fill in the VB-MAPP Milestones Assessment, Barriers Assessment, Transitions Assessment, and Task Analysis grids correctly (5 points)
2. Select five different targets for instruction (giving preference to cusps), across at least three operants. (Up to 5 points)
3. For each target, you will identify the procedure(s) you will use to teach the target, and
4. give the rationale for those procedure(s), (up to 5 points)
5. write step by step instructions for implementing the procedure(s), (Up to 10 points)
6. develop a data collection procedure (to include a recording form and step by step data collection instructions), (Up to 10 points)

You will scan your ABLLS-R Skills Tracking grids and your ABLLS-R based instructional grids, instructional procedures, data collection instructions, and data sheets into a single pdf document; and the VB-MAPP Barriers Assessment grid, the VB-MAPP Milestones Assessment Grid, the VB-MAPP Transitions Assessment grid, the VB-MAPP Transitions Assessment grid, your VB-MAPP based instructional grids, instructional procedures, data collection instructions, and recording forms into a single, second document (10 points), and submit through VIA.

**Verbal Behavior Instructional Project Drafts.** Beginning in Week 3, you will be assigned a portion of the VB Instructional Project to draft and submit prior to the next week's class session. You will do this for five consecutive weeks. Each draft submitted on time will receive 2 points. Late drafts will not be accepted. You will be provided feedback on your drafts, which you will be expected to incorporate when putting together your final project.

**ABA Toolchest Video Assignments and Quizzes.** For the weeks so noted in the schedule that appears later in this document, you will be assigned a video to watch online. These videos are located in the VB Video Assignment Folder that

is within the week's Graded Activities folder. You will also find guided notes to accompany that video in the Lesson Documents folder for that week. Watch the video. Complete the Video Quiz for that week (online, through Blackboard). There will be 10 points possible for each quiz.

**Reaction Papers.** To complete this assignment:

1. Watch the assigned video.
2. Write and submit a brief (1 – 2 page) paper in which you:
  - a. Summarize the presentation.
  - b. Explain what was new to you in this presentation.
  - c. Explain how you may incorporate this new information into your work.

Ensure that your spelling, grammar, and punctuation are correct. Submit your reaction paper through the links in the graded activities folders during the weeks for which they were assigned. (5 points possible per paper)

**Discussion Board Items.** During all but the first and last week of the course, you will have a Discussion Board Item to which to respond. To respond to the Discussion Board Item, read the item, and then do the activity listed in that item. Then, tell your classmates about it – describe what you did and what you found (or what happened) in the Discussion Board, for one point. Go back later that day or another day that week and read your classmates posts, and respond to one or more for a second point. (5 points possible per DB Item)

**Weekly Quizzes.** There is a total of 111 questions across these quizzes. Each correct answer is worth one point toward your final grade. Total quiz availability time is equivalent to 1.5 min per question.

**Verbal Operant Summary Table.** Print this up in Week 1. Hand write the content of each of the cells – in pencil! – during Weeks 1 and 2 as you work through the lessons. Double check all of your answers and correct, as needed (hence, pencil). Upload as part of Week 2's assignments. NOTE: CREDIT IS NOT GIVEN FOR COPIED AND PASTED RESPONSES, OR FOR RESPONSES THAT APPEAR TO BE HANDWRITTEN COPIES. Your work must be in your own words. 5 points possible.

**EXTRA-CREDIT - EDSE 621 Final Exam.** If you don't use it, you lose it! This statement is true about many things we do – including our behavior analytic skills. At any point during the first two weeks of the course, you will complete the final exam that this instructor gives when he teaches EDSE 621. Within one week, your instructor will email you a feedback form that tells you how you performed with regard to the objectives assessed by that course. Each correctly answered question is worth 0.2 points, and so this exam is worth up to 10 points. *You will have two opportunities to take this exam. Your higher score will be counted. If you have not yet taken this course, or are taking it in the same*

*semester in which you are taking EDSE 625, please inform your instructor of this by the end of the first week of the course.*

## **Course Policies and Expectations**

### **Attendance/Participation**

Given that this is an asynchronous course, we do not have course meetings. We do have recordings to be watched, discussion boards with discussions with your classmates to be completed, quizzes to be taken, drafts to be completed, and so forth, every week, it is essential that you plan - and follow through with that plan – to interact with the course at minimum three times per week. More will probably be needed for many students. It is strongly recommended that you distribute your work throughout the week, and don't let it wait until the weekend during which the grade earning assignments are due. Much of the content in this course will be new to you, will be difficult, and will require time and thought to “sink in.”

### **Late Work**

Assignments are due at 11:59 pm on Sunday at the end of the week for which they were assigned. Late work is not accepted.

### **Other Requirements**

Given the possibility of computer or internet difficulties some students may experience from time to time, students must consider and identify alternative availability of computers and internet access (e.g., public libraries, their employer (if permissible by the employer), internet cafes, etc.) within the first week of this course to ensure that they will be able to complete their assignments in a timely manner.

Several assignments will require that you scan your work and upload it to Blackboard. Given this, you will need to have access to a scanner that will permit you to scan a multiple page document into a single document and save it as a pdf file. Many of our home printers do this. Scanners are also available at FedEx Office, Staples, and other, similar stores for your use. Some employers will also permit use of their scanners for this purpose. Scanned multiple page documents must be in pdf format and must include all pages for the document in a single pdf file. Uploads of multiple, single page pdfs, and uploads of jpg files will not be accepted.

### **Grading Scale (traditional rounding principles apply)**

93-100% = A

90-92% = A-



87-89% = B+  
 83-86% = B  
 80-82% = B-  
 70-79% = C  
 < 69% = F

Assignment Type	Number of Instances	Points per Instance	Total Possible for Assignment Type	Cumulative Points Possible
ABLIS-R VBIP	1 Project	40 points	40 points	40 points
VB-MAPP VBIP	1 Project	40 points	40 points	80 points
Discussion Boards	7 DBs	5 points	35 points	115 points
ABA Toolchest Video Quizzes	7 Quizzes	10 points	70 points	185 points
VB IP Drafts	5 Drafts	2 points	10 points	195 points
Reaction Papers	4 Papers	5 points	20 points	215 points
Content Quizzes	111 questions	1 point per question	110 points	326 points
Verbal Operant Worksheet	1 Worksheet	5 points	5 points	331 points

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C	F
307 – 331 points	297 – 306 points	287 - 296 points	274 – 286 points	264 - 273 points	231 – 263 points	< 231 points

**\*Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced (see <https://oai.gmu.edu/> and <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

### Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/> .

### Class Schedule

**\*Note:** Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Week	Read / View	Complete / Submit
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Winokur, Chapters 1-4 and 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 1 Recordings (Use guided notes and Verbal Behavior Summary Table) <input type="checkbox"/> ABA Toolchest Recording 1 (Use Guided Notes)	<input type="checkbox"/> DB 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 1 Content Quizzes <input type="checkbox"/> ABA TC Quiz 1
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Winokur Chapters 6 and 8-11 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 2 Recordings (Use guided notes and Verbal Behavior Summary Table) <input type="checkbox"/> ABA Toolchest Recording 2 (Use Guided Notes)	<input type="checkbox"/> DB 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 2 Content Quizzes <input type="checkbox"/> ABA TC Quiz 2
3	<input type="checkbox"/> VB MAPP Administration and Interpretation Instructions, and Protocol <input type="checkbox"/> Week 3 Recordings <input type="checkbox"/> ABA Toolchest Recording 3 (Use Guided Notes)	<input type="checkbox"/> DB 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 3 Content Quizzes <input type="checkbox"/> ABA TC Quiz 3 <input type="checkbox"/> VBIP Draft 1
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ABLLS-R Administration and Interpretation Protocol <input type="checkbox"/> Week 4 Recordings <input type="checkbox"/> ABA Toolchest Recording 4 (Use Guided Notes)	<input type="checkbox"/> DB 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 4 Content Quizzes <input type="checkbox"/> ABA TC Quiz 4 <input type="checkbox"/> VBIP Draft 2
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Week 5 Recordings <input type="checkbox"/> ABA Toolchest Recording 5 (Use Guided Notes)	<input type="checkbox"/> DB 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 5 Content Quizzes <input type="checkbox"/> ABA TC Quiz 5 <input type="checkbox"/> VBIP Draft 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
6	<input type="checkbox"/> Week 6 Recordings <input type="checkbox"/> Sundberg and Partington (1998 or newer) Chapters 4 – 8 <input type="checkbox"/> ABA Toolchest Recording 6 (Use Guided Notes)	<input type="checkbox"/> DB 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 6 Content Quizzes <input type="checkbox"/> ABA TC Quiz 6 <input type="checkbox"/> VBIP Draft 4
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Week 7 Recordings <input type="checkbox"/> Sundberg and Partington (1998 or newer) Chapters 9 – 13 <input type="checkbox"/> ABA Toolchest Recording 7 (Use Guided Notes)	<input type="checkbox"/> DB 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 7 Content Quizzes <input type="checkbox"/> ABA TC Quiz 7 <input type="checkbox"/> VBIP Draft 5
8	<input type="checkbox"/> View Sundberg recording <input type="checkbox"/> View Skinner recording <input type="checkbox"/> View Dreyfus recording <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Verbal Behavior Instructional Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunderg Reaction Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Skinner Reaction Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Dreyfus Reaction Paper <input type="checkbox"/> ABLLS-R Instructional Project <input type="checkbox"/> VB-MAPP Instructional Project

## Core Values Commitment

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

## GMU Policies and Resources for Students

### Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### Campus Resources

- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

### Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

- As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at [703-380-1434](tel:703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at [703-993-2380](tel:703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling [703-993-8730](tel:703-993-8730), or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>.
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <http://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

## **Appendix**

**Signature assessment.** The sum of the two Verbal Behavior Instructional Projects will be the signature assessment for this course. Scores on the exam will be used for program evaluation instead of a rubric. You will not need to make a VIA submission. Your instructor will submit this assessment score for you. Please submit your Verbal Behavior Instructional Projects as outlined in the Verbal Behavior Instructional Projects portion of the Assignments section of this document.