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

Fall 2024
EDSE 625 001: Applied Behavior Analysis: Verbal Behavior
CRN: 82760, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Theodore Hoch	**Meeting Dates:** 8/26/24 – 12/18/24
Phone: 703-987-8928 (may also text here)	**Meeting Day(s):** Thursday
E-Mail: thoch@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s):** 7:20 pm – 10 pm
Office Hours: by appointment	**Meeting Location:** Fairfax; KH 14
Office Location: Suite 100, Finley Building, Fairfax Campus; and virtual	

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 their LMS (Learning Management System).**

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 in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or speced@gmu.edu for assistance. All other students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

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 your LMS

Learner Outcomes

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

1. Define and describe characteristics of verbal behavior.
2. 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.

Professional Standards

This course is part of the George Mason University, School of Education, 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.

Required Texts

Partington, J.W. (2007). *The assessment of basic language and learning skills (Revised) (ABLLS-R).* **Behavior Analysts, Inc.** Purchase here, or elsewhere: www.partingtonbehavioranalysts.com

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.** Available at the GMU bookstore and elsewhere.

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

Recommended Texts

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.

Additional Readings

Selections from the following, made available by the instructor:

Winokur, S. (1976). *A primer of verbal behavior: An operant view.*
Prentice-Hall, Inc.

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

VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement
No required upload.

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 Assesment, 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).

Verbal Behavior Instructional Project Drafts. Beginning in Week 6 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. You will be provided feedback on your drafts, which you will be expected to incorporate when putting together your final project. (12 points possible, total)

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. (70 ABA TC Quiz question points).

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. 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. (2 points possible per DB Item)

Weekly Quizzes. Weeks 3 through 14 will each include a 10 item, multiple choice quiz completed through our course's learning management system. Each correct answer is worth one point toward your final grade. Each quiz is timed, with 15 minutes available in which to complete the quiz. (120 quiz points total)

Assignment Summary

Assignment Type	Possible Points
ABLLS-R VB Instructional Project	40 points

VB-MAPP Instructional Project	40 points
Instructional Project Drafts	12 points
ABA Toolchest Quizzes	70 points
Reaction Papers	10 points
Discussion Board Items	26 points
Weekly Quizzes	120 points
Total Possible	318 points

Student Evaluations of Teaching:

The student evaluation of teaching, or SET, is an online course survey. You are strongly encouraged to complete this form for each course as this feedback helps instructors and administrators improve your class experiences. Towards the end of the course, you will receive email and LMS notifications when the evaluations open. Your anonymous and confidential feedback is only shared with instructors after final grades have been submitted. More information about the SET can be found on The Institute of Effectiveness and Planning website at https://oiep.gmu.edu/set/

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

Each student is expected to be present at the beginning of each course session, and to remain present throughout the entire course session. Should a student miss a course session, that student will be responsible for contact one or more classmate(s) for notes on content missed.

Late Work

Work submitted after the due date is subject to a 5% late submission penalty.

Grading

At the end of the course, your instructor will assign grades based on the number of points you have accumulated throughout the course. Point values per grade are as follows:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C	F
93 – 100%	90 – 92%	87 - 89%	83 – 86%	80 – 82%	70 – 79%	0 – 69%
295 – 318 points	286 – 294 points	276 – 285 points	263 – 275 points	254 – 262 points	222 – 253 points	221 or fewer points

*Note: George Mason University Academic Standards will be strictly enforced *through an institutional sanctioning matrix that all colleges and departments will need to adhere to if they find there are students who are engaged in academic dishonesty.* See [Academic Standards](http://academicstandards.gmu.edu/) (http://academicstandards.gmu.edu/) and [GMU Catalog - Academic Standards](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/) (https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Standards. The Office of Academic Integrity "works to promote authentic scholarship, support the institution's goal of maintaining high standards of academic excellence, and encourages continued ethical behavior of faculty and students to cultivate an educational community which values integrity and produces graduates who carry this commitment forward into professional practice." Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

Professional Dispositions

Throughout study in the College of Education and Human Development, students are expected to demonstrate behaviors that reflect the positive dispositions of a professional. See [Student Guide](https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide) (https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide).

Use of Generative AI

Generative AI tools should follow the principles of Mason's Academic Standards. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative AI tools.

Class Schedule

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

Week Beginning	Topics	Assignments
Week 1 29 August	Review syllabus; begin discussion on basic verbal operants	☐ Bring syllabus ☐ Examine Lesson 1 Documents
Week 2 5 September	Lecture, Discussion, Practice Basic Verbal Operants – Mand, Tact	Read before Class: ☐ Examine Lesson 2 Documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 2 Quiz ☐ DBI 1

Week Beginning	Topics	Assignments
Week 3 12 September	Lecture, Discussion, Practice on Echoics, Audience Control, and Textuals	Read Before Class ☐ Examine Lesson 3 Documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 3 Quiz ☐ DBI 2
Week 4 19 September	Lecture, Discussion, Practice on Intraverbals and Multiple Causation	Read before Class: ☐ Examine Lesson 4 Documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 4 Quiz ☐ DBI 3
Week 5 26 September	Lecture, Discussion, Practice on Autoclitics and Implications	Read before class: ☐ Examine Lesson 5 Documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 5 Quiz ☐ DBI 4 ☐ View ABA Toolchest Video 1 ☐ Complete ABA Toolchest Quiz 1
Week 6 3 October	Introduction, administering, and interpreting the VB-MAPP	Read before class: ☐ As much of the VB-MAPP as you can this week ☐ Examine Lesson 6 Documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 6 Quiz ☐ DBI 5 ☐ View ABA Toolchest Video 2 ☐ Complete ABA Toolchest Quiz 2
Week 7 10 October	Practice scoring, interpreting, and planning instruction using the VB-MAPP	Read before class: ☐ The rest of the VB-MAPP ☐ Examine Lesson 7 documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 7 Quiz ☐ View ABA Tollchest Video 3 ☐ Complete ABA Toolchest Quiz 3 ☐ DBI 6 ☐ VB Instructional Project Draft 1

Week Beginning	Topics	Assignments
Week 8 17 October	Introduction to, and administering, interpreting, and developing instruction based on the ABLLS-R	Read before class: ☐ ABLLS-R Guide and Protocol ☐ Examine Lesson 8 Documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 8 Quiz ☐ View ABA Toolchest Video 4 ☐ Complete ABA Toolchest Quiz 4 ☐ DB 7 ☐ VB Instructional Project Draft 2
Week 9 24 October	Measuring verbal behavior	Read before class ☐ Examine Lesson 9 Documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 9 Quiz ☐ View ABA Toolchest Video 5 ☐ Complete ABA Toolchest Quiz 5 ☐ DB 8 ☐ VB Instructional Project Draft 3
Week 10 31 October	Lecture, discussion, and practice on selection based v. topography based verbal behavior, and beginning teaching verbal behavior	Read before class ☐ Sundberg & Partington Ch 4 – 6 ☐ Examine Lesson 10 Documents Complete before next class: ☐ Week 10 Quiz ☐ View ABA Toolchest Video 6 ☐ Complete ABA Toolchest Quiz 6 ☐ DB 9 ☐ VB Instructional Project Draft 4
Week 11 7 November	Lecture, discussion, and practice on teaching verbal behavior	Read before class ☐ Sundberg & Partington Ch. 7 – 9 ☐ Examine Lesson 11 Documents Complete before next class ☐ Week 11 Quiz ☐ View ABA Toolchest Video 7 ☐ Complete ABA Toolchest Quiz 7 ☐ DB 10 ☐ VB Instructional Project Draft 5
Week 12 14 November	Lecture, discussion, practice on teaching verbal behavior	Read before class ☐ Sundberg & Partington Ch 10 – 12 ☐ Examine Lesson 12 Documents Complete before next class ☐ Week 12 Quiz ☐ DB 11 ☐ VB Instructional Project Draft 6

Week Beginning	Topics	Assignments
Week 13 21 November	Effective verbal behavior instruction	Read before class ☐ Sundberg & Partington Ch 13 & 14 ☐ Examine Lesson 13 Documents Complete before next class ☐ Week 13 Quiz ☐ DB12
Week 14 5 December	Working with others; Shaping the behavior of the listener Verbal Behavior Research	Complete before next class ☐ Reaction papers 1 and 2 ☐ DB 13
Week 15 12 December	Wrap up!	Verbal Behavior Instructional Projects due no later than 11:59 pm on 12 December 2024.

CEHD Commitments

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to fostering collaboration and community, promoting justice and equity, and advancing research-informed practice. Students are expected to adhere to, and contribute to, these commitments, the CEHD Mission, and Core Values of George Mason University. More information can be found here: Culture (https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/)

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to Mason's Academic Standards. See Academic Standards (https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See Responsible Use of Computing (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

Disability Services (https://ds.gmu.edu/).

- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources
- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments.

- Questions or concerns regarding use of your LMS should be directed to:

    o [Blackboard Learn](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/): https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/

    o [Canvas](https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/): https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/

- For information about [student support resources](https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus) on campus, see: https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus

    O [Timely Care](https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/): https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/

    o [Writing Center](https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/): https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/

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

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 the [Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC)]() at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)]() at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website [College of Education and Human Development](http://cehd.gmu.edu/) (http://cehd.gmu.edu/).

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

The two verbal behavior instructional projects will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Fill in the VB-MAPP or ABLLS-R grids correctly, given the provided assessment. (Up to 5 points per project)

2. Student identifies and lists five appropriate targets for instruction appropriately selected from the VB-MAPP or ABLLS-R provided, for which at least three for each instrument will be verbal operants. (Up to 5 points per project)
3. For each target identified, student will write step-by-step instructions (using active voice) for conducting an instructional procedure to teach the behavior specified by the target. (Up to 15 points per project)
    a. The student will provide a rationale for the instructional procedure selected which describes
        i. Justification for selection of that procedure to teach the behavior specified by the target;
        ii. Discussion regarding why that procedure would be more suitable than other procedures.
4. For each target identified, the student will:
    a. Specify an appropriate measure for the behavior specified by the target; (Up to 5 points per project)
    b. Write a functional or topographical behavioral definition (as is appropriately for the objective) for the behavior specified by the target; (Up to 5 points per project)
    c. Write step-by-step instructions for collecting data using that measure for that behavior, using active voice. (Up to 5 points per project), and including a data sheet where appropriate.