



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

Fall 2023

EDSE 625 001: Applied Behavior Analysis: Verbal Behavior

CRN: 74872, 3 – Credits

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| Instructor: Dr. Joy Engstrom | Meeting Dates: 8/21/23 – 12/13/23 |
| Phone: 804-937-3680 (cell) | Meeting Day(s): Thursday |
| E-Mail: jengstr2@gmu.edu or Joy.Engstrom@lcps.org | Meeting Time(s): 7:20 pm – 10 pm |
| Office Hours: By Appointment | Meeting Location: Fairfax; KH 15 |
| Office Location: N/A | Other Phone: N/A |

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 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 Blackboard

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.

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

Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heyward, W. L. (2020). *Applied behavior analysis (3rd ed)*. Hoboken, NJ: Pearson. ISBN: 9780134752556

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

- NOTE: YOU CANNOT PURCHASE THIS FROM THE BOOKSTORE! Order from the publisher directly or a 3rd party site.
- You need both the assessment and the protocol.

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.

- You need both the assessment and the protocol

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

Fryling, M., Rehfeldt, R., Tarbox, J., & Hayes, L. (2020). *Applied behavior analysis of language and cognition: Core concepts and principles for practitioners*. Context Press.

- NOTE: DO NOT PURCHASE- This is available as a free digital resource from the GMU library.

Recommended Texts

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

Mayer, G. R., Sulzer-Azaroff, B., & Wallace, M. (2022). *Behavior analysis for lasting change*. Sloan Publishing.

Any additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

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).

VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

No required upload.

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

- **Verbal Behavior Instructional Project**

For this project you will apply what you have learned about assessment and intervention with verbal behavior targets. Using a completed ABLLS-R and a completed VB-MAPP, you will:

1. Fill in the ABLLS-R Skills Tracking grids and VB-MAPP grids correctly (10 points per assessment)
2. Select six different targets for instruction across six different operants/domains (2 points per goal). For each target, you will:
 - a. Operationally define each goal (2 points per goal)
 - b. Select a research-based instructional procedure with a rationale (2 points per goal)
 - c. Select a data collection measure (1 point per goal)
 - d. Create a data collection form (1 point per goal)
 - e. Write step-by-step data collection procedures (2 points per goal)
 - f. Write step-by-step instructional procedures (2 points per goal)
3. Include a reference list in APA 7 format (6 points)
4. Submit as 3 documents- ABLLS-R grid, VB-MAPP grid, instructional grids with references (2 points)

- **Verbal Behavior Instructional Project Drafts.** Throughout the semester, you will be assigned a portion of the VB Instructional Project to draft. 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.

- **Reaction Papers.** There are two reaction papers. To complete these assignments:
 1. Watch the assigned video.
 2. Write and submit a brief (about 2 pages) 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. (15 points possible per paper)

- **In-Class Exercises.** On indicated weeks, there will be in-class exercises related to the readings and to the other assignments. These could include an in-class quiz on the reading material, reading response discussions, group activities, and other activities as announced. Each in-class activity is worth 10 points.
- **Weekly Quizzes.** There are several quizzes in each week of the course that check your knowledge of the assigned videos and reading materials. Each correct answer is worth one point toward your final grade. Total quiz availability time is equivalent to 1.5 min per question. (124 points total)
- **Verbal Operant Summary Table.** Print this up in Week 1. Hand-write the content of each of the cells – in pencil! – as you work through the materials. Double check all of your answers and correct, as needed (hence, pencil). 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.
- **Foxy Learning Modules.** Foxy Learning is an online learning platform that includes open education resources. Throughout the course you will complete the following modules: 1) Introduction to Verbal Behavior and 2) Introduction to Relational Frame Theory. Throughout the two learning modules, there are 51 lessons. After you pass each lesson, you will take a screenshot which will be submitted in the corresponding assignment on Blackboard. Each lesson is worth one point.

Assignment Summary

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| In-Class Exercises (8 @10 points) | 80 points |
| Quizzes (7) | 124 points |
| Assignments (4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foxy Learning Lessons (51 pts) • Verbal Operant Worksheet (5pts) • Skinner Reaction paper (15 pts) • Sundberg Reaction paper (15 pts) | 86 points |
| Verbal Behavior Instructional Project (VBIP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VBIP Draft 1 (3 pts) • VBIP Draft 2 (3 pts) • VBIP Draft 3 (6 pts) • VBIP Draft 4 (6pts) • VBIP Draft 5 (6 pts) • VBIP Final (87 pts) | 111 points |
| Extra Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muldoon and Hoch Reaction Paper (up to 15 points of extra credit) | |
| Total Points: | 401points |

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 Blackboard 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

Your attendance and participation at each scheduled class session is an expectation of the course. In class assignments cannot be made up outside of class.

Assignment Instructions

Following instructions for formatting papers will expedite grading and feedback for all students.

Students are responsible for following these guidelines for grading:

- All final drafts of assignments must be submitted through Blackboard, including final drafts of assignments.
- Assignments must be completed within the template provided by the instructor. Failure to do so will result in delays in grading.
- Emailed and hard copies of assignments will not be graded unless approved in advance by the instructor, as these methods of submission lead to a high probability of lost student work.
- Detailed information about each assignment is posted on Blackboard. Failure to review all documents available can result in low performance.

Late Work

Work is considered on time if it is submitted by 11:59 p.m. (ET) on the date that it is due (if BlackBoard says an earlier time, it is an error – all submissions received by 11:59pm will be considered to be on time). Late work will only be accepted when prior arrangement has been made with the instructor.

Other Requirements

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, unless as noted for a particular assignment

Inclement Weather Procedures.

If GMU is closed due to weather conditions, class will be canceled. If GMU is not closed but, in your judgment, travel poses a substantial risk, you may choose to skip class as an excused absence.

Electronics

Cell phones must be turned off and/or set on vibrate. Computers are allowed for note taking and course-related work ONLY.

Grading

Traditional rounding principles apply.

- 93-100% = A
- 90-92% = A-
- 87-89% = B+
- 83-86% = B
- 80-82% = B-
- 70-79% = C
- < 69% = F

***Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See [Academic Integrity Site](https://oai.gmu.edu/) (<https://oai.gmu.edu/>) and [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<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 [Policies and Procedures](https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/) (<https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>).

Class Schedule

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

| Modules | Readings | Assignments |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| 1 8/21/23- 9/3/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ABALC Chapter 1,2• Cooper Chapter 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module 1 Content Quizzes• In-Class Exercise• Assignment: Foxy Learning Lessons• Assignment: Verbal Operant worksheet (due in M2) |
| 2 9/4/23-9/17/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Cooper, Chapter 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module 2 Content Quizzes• In-Class Exercise |

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|---|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment: Foxy Learning Lessons • Assignment: Verbal Operant Worksheet |
| 3 9/18/23- 10/1/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sundberg, VB-MAPP Guide and Protocol | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 3 Content Quizzes • In-Class Exercise • VBIP Draft 1 |
| 4 10/2/23- 10/15/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABLLS-R Guide and Protocol • Palmer & Sundberg, The multiple control of verbal behavior | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 4 Content Quizzes • In-Class Exercise • Assignment: VBIP Draft 2 • Assignment VBIP Draft 3 • Assignment: Foxy Learning Lessons |
| 5 10/16/23- 10/29/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Readings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 5 Content Quizzes • In-Class Exercise • Assignment: VBIP Draft 4 |
| 6 10/30/23- 11/12/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABALC Ch. 3-4 • Sundberg and Partington Chapters 5-9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 6 Content Quizzes • In-Class Exercise • Assignment: VBIP Draft 5 |
| 7 11/13/23- 11/26/23 (includes Thanksgiving Break 11/22- 26) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooper Chapter 19 • ABALC, Chapter 5 • Sundberg and Partington Ch. 10-12 • Sidman, Reading and auditory-visuals equivalences • Walker, Rehfeldt & Ninness, Using the stimulus equivalence paradigm to teach course material in undergraduate rehabilitation course. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 7 Content Quizzes • In-Class Exercise • Assignment: Foxy Learning Lessons • Extra Credit Assignment: Muldoon and Hoch Reaction Paper |
| 8 11/27/23- 12/10/23 No In-person class the week of 12/3/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sundberg, Ch 13-14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment: Skinner Reaction Paper • Assignment: Sundberg Reaction Paper • In-Class Exercise • Assignment: VBIP Final |

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: See [Core Values](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/) (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>).

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. See [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- 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/) (<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/) (<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 Blackboard should be directed to [Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/) (<https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>).
- [Learning Services](mailto:learningservices@gmu.edu) (learningservices@gmu.edu) - Provides a variety of experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns. Services include support to students with learning differences, individual study strategy coaching, individualized programs of study, and referrals to tutoring resources. Presentations on a variety of academic topics such as time management, reading, and note taking are available to the university community. The programs are open to all George Mason University students free of charge.

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)**

Signature assessment. The sum of the two Verbal Behavior Instructional Projects will be the signature assessment for this course, with rubric as indicated in the assignment. 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.