



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

Summer 2024

EDSE 622: Philosophical and Conceptual Issues in Behavior Analysis

Section: 002; CRN: 40912

3 – Credits

Instructor: Brady Phelps	Meeting Dates: 5/10/24 - 6/27/24
Phone: 6056915047	Meeting Day(s): Online
E-Mail: bphelps4@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): Asynchronous
Office Hours: By appointment	Meeting Location: Online
Office Location: I work entirely remote	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):

Completion of EDSE 619 with a minimum of B- or XS or concurrent enrollment in EDSE 619.

Co-requisite(s):

Completion of EDSE 619 with a minimum of B- or XS or concurrent enrollment in EDSE 619.

Course Description

Focuses on basic principles and philosophies of behavior analysis. Identifies historical contributions to modern behavior analysis and identifies seminal individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to behavior analysis. Describes tenets of radical behaviorism. Emphasizes vocabulary and basic research that contributes to a modern understanding of behavioral principles.

Course Overview

This course provides instruction into philosophical underpinnings of behavior analysis, historical perspectives, and an overview of radical behaviorism.

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 1-844-306-1785, mason@support.edu.help for assistance.

Advising Tip

Did you know you can order an official transcript through Patriotweb? Logon to Patriotweb. Select Student Services. Select Student Records. Select Order Official Transcript.

Course Delivery Method

Learning activities include the following:

1. Application activities
2. Small group activities and assignments
3. Video and other media supports
4. Research and presentation activities
5. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using asynchronous format 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 Patriot Pass password. The course site will be available in accordance with the posted start date.

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 will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- 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](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/) (www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)
 - Screen Capture Video software, such as Screencast-O-Matic
- Technical Support 24/7
 - chat: <https://support.edu.help>
 - call: 1-844-306-1785
 - e-mail: Mason@support.edu.help

Expectations

- **Course Week:**
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on the weekday of the first day of class and end 7 days later at 11:59 PM Eastern Time. That is, if a class begins on Thursday, then each subsequent module will begin on a Thursday. Work will be due on the following Wednesday at 11:59 PM Eastern Time. *This is only an example; the actual start date of each week will be dependent on University schedules. Week start and end days will be announced by the instructor at the beginning of class.*
- **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 5 times per week.
- **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. Participation in Interteach is graded.
- **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 use the method required by the instructor to schedule meeting 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 insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes

1. Compare and contrast methodological and radical behaviorism.
2. Identify the differences among basic principles, applied behavior analysis, and service delivery.
3. Define, describe, and identify basic philosophical assumptions of applied behavior analysis.
4. Define, describe, and identify the concepts and philosophy of respondent behavior and respondent conditioning.
5. Define, describe, and identify the concepts and philosophy of operant behavior and operant conditioning.
6. Define, describe, and exemplify operant and respondent principles.
7. Define, describe, and exemplify operant and respondent procedures.
8. Describe and identify factors affecting behavioral variables.
9. Describe and explain behavior using an operant and/or respondent paradigm.

Professional Standards

This course is offered by the George Mason University Division of Special Education and disability Research. The goal of our special education programs is to improve the lives, productivity, and education of persons with disabilities. The content of the courses in this program is derived from the 5th Edition Task List published by the national Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) as well as the Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts. The Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts is listed on the following website: <https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Ethics-Code-for-Behavior-Analysts-2102010.pdf> . For more information on the Board and the examination, please visit the Board's website at www.bacb.com.

Required Texts

Catania, A.C. (2017). *The ABCs of Behavior Analysis: An Introduction to Learning and Behavior*. Cornwall on Hudson, NY: Sloan.

(It is recommended, if at all possible, to purchase these materials directly from the Sloan website, including the e-book. Other outlets often have significant delays that put students at a disadvantage.)

Recommended Texts

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

Johnston, J.M. (2014). *Radical Behaviorism for ABA Practitioners*. Cornwall on Hudson, NY: Sloan. (This book is currently out of print but may be available from selected re-sellers.)

Required Resources

CyberRat. Can be purchased through the following link:

<http://www.ai2inc.com/Products/products.html> - note that this program only works on desktops and laptops. It will not run on tablets, phones, or Chromebooks.

Additional Readings

Additional required readings can be found on Blackboard.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor.

Assignments and/or Examinations

Video Introduction. Students will post a video introducing themselves and answering questions posed by the instructor.

Presentation guidelines: Any media is allowed, so be creative. No voice over PowerPoint, and no Word papers. Ideas: record a video, write a song, create a visual infographic, do a Prezi, create a Podcast, etc. Presentations should be 2-3 minutes in length if using video or audio.

Follow up with at least two classmates (who do not yet have responses to their presentations). Your response should be thoughtful, substantial, polite and more

extensive than a simple "well done" phrase or "I agree." Consider points of agreement, disagreement, assumptions, and value judgments.

Academic Integrity Module (Plagiarism/APA Style). For this course, you will familiarize yourself with GMU's academic integrity policies. **The instructors and GMU take academic integrity very seriously.** Complete the module as well as the Quiz Questions. You must receive an 80% or better to pass the quiz. Those who pass will receive 20 points towards their grade.

Reading Guide Submission. Each week, students will be given a reading guide that Corresponds with chapters in Catania and any additional readings assigned. Students are expected to complete the reading guides in their entirety and submit them for grading. Grading will be based upon completion and relevance to the chapter read rather than accuracy of guides.

Course Record Sheet. Upon completion of all assignments, students will submit via quiz a record sheet. Students will state specifically three things they learned, have an opportunity to ask questions, and provide feedback on the week's learning activities.

Module Quizzes. Each week, students will complete a quiz based upon that week's material. Questions are similar to those encountered on the BACB exam and the quiz itself is designed to mimic the conditions of the BACB exam. Students will have 20 minutes to complete a 20 question quiz. Quizzes may be taken up to 3 times for credit.

CyberRat. CyberRat is a fully interactive digital video presentation of a real laboratory rat to help you perform behavior analysis in a controlled laboratory environment. You will be expected to download CyberRat and perform a set of experiments. You will also prepare and write a report that mirrors what would be seen in a peer-reviewed journal article. This assignment is broken into milestones across the term. Full instructions are available on Blackboard.

Students will also complete two additional CyberRat experiments, upload the results, and complete quiz questions about the assignment.

Pretest and Final Exam. There are two parts to this assignment – the pretest and final exam.

The pretest will be given during the first week of class and is designed to test your prior knowledge of the material. Points are assigned for completion of the assignment, NOT for the score obtained.

The final exam is designed to test your knowledge of vocabulary and basic concepts and philosophy that you were taught this term. The score you receive on the final exam will be factored into your final grade. Both exams will consist of 50 questions, will be timed, and will require Respondus Lockdown Browser. Timed tests and locked screens are used to help simulate the requirements of the BACB certification exam.

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

Technology Use

The ability to use technology is key to this course. Students are expected to present via video and audio, create and upload documents, complete interactive activities, and navigate the online environment. In group work,

students are expected to delegate work evenly, log in to Blackboard Collaborate at the time designated by the group, and participate via video and audio for the entire session. Group sessions should be recorded or otherwise documented.

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 and in the format required 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 often results in low performance.

Late Work

This class is NOT self-paced. All assignments (e.g., quizzes, activities, assignments, projects) must be submitted via Blackboard on or before the due date. In fairness to students who submit work on time, points will be deducted for late submissions (up to 10% per day). Assignments will not be accepted more than 1 week late unless prior arrangements with the instructor have been made. No work will be accepted after the final exam has closed.

Grading

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

Assignments	Points
Introductory Discussion	5
Academic Honesty Assignment	20
Reading Guides	140
Course Record Sheet	42

Module Quizzes	280
Cyber Rat	79
CyberRat Reinforcement Schedules Assignments	78
Pre-Test (completion only)	20
Final Exam	150
Total	814

***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.

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.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See [Policies and Procedures \(https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/\)](https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/).

Class Schedule

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

Module	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1	Philosophical Underpinnings of Behavior Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catania, Ch 1 • Baer, Wolf and Risley, 1968 • Critchfield, 2011 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction Discussion • Academic Integrity Module • Pre-test • CyberRat Milestone 1
2	What is behavior and what is learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catania, Ch. 4 • Schneider and Morris, 1987 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CyberRat Milestone 2

3	Consequences that Strengthen Responding - Reinforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catania 6 • Catania 14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ungraded Activity - Schedules of Reinforcement • CyberRat Project - Module 2 Revisions • CyberRat Project - Background and Significance
4	Consequences that Weaken Responding – Punishment and Extinction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catania 8 • Catania 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CyberRat Project - Module 3 Revisions • CyberRat Project - Run Experiment
5	Antecedents - Stimulus Control v. Motivating Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catania 13 • Catania 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CyberRat Project - Module 4 Revisions • CyberRat Ratio Schedules Assignment (this is in addition to the CyberRat Paper) • CyberRat Project - Prepare to Write Discussion
6	Verbal Behavior and Rule Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catania 26 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CyberRat Project - Module 5 Revisions • CyberRat Project - Write Your Discussion
7	Maintaining Behavior, Making Connections, Novel Responding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catania 17 • Truax, 1966 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CyberRat Project - Module 6 Revisions • CyberRat Interval Schedules and Extinction Assignment (this is in addition to your CyberRat paper)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDSE 622 Final Exam
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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 either Tk20 or VIA should be directed to [Assessment support](https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments/) (<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/>).

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 information on student support resources on campus, see [Student Support Resources on Campus \(https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus\)](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 [College of Education and Human Development \(http://cehd.gmu.edu/\)](http://cehd.gmu.edu/).

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

Scores on the final exam will be used for program evaluation purposes as opposed to a rubric.