

Grand Valley State University
ABA Graduate Certificate Program

PSY 624 Behavioral Assessment & Intervention
Fall 2024

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Class Format: Online through Blackboard Ultra
Office Hours: Zoom or phone by appointment
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Course Description

This course introduces the theoretical foundations and practical applications of behavioral assessment and intervention. The focus is on evidence-based assessment and intervention strategies that lead to socially significant, durable outcomes for students, educators, and families. The course uses functional behavioral assessment as a framework for understanding behavior.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Compare, contrast, and utilize indirect and direct methods of functional behavioral assessment
- 2) Individualize and implement direct observation systems to evaluate and assess changes in behavior
- 3) Summarize, interpret, and report functional behavioral assessment and intervention data with effective communication of results to teachers and parents, orally, graphically, and in written reports
- 4) Provide the rationale for conducting functional behavioral assessment and critique various methods in the process
- 5) Demonstrate competence in the administration of behavioral rating scales commonly used in schools, while critically reviewing the potential uses and limitations of such measures
- 6) Use assessment data to devise intervention plans to decrease challenging behavior and increase prosocial behavior
- 7) Develop intervention targets in conjunction with parents, teachers, school psychologists, and other school professionals
- 8) Adhere to and demonstrate understanding of school and professional policies surrounding assessment and service provision in schools (e.g., confidentiality, special education law, professional ethics, collaboration, and professionalism)

Table 1. BACB 5th Edition Task List

Section 2: Applications	Task List Items	Content Hours
F: Behavior Assessment	F-1-9	40 hours
G: Behavior Change Procedures	G-1, G-2, G-14, G-15	5 hours

Table 2. Course Learning Units

Learning Units	Task List Items	Content Hours
Unit 1: Defining Behavior and Measurement of Behavior	F-2, F-4	10 hours
Unit 2: Structural Analysis and Functional Analysis	F-6, F-7, F-8, F-9	10 hours
Unit 3: Trial-Based Functional Analysis and Practical Functional Analysis	F-6, F-7, F-8, F-9	
Unit 4: Functional Behavioral Assessment and Preference Assessment	F-1, F-3, F-4, F-5, F-7, F-8, F-9	10 hours

Unit 5: Competing Pathways and Behavioral Interventions	F-1, F-3, F-6, F-9, G-1, G-2, G-14, G-15	15 hours
Unit 6: Developing and Implementing Function-based Behavior Intervention Plans	F-1, F-6, F-9	

Reading Materials and Required Text

- Steege, M.W., Pratt, J.L., Wickerd, G., Guare, R. & Watson, S. (2019). *Conducting school-based Functional Behavioral Assessments: A practitioner's guide* (3rd Ed.). Guilford Press: NY.
- Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heward, W. L. (2020). *Applied Behavior Analysis* (3rd Edition). Hoboken, NJ: Pearson Education. (Please let me know if you do not own the Cooper book or do not have access to it).
- Additional readings will be posted in unit modules.

Course Access

Required Equipment (owned or accessible) for this course includes:

- High-speed internet access
- Computer with a sound card and speakers; operating system that meets current Blackboard browser requirements (see below)
- Microphone (built in or external)

This course utilizes Blackboard Ultra, GVSU's online course management system. To access Blackboard, go to <https://lms.gvsu.edu/> and enter your log in and password. Use of Blackboard Ultra is integral to this course and student must log on a few times each week in order to complete course requirement, receive important announcements and updates, and communicate with instructors and other students about course content and requirements.

- To find numerous materials about using Blackboard and online learning, take a look at the [GVSU Online Learning pages](https://www.gvsu.edu/library/km/tips-for-online-learning-53.htm) (<https://www.gvsu.edu/library/km/tips-for-online-learning-53.htm>)
- To check the current [technical requirements](https://www.gvsu.edu/online/technology-requirements-for-onlinehybrid-courses-8.htm) to use Blackboard Ultra (<https://www.gvsu.edu/online/technology-requirements-for-onlinehybrid-courses-8.htm>)
- If you experience technical problems with Blackboard Ultra, contact the help desk by email or phone - helpdesk@gvsu.edu or 616-331-2101. The help website is <https://www.gvsu.edu/elearn/help/blackboard-support-85.htm>

If you need specific accommodations and you have a documented disability, contact the Disability Support Resources Office at 616-331-2490 to coordinate accommodations. If you plan to request accommodations in this course, please let me know right away so that I can assist you.

BCBA Certification Information

The Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®) has verified Grand Valley State University's 21-credit Applied Behavior Analysis Certificate Program as meeting the 315-hour coursework requirement for eligibility to take the 5th Edition Board Certified Behavior Analyst™ examination. Upon successful completion of the course sequence (see Grade Requirement Policy), students will receive a certificate of completion from GVSU. This certificate of completion does not equate to professional certification, nor does it entitle a graduate to claim that they are a "certified behavior analyst" or a Board Certified Behavior Analyst™. To become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst™ (BCBA®), you must meet all of the BACB's eligibility standards, including specific degree requirements, coursework requirements, and supervised experience hours, and then you must pass the BACB's certification exam. **You are responsible for ensuring that you meet ALL of the current BACB standards.**

More information regarding the BACB's certifying process can be found at www.bacb.com.

Course Organization and Assignments

Readings

You will have book chapters or articles to read for each module. Try to stay caught up on the readings. Even though you won't be quizzed on every article and chapter, the readings are designed to give you broad knowledge about the topics in this course and will help you to learn the terminology and process for completing Functional Behavior Assessments and developing Behavior Intervention Plans. Early units focus heavily on the foundations for FBA, while later units focus more on the process of conducting FBA and how that process relates to intervention. Because of the flow of content, there are some units where the reading load is heavier and others where it is lighter. Readings will constitute a combination of "how-to's," as well as classic research articles in the field.

Learning Modules (6 units, 2-3 weeks per module)

There are six modules in this course. Learning modules include lecture materials, readings, lecture videos, discussion boards or Zoom activities, quizzes, and assignments. All previous units will be open throughout the course.

Most modules have embedded questions and practice activities associated with the content. These are ungraded activities. However, completing these activities will deepen your understanding as you complete assignments and exams and apply the content during practice. I will post answers to the practice activities for each module at the end of that module.

Discussion Board/Zoom Meetings (5 modules)

We will have Zoom Meetings or Discussion Board questions/activities five times over the semester. We will have two Zoom meetings in the evening and one additional Zoom meeting where you will be asked to sign up to participate in a small group at a time that fits within your schedule.

Quizzes (6 quizzes)

There will be six graded quizzes in this course. These are brief 5-10 point quizzes that provide additional practice with the terminology and content, as well as a review of several Cooper chapters. More detail about these quizzes is provided in the schedule within this syllabus and will be provided within the materials of each Unit in Blackboard.

Assignments (2 Case Study Assignments, 4 Content Assignments, 1 Operational Definition Assignment)

There are seven graded assignments in this course. To complete some of these assignments, you will need to identify students who are engaging in interfering behavior from your practicum site or work setting and complete specific steps related to assessment and intervention. If you are a practicing teacher, these students can be from your classroom. If you are a school psychology practicum student, you will need to work with your supervisor to identify students. These assignments are graded and will constitute an important part of your learning for the course. More information about each of these assignments will be provided in Blackboard. All assignments must be prepared professionally (typed, and free from spelling/grammatical errors). If you are having difficulties identifying students or completing these activities in a timely manner, please reach out to me and I will work with you.

Exams (2 online exams)

You will have 2 exams scheduled throughout the semester. The exams will include a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. I will provide more information about the content/format of each exam closer to the scheduled dates. Exams will require Respondus Lockdown. You can take them at any point on the day they are due or work with me if you need to identify an alternative date.

Course Grading

Table 3. Points for Assignments

Assignment	Possible Points	Total Points for Semester
Quizzes		
Quiz 1: Cooper Chapter 3 & 4	5	35
Quiz 2: Unit 2	5	
Quiz 3: Unit 3	5	
Quiz 4: Cooper Chapter 27 (Functional Behavioral Assessment)	5	
Quiz 5: Unit 4- FBA	10	
Quiz 6: Cooper Chapter 26 (Antecedent Interventions)	5	
Discussion Boards		
1: Zoom	15	65
2: Blackboard	10	
3: Zoom	15	
4: Blackboard	10	
5 & 6: Selection of one small group Zoom during these units	15	
Assignments		
Case Study Assignment 1: Student Observations	30	170
Case Study Operational Definition: Target Behavior for FBA	10	
Case Study Assignment 2: Functional Behavioral Assessment	50	
Content Assignment 1: SA and FA	20	
Content Assignment 2: Trial-based FA and PFA	20	
Content Assignment 3: Developing Interventions	20	
Content Assignment 4: BIP Summary and Implementation Checklist	20	
Exams		
Exam 1	50	100
Exam 2	50	
TOTAL POINTS		370

Final Grade Requirement

Students seeking the ABA Graduate Certificate must complete all courses with a B- or higher in each course and finish with a minimum 3.0 grade point average.

Letter Grade	Percentage Range
A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	70-76%
D	61-69%
F	0-60%

GVSU Policies and Academic Integrity

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies>.

- **Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities:** “Standards of conduct are established in order to foster a community and environment where the mission, vision and values of Grand Valley State University... can flourish. These standards are embodied within a set core of values that include integrity, community, inclusion & equity, respect, and responsibility. The University conduct process exists to protect the interests of the community and to challenge those whose behavior falls outside of these values and our policies.”
- **Academic Misconduct Policies and Procedures:** According to GVSU Code STU 5.1, “[Academic Misconduct](https://www.gvsu.edu/osccr/academic-misconduct-policies-and-procedures-14.htm) is defined as any action or behavior that misrepresents one’s contributions to or the results of any scholarly product submitted for credit, evaluation, or dissemination.” Academic misconduct procedures apply to any allegation of academic misconduct that happens in a course, program of study, or research. (<https://www.gvsu.edu/osccr/academic-misconduct-policies-and-procedures-14.htm>)

Schedule for PSY 624 – Fall 2024

Table 4. Schedule for Fall 2024

Session Dates	Unit Details	Readings	Activities	Assignments Due
<p>UNIT 1</p> <p>August 26 – Sept 8</p> <p>(2 week unit)</p>	<p>Defining Behavior & Measurement of Behavior: Preparing for FBA and Behavioral Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and prioritizing targets • Operationally defining targets • Procedures for measuring behavior • Scatterplot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Cooper, Heron & Heward, (2020) Chapter 3 • Review Cooper, Heron & Heward (2020) Chapter 4 • Touchette et al. (1985) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Zoom: Wednesday, Sept 4 from 7:00-7:30 pm • Module Practice Activities • Quiz 1- Cooper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin Case Study Assignment 1: Student Observations • Quiz 1 (Cooper Ch 3 & 4) due Sunday, Sept 8th (5 points)
<p>UNIT 2</p> <p>Sept 9 – Sept 22</p> <p>(2 week unit)</p>	<p>Structural Analysis and Functional Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding antecedents • Manipulating antecedent conditions • Data interpretation • Functional Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gage & Lewis (2010) • Iwata et al. (1994) • Stichter (2005) • Northup et al. (1991) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board: Blackboard • Module Practice Activities • Quiz 2 from Unit 2 lectures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content Assignment 1: SA & FA due Sunday, Sept 22 (20 points) • Case Study Assignment 1: Student Observations due Sunday, Sept 22 (30 points) • Quiz 2 due Sunday, Sept 22 (5 points)
<p>UNIT 3</p> <p>Sept 23 – Oct 13</p>	<p>Trial-Based Functional Analysis; Practical Functional Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial-based Functional Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sigafoos & Sagger (1995) • Austin et al. (2105) • Rispoli et al. (2012) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Zoom: Monday, October 7 at 7:00pm • Module Practice Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study Operational Definition Assignment due Sunday, Oct 13 (10 points)

(3 week unit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical Functional Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bloom – “How to Conduct Trial-Based FA” Slaton, Hanley & Raferty (2017) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz 3 from Unit 3 lectures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Assignment 2: TBFA & PFA due on Sunday, Oct 13 (20 points) Quiz 3 due Sunday, Oct 13 (5 points)
Exam 1: Monday, October 14th using Respondus Lockdown (50 points)				
UNIT 4 Oct 14 – Nov 3 (3 week unit)	Functional Behavioral Assessment & Preference Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) Role of FBA in schools Overview of FBA methods Descriptive FBA Formulating hypotheses Preference Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minahan & Rapaport (2012) Steege et al. (2019) book Chapters 1, 3, 7, 8, and 10 Cooper, Heron, & Heward (2020) book-- Chapter 27 Scott, Alter & McQuillan (2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Board: Blackboard Module Practice Activities Quiz 4- Cooper Quiz 5 from Unit 4 lectures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz 4 (Cooper Ch 27 – FBA) due Sunday, Nov 3 (5 points) Quiz 5: FBA due Sunday, Nov 3 (10 points)
UNIT 5 Nov 4 – Nov 24 (3 week unit)	Competing Pathways & Behavioral Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competing Pathways Antecedent & consequence-based interventions Developing function-based, multicomponent interventions Functional Communication Training (FCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tiger, Hanley & Bruzek (2008) Durand & Merges (2001) Grow, Carr & LeBlanc (2009) Sullivan, A. L., Weeks, M. R., & Nguyen, T. (2021) Steege et al. (2019) book – Chapter 11 Cooper, Heron, & Heward (2020) book – Chapter 26 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Board: Zoom Small Group Problem Solving meeting (sign up for one time in <i>either</i> Unit 5 or Unit 6) Quiz 6- Cooper Module Practice Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study Assignment 2: FBA Implementation due Sunday, Nov 24 (50 points) Content Assignment 3: Developing Interventions due Sunday, Nov 24 (20 points) Quiz 6 (Cooper Ch 24) due Sunday, Nov 24
UNIT 6 Nov 25 – Dec 8 (2 week unit)	Developing & Implementing Behavior Plans Based on Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration in developing behavior intervention plans Developing an Intervention Checklist Wrapping it Up: Behavior Analysis & Mental Health, Emotions and Thoughts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steege et al. (2019) book – Chapter 4 Cook et al. (2012) Benazzi, Horner & Good (2006) Iovannone, Anderson & Scott (2013) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Board: Zoom Small Group Problem Solving meeting (sign up for one time in <i>either</i> Unit 5 or Unit 6) Module Practice Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Assignment 4: BIP Summary and Implementation Checklist due Sunday, Dec 8 (20 points)
Exam 2: Tuesday, December 10th using Respondus Lockdown (50 points)				

Readings

- Austin, J.L., Groves, E.A., Reynish, L.C. & Francis, L.L. (2015). Validating trial-based functional analyses in mainstream primary school classrooms. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 48*, 274-288.
- Benazzi, L., Horner, R.H., & Good, R.H. (2006). Effects of behavior support team composition on the technical adequacy and contextual fit of behavior support plans. *The Journal of Special Education, 40*, 160-170.
- Cook, et al. (2012). Exploring the link among behavior intervention plans, treatment integrity and student outcomes under natural educational conditions. *The Journal of Special Education, 46*, 3-16.
- Durand, V.M. & Merges, E. (2001). Functional Communication Training: Contemporary behavior analytic intervention for problem behaviors. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 16*, 110-119.
- Gage, A. & Lewis, T. (2010). Structural analysis in the classroom. *Beyond Behavior, 19*, 3-11.
- Geiger, K.B., Carr, J.E., LeBlanc, L (2010). Function-based treatments for escape-maintained problem behavior: A treatment-selection model for practicing behavior analysts. *Behavior Analysis in Practice, 3*, 22-32.
- Grow, L.L., Carr, J.E., & LeBlanc, L.A. (2009). Treatments for attention-maintained problem behavior: Empirical support and clinical recommendations. *Journal of Evidence-Based Practices for Schools, 10*, 70-92.
- Hanley, G.P. (2012). Functional assessment of problem behavior: Dispelling myths, overcoming implementation obstacles, and developing new lore. *Behavior Analysis in Practice, 5*, 54-72.
- Iovanonne, R., Anderson, C. M., & Scott, T. M. (2013). Power and control: Useful functions or explanatory fictions? *Beyond Behavior, 22*(2), 3-6.
- Iwata, B.A., Dorsey, M.F., Slifer, K.J., Bauman, K.E. & Richman, G.S. (1994). Toward a functional analysis of self-injury. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 27*, 197-209.
- Northup, J., Wacker, D., Sasso, G., Steege, M., Cigrand, K., Cook, J., & DeRaad, A. (1991). A brief functional analysis of aggressive and alternative behavior in an outclinic setting. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 24*, 509-522.
- Rispoli, M.J., Davis, H.S., Goodwyn, F.D., Camargo, S. (2012). The use of trial-based functional analysis in public school classrooms for two students with developmental disabilities. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 15*, 180-189.
- Scott, T.M., Alter, P.J. & McQuillan, K. (2010). Functional Behavior Assessment in classroom settings: Scaling down to scale up. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 46*, 87-94.
- Sigafoos, J. & Sagers, E. (1995). A discrete-trial approach to the functional analysis of aggressive behavior in two boys with autism. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Developmental Disabilities, 20*, 287-297.

Slaton, J.D., Hanley, G.P., & Raferty, K.J. (2017). Interview-informed functional analyses: A comparison of synthesized and isolated components. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 50*, 252-277.

Stichter, J.P., & Conroy, M.A. (2005). Using structural analysis in natural settings: A responsive functional assessment strategy. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 14*, 19-34.

Sullivan, A. L., Weeks, M. R., & Nguyen, T. (2021). Students are not their behavior: Returning to the roots of multitier systems of behavior support. *Equity by Design Research Brief*. Indianapolis, IN: Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center (MAP EAC).

Tiger, J.H., Hanley, G.P., & Bruzek, J. (2008). Functional Communication Training: A review and practical guide. *Behavior Analysis in Practice, 1*, 15-23.

Touchette, P.E., MacDonald, R.F. & Langer, S.N. (1985). Scatter plot for identifying stimulus control of problem behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 18*, 343-351.