PSYC322: Behavior Modification

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Virtual Office Hours (via Zoom) by Appointment

This course examines experimental principles of human and animal learning within the theoretical framework of **applied behavior analysis** (ABA). This includes: design, implementation, and evaluation of intervention programs across a wide variety of human (and animal) situations.

Technology

Logging Into Blackboard: Online materials for this class can be accessed through Blackboard. You must check our course webpage frequently for course content, assignments, and exams. This course is 100% online. Students can log into their Blackboard account through MyMason. You can find help and information about Blackboard on the Student Support page. Please log-in to Blackboard prior to the first day of class and take time to learn how to navigate through the different aspects of the course page.

Hardware Requirements: You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and access to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required taking a distance education course, consider and allow for: (1) the storage amount needed to install any additional software and (2) space to store work that you will do for the course. Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch this video about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Software Requirements: This course uses Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the myMason Portal. (See supported browsers and operating systems.) You will certainly need plugins that will allow you to stream videos through Kaltura and YouTube. You will also need PowerPoint and Acrobat reader. ==A Mac or a PC is required for tests, because exams must be taken using Respondus Lockdown Browser, which only installs on those systems==. It is possible that course materials may need additional software such as Flash, Java, and Windows Media Player, QuickTime and/or Real Media Player. Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Anti-Virus software for free here.

Accommodations

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resources Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Policies

Official Communication via GMU E-Mail: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

> **Note:** I usually answer all emails within 48 hours; it will never take me longer than one week Occasionally, it will take me longer. It will never take me longer than a week. If you do not hear from me within a week then please resend your email. **Please begin your subject line with "PSYC322" – this helps me stay on top of course related emails.** For example, the subject like "PSYC322 – Question about Lecture" is preferred over the subject line "Lecture Question".

Honor Code: George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. It is every student's responsibility to familiarize himself or herself with the Honor Code. The Honor Code is available at: http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/ All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. Students may not reproduce (including uploading to the Internet) any portion of any of the exams for this course. Students who attempt to photograph or in any way capture information about the exam for others' use will be reported for an honor violation.

Late Work Policy: 10% will be deducted for each day (past the due date) that an checkpoint, assignment, or exam is turned in. For example, if you turn in an assignment two calendar days past-due, then 20% will be deducted from the grade you earn.

Textbook

This course utilizes the following text:

Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E. Heward, W. L. (2007). *Applied Behavior Analysis, Second Edition*.
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson

> **Note:** This book is an incredibly comprehensive resource on Applied Behavior Analysis. There will be times when the textbook covers topics that are <u>not</u> discussed in this course. **You are only responsible for information that has been covered in Lecture Videos and Slides and on the Knowledge Checklists.** Knowledge checklists are provided to help you filter through "must-know" information versus extraneous information within this text.

Blackboard Resources for Students

- **Lecture Videos:** Every week, a lecture video will be posted in the corresponding content folder on Blackboard. These lecture videos will convey the majority, and in most cases all, of the weeks' information you are responsible for.

- **Lecture Slides:** The PowerPoint presentations that are used in the lecture videos are made available to students in each weeks folder on Blackboard. The "presenter notes" under each slide loosely transcribe the lecture videos.

  - **"Knowledge Checklist":** I also provide a "knowledge checklist" for every weekly topic. Knowledge checklists are bulleted lists of information that I expect students to "take-away" from each lecture. I do not provide study guides for the exams. With that being said, if you feel confident about the information on each weeks' checklist, you should be in good shape for the exam.

    Please Note: This checklist icon (left) appears in the lecture videos/on lecture slides when knowledge checklist information/concepts are being discussed. This is a quick cue to help with note-taking and going back to study for the exams.

Course Requirements and Grading

This course is **NOT** self-paced – meaning you are expected to adhere to the deadlines outlined in this syllabus. Barring a major disruption of Blackboard, University holidays will not affect our schedule given that you can work within the timeline provided and adjust pace as you see fit. Please refer to the late work policy to understand how failing to meet deadlines will impact your grade in this course. Although not guaranteed, course materials may be available on blackboard to allow you to work *ahead* of the course schedule if you would like.

Grading Scale: Grades will be calculated using the following grading scale: 93% – 100% = **A**; 90% – 92% = **A–**; 87%–89% = **B+**; 83 – 86% = **B**; 80 – 82% = **B–**; 77 – 79% = **C+**; 73 – 76% = **C**; 70 – 72% = **C–**; 60 – 69% = **D**; Grades lower than 60% will receive a **F**.

- **Behavior Modification Project (25 points) – 25% of Overall Grade**
  For this project, I want to select a behavior that you would like to change in yourself (i.e., increase exercise, decrease smoking), a relative/housemate, or a pet. You will then design, institute, and evaluate a behavior modification program to change the behavior. You should identify the target behavior with an explicit definition of the behavior and how you intend to change it. I recommend that you try to establish or strengthen a desirable behavior as it is more straightforward and probably easier to accomplish, but you are also welcome to try to decrease or eliminate problematic behaviors. There will be four separate assignments (described below) with different due dates to be completed. Papers should be typed, double-spaced, and no more than 5 pages in length (not including ABC diaries and graphs or any other data that you collect). I will grade the assignments based on how well you use behavior modification techniques (including using the appropriate terminology), your supporting data, in addition to organization, grammar, and spelling.

Part 1 – Behavior Modification Project **Due:** March 14, 2021 (by 11:59 PM)	**(9 Points)** For this assignment you should identify a behavior you wish to modify and set goals for your treatment plan. This will include behavioral definitions (including identification of relevant behaviors), objective measurement using a quantified measure of the target behavior and data collection (ABC diary) of baseline levels of behavior. The ABC diaries should include the date and time of day for each entry. Remember that all modification plans should include a contingency (reinforcement or punishment) as an agent of change.

Part 2 – Behavior Modification Project **Due:** April 4, 2021 (by 11:59 PM)	**(8 Points)** In this assignment you will give a description of the plan you intend to implement in order to change the behavior and discuss implementation of the treatment plan, record the data collected (another ABC diary) to date, and report on the progress of the behavior modification program. Your paper should also include your observations about how well you accomplished the steps in Assignment 1 and general observations about the progress of the treatment program. Any changes you make in the treatment program should be described and explained.
Part 3 – Behavior Modification Project **Due:** April 25, 2021 (by 11:59 PM)	**(8 Points)** The final assignment should be an evaluation of the effectiveness of your treatment program. This should include a graph that indicates baseline behavior during the first data collection phase as well as the data collected during the treatment phase and an overall assessment of the level of success of your program. You should include a discussion about the effectiveness of your behavioral definitions, contingencies and other phases of the project and what changes you made or might make if you were to continue to attempt to change this behavior.

- **Exams (75 points) – 75% of Overall Grade**
  There will be three (3) exams worth 25 points each. Thus, 75 points (75%) of your final grade will reflect your performance across these three exams. Each exam will consist of predominately multiple choice questions. However, some will include short-answer questions. Each exam will be administered online via Blackboard using the Respondus Lockdown Browser. Each exam will have a time-limit of 55 minutes to complete. Exams are not cumulative. **Note:** Students may not reproduce (including uploading to the Internet) any portion of the exam. Students who attempt to photograph or in any way capture information about the exam for others' use will be reported for an honor violation.

  - **Exam 1: Due by February 28, 2021 at 11:59 PM**
  - **Exam 2: Due by March 21, 2021 at 11:59 PM**
  - **Exam 3: Due by May 7, 2021 at 11:59 PM**

Tentative Course Schedule
* Any Changes to this schedule will be announced via Announcements on Blackboard *

Week #1: January 25, 2021 – January 31, 2021

topic: Course Introduction	**Lecture Videos:** 1. Syllabus Run-Through 2. Meet Your Professor	**Due this week:** N/A

Week #2: February 1, 20201 – February 7, 2021

topic: Classical Conditioning & Introduction to Applied Behavior Analysis	**Readings:** • Chapter 1 **Lecture Videos(s):** 1. Principles of Classical Conditioning 2. Introduction to ABA **Lecture Resources:** • Principles of Classical Conditioning Lecture Slides • Introduction to ABA Lecture Slides • Week #2 Knowledge Checklist	**Due this week:** N/A

Week #3: February 8, 2021 – February 14, 2021

topic: Basic Concepts of Applied Behavior Analysis	**Readings:** • Chapter 2 **Lecture(s):** 1. Basic Concepts of ABA **Lecture Resources:** • Basic Concepts of ABA Lecture Slides • Week #3 Knowledge Checklist	**Due this week:** N/A

Week #4: February 15, 2021 – February 21, 2021

topic: Selecting/Defining Target Behaviors & Measuring Behavior	**Readings:** • Chapter 3 • Chapter 4 **Lecture(s):** 1. Selecting and Defining Target Behaviors 2. Measuring Behavior **Lecture Resources:** • Selecting and Defining Target Behavior Lecture Slides • Measuring Behavior Lecture Slides • Week #4 Knowledge Checklist	**Due this week:** N/A

Week #5: February 22, 2021 – February 28, 2021

topic: Evaluating and Analyzing Behavior Change	**Readings:** • Chapters 6–10 **Note:** Remember to focus on material highlighted in the lecture videos. **Lecture(s):** 1. Evaluating and Analyzing Behavior Change **Lecture Resources** • Selecting and Defining Target Behavior Lecture Slides • Measuring Behavior Lecture Slides • Week #5 Knowledge Checklist	Due this week: ○ Exam 1 **Due by 11:59 PM on February 28, 2021**

Week #6: March 1, 2021 – March 7, 2021

topic: Positive and Negative Reinforcement & Reinforcement Schedules	**Readings:** • Chapter 11 • Chapter 12 • Chapter 13 **Lecture(s):** 1. Positive Reinforcement 2. Negative Reinforcement 3. Reinforcement Schedules **Lecture Resources** • Positive Reinforcement Lecture Slides • Negative Reinforcement Lecture Slides • Reinforcement Schedules Lecture Slides • Week #6 Knowledge Checklist	Due this week: N/A

Week #7: March 8, 2021 – March 14, 2021

topic: Stimulus Control	**Readings:** • Chapter 15 **Lecture(s):** 1. Stimulus Control **Lecture Resources** • Stimulus Control Lecture Slides • Week #7 Knowledge Checklist	Due this week: ○ Part 1 – Behavior Modification Project **Due by 11:59 PM on March 14, 2021**

Week #8: March 15, 2021 – March 21, 2021

topic: Positive and Negative Punishment	**Readings:** • Chapter 17 **Lecture(s):** 1. Positive and Negative Punishment **Lecture Resources** • Positive and Negative Lecture Slides	Due this week: ○ Exam 2 **Due by 11:59 PM on March 21, 2021**

	• Week #8 Knowledge Checklist	

Week #9: March 22, 2021 – March 28, 2021

topic: Generalization and Termination	**Readings:** • Chapter 28 **Lecture(s):** 1. Generalization & Termination Lecture **Lecture Resources** • Generalization & Termination Lecture Slides • Week #9 Knowledge Checklist	Due this week: N/A

Week #10: March 29, 2021 – April 4, 2021

topic: Imitation, Shaping, and Chaining	**Readings:** • Chapter 18 • Chapter 19 • Chapter 20 **Lecture(s):** 1. Imitation, Shaping and Chaining **Lecture Resources** • Imitation, Shaping & Chaining Lecture Slides • Week #10 Knowledge Checklist	Due this week: ○ Part 2 – Behavior Modification Project **Due by 11:59 PM on April 4, 2021**

Week #11: April 5, 2021 – April 11, 2021

topic: Extinction and Differential Reinforcement	**Readings:** • Chapter 21 • Chapter 22 **Lecture(s):** 1. Extinction 2. Differential Reinforcement **Lecture Resources** • Extinction Lecture Slides • Differential Reinforcement Lecture Slides • Week #11 Knowledge Checklist	Due this week: N/A

Week #12: April 12, 2021 – April 18, 2021

	Readings: • Chapter 23 **Lecture(s):** 1. Antecedent Interventions **Lecture Resources** • Antecedent Interventions Lecture Slides • Week #12 Knowledge Checklist	**Due this week:** N/A
topic: Antecedent Interventions		

Week #13: April 19, 2021 – April 25, 2021		
topic: Functional Behavior Assessment	**Readings:** • Chapter 24 **Lecture(s):** 1. Functional Behavior Assessment **Lecture Resources** • Functional Behavior Assessment Lecture Slides • Week #13 Knowledge Checklist	**Due this week:** ○ **Part 3 – Behavior Modification Project Due by 11:59 PM on April 25, 2021**

Week #14: April 26, 2021 – May 2, 2021		
topic: Contingency Contracting , Token Economies & Group Contingencies	**Readings:** • Chapter 26 **Lecture(s):** 1. Contingencies & Token Economies **Lecture Resources** • Contingencies & Token Economies Lecture Slides • Week #14 Knowledge Checklist	

Remember!! Exam 3 is due by 11:59 PM on May 7, 2020!