

Introduction to Behavior Analysis Syllabus

Instructor

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Email

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Office Hours

Class Meeting Time

Room

Purpose of the Course (*this is my pitch to get you excited about this course – imagine it being said as a voiceover on an infomercial...*)

...Are you tired of trying to understand why other people do what they do??...

...Do you wish that you could do something to influence the way that they act??...

...Well, then Psych 180 is the course for you!!

This course is designed to introduce you to the concepts and principles that make up the field of **Behavior Analysis**. In a nutshell, behavior analysis is a field whose sole purpose is to provide its practitioners with the necessary framework and tools to **predict and control the behavior of organisms**.

Yes, what you learn here can be applied in a variety of careers, including:

- Working with individuals with autism or other developmental disabilities,
- School psychology,
- Special education,
- Working with geriatric populations,
- Behavioral child and family counseling,
- Addiction treatment,
- Parenting,
- Coaching,
- Managing and supervising complex organizations in the business world,
- Marketing,
- Behavioral sports psychology,
- Animal training (*just imagine getting a job training horses or dolphins!*),
- And MORE!!!

Sound exciting?? Then continue reading to learn how this course will change your life!!

The REAL Purpose of this course

OK, now it's time to be serious...As said above, the purpose of this course is to help you master the concepts and principles that make up the foundations of the field of behavior analysis. In truth, there are **115** concepts that you will learn during this course, but don't let that big number scare you because there are only **four things** that I will ever ask you to do for this course:

- If I give you a concept, give me its **definition**,
- If I give you a definition, **tell me the concept** that it is describing,
- If I give you a concept, give me a **real-world scenario** that fits under it *and* tell me **why it's an example** of that concept,
- If I give you a real-world scenario, **analyze it** into its parts

And that's it. That's all that I will ever ask you to do for any of the concepts discussed in this course. And when you can do each of these four tasks for all of the concepts in this course, then you will be well on your way to becoming an effective behavior analyst and changing the world.

If you would like a detailed listing of the concepts covered in this course, then refer to the concept list included in the final project support documents on Blackboard. The concepts on that list are the same ones included throughout this course's textbook. Speaking of the textbook...

Class Materials

You are asked to obtain the following textbook for this course.

Malott, R.W. (2008). *Principles of Behavior* (6th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall

In addition, I will be providing you with the following (*it can all be found on Blackboard*):

- Syllabus,
- Homework packets,
- Contingency Diagramming Checklist,
- Chapter objectives,
- Participation guidelines & templates
- Flashcards,
- Final Project Materials (*Instructions, Checklist, Examples*)

The materials are provided in a digital format for your convenience and to keep costs down for you. It wasn't that long ago (*really*) that I was sitting in your shoes looking at the bills for textbooks and course-packs. Believe me when I say that printing all of this material into a course-pack would typically cost you around \$80 in addition to purchasing your textbook. But in this *exclusive, direct-from-the-supplier offer*, as long as you stay registered for this class, you get them all free!!

NOTE: I will discuss the details of each class's procedure below, but please note that you will be expected to **print** the corresponding homework packet for each class period to turn in. I am aware that printing costs money, but in the past students have still found it cheaper to get digital copies of the materials and print rather than pay for an entire course-pack. If you don't own your own printer, then are printers are available in campus computer labs, or you can opt to drive costs further down by "borrowing" a friend's printer to use their ink and paper – just a suggestion...

Grading

Now for the section that you've all been waiting for!! The part where you find out how much effort that you're going to have to put into this course to pass...

Before I explain the grading system, let me first tell you that I am not the kind of instructor that gives tricky test questions or believes in the "bell curve". In fact, I don't even give midterms or a final exam. And why?? Well, that's because I want you all to learn as much as you can – and I will provide every opportunity for you to succeed in this course and get that "A". *(And really, this is just selfishness on my part – the world needs more amazing behavior analysts in the world. So if I can get you excited about the field and get an "A", then I feel that I'll have done my part in achieving that goal. So, don't think of me as too gracious a person...)*

That being said, here it is... You're grade will be determined by three things – your **homework**, your **class participation**, and your **daily quizzes**. Let me explain each one.

Homework

- Each class period, you will be expected to complete the homework packet for that chapter. As you'll learn in behavior analysis, the old saying, "practice makes perfect," is truer than you probably knew. The homework is designed to provide you with practice in analyzing and producing real world examples, which are two of the tasks that I discussed under the "purpose" section of this syllabus.
- With respect to grading, I'll expect you to do your homework in either **pencil** or **black/blue pen** prior to class. When class first starts, you all will be given a chance to ask questions about anything that you were unsure about within the homework packet. At this time, you each can use the **red pen** that I have provided you to **make corrections** to your homework based on the answers to your questions. Points for your homework grade will be based on both your original work in black ink AND the corrections that are made in red ink. So there is really no reason why you should get less than 100% of your points on your homework. **Remember this**, keep your red pen handy, and take advantage of the opportunity that I am giving you.

Class participation

- Within each homework packet, there will be a section that asks you to provide a real-world scenario of a concept that was covered in the chapter. During the class period, I will be asking each of you to present your scenario to the class and explain why it is a good example of the specified concept. You will then be given feedback regarding your scenario.
- With respect to grading, you will be given full points just for **presenting and explaining** your scenario. In-class feedback WILL NOT affect your grade for this category. That part is simply to help you learn more and prepare you for the **applied definitions** section on the quizzes.
- **Guidelines** for preparing your participation materials are included in the folder labeled "*Supporting Documents*".

Daily quizzes

- At the end of the class period, you will be quizzed over the chapter that you read and the material covered in class **that day**. And that is it. There will be no review quizzes, midterms, or final exams – just the daily quizzes for you to demonstrate mastery of the concepts. So remember, it is your responsibility to make sure that you fully understand the material prior to the quiz – so read, do the homework, and ask questions on anything that is unclear to make sure that you know the material inside and out.
- Now, you might be asking, “*Why is this class so weird? It’s not like any of the other courses that I’ve taken. Who gives quizzes on the day that the materials are presented?*”
 - o Well, the answer to this is easy – We both know that if I gave large review tests over multiple chapters that only the most *conscientious* of students would actually read the material prior to the class period that it was due. The rest of you most likely wouldn’t even touch the stuff to study until a few hours before test day. And I’m no exception; I did exactly that when I was in school, and *still* do when I don’t grade your quizzes until someone gets on my case about it ...
 - o So, in order to make class periods more productive and mastery of the material easier, I’ve broken up the quizzes by chapter so that you have **smaller chunks of material to learn** for a quiz, and you don’t have to get stressed out. And also, by placing the quizzes at the end of the class period in which we discussed them – **the material will be fresh in your mind**, making it easier for you to achieve superstar status in this class!
- The quizzes will consist of **conceptual questions, definition of terms, and an applied definition section**. Generally there will be approximately 15 points available on the conceptual questions, 6 or fewer terms to define, and 1 or 2 items that ask you to apply your definitions. Information regarding the important points and terms for each chapter will be posted on Blackboard as I write the quizzes (*look in the folder labeled “Chapter Objectives”*). Additionally, flashcards have been provided for you to help in studying the terms – if you desire, you can print and cut these out to help prepare. Look for these in the folder labeled “*Supporting Documents*”
- **A note about the definitions:** When grading your definitions, I say that definitions “*don’t have to be verbatim, just perfect*”. This means that if you choose to write your definitions in your own words, then you have to ensure that they include every aspect of the definitions given in the text, nothing more or less. For previous students, it’s been the case that a mistake in a single word could change the entire definition, so most have just memorized the given definitions – then they didn’t have to worry because they would always be perfect. It’s your choice though, play it safe or live life on the edge – I recommend safety.

Point Distribution

Now for the finale of this section – the point cut-offs. Points will be distributed in the following manner.

Participation is worth 10 points per class period, each **homework packet will be worth 20 points**, and each **quiz will be worth approximately 20 points** (*although this may vary depending on the content of each chapter – some may be worth less and some more*).

The totals are:

Participation – **230 points**
Homework – **420 points**
Quizzes – *approx.* **520 points**

Below is a grading matrix that shows how letter grades will be assigned. It may look complex, but don't get too anxious yet, let me explain...

	↓ Lowest % in either Participation or Homework ↓										
% of Quiz Points ↓	93	90	87	83	80	77	73	70	67	63	<63
93	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
90	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F	
87	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F		
83	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F			
80	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F				
77	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F					
73	C	C-	D+	D	F						
70	C-	D+	D	F							
67	D+	D	F								
63	D	F									
<63	F										

I know that you are asking, “*What’s going on here? Is this some kind of behavior analysis thing??*” Yep, it is. It’s actually a system designed to help you get the most meaningful “A” possible.

In order to use the matrix, simply take the **lower percentage from either your homework or participation** and find the corresponding *column*. Then find the *row* that corresponds to your **quiz percentage**. Where they meet is your current grade for the course.

For example, say that I had a 96% on my homework, an 89% on my participation, and a 90% for my quizzes. I would find the 87% column (*because 89% is the lower percentage between my homework and participation*) and then I would find where it meets the 90% row to discover that I had a B in the course.

So, to answer the question of, “*Why the weird matrix thing?*”...

- What I’ve found in the past is that with the three grade categories, some students were building up such a *cushion* of points from just the homework and participation that they could slack off on the quizzes and still obtain a decent grade, but it’s really the quizzes that matter!
- A friend once told me this story – Imagine that I was training surgeons, and I taught my students how to replace organs. I showed them how to locate the correct organ, to make only the tiniest incision, remember not to leave the scalpel in the patient, and sew the patient up so that they only needed a few hours for recovery. Now imagine that I sent one of those students out to help a patient, and he did everything correct, *except* he replaced the patient’s liver when she had a heart problem. That student could say, “*Hey, I did 19 out of 20 things correct; that’s a 95%. Where’s my ‘A’? The fact that I took out the wrong organ and the patient died shouldn’t overshadow my performance.*”...
- Well, the moral of the story is that the quizzes do matter a lot, and in order to keep myself from becoming one of those instructors that gives huge, difficult exams, I adopted this matrix. I hope that you can learn to love it as much as I do. It should be nice to know that most of my past students have earned at least a B if not an A in the course with this matrix, so it can’t be that bad...

Final Project

Oh yeah, I forgot to mention, you'll be completing a final project for this course. In my effort to make this the most enjoyable class that you'll ever take as an undergrad, I've substituted this project for one of the most aversive features of traditional courses – the final exam. You'll have demonstrated throughout the semester how you've mastered the concepts and principles of behavior analysis, but this will be your opportunity to really impress everyone and show them that you are on your way to becoming a professional behavior analyst.

Basically, this project will consist of a **short paper and presentation**. The points earned for this project will be factored into the **quiz portion** of your grade. The paper will be worth 25 quiz points and the presentation 50 quiz points.

Details about this project are included on Blackboard if you would like to look at it sooner, and I will be explaining it to you during the class period on _____.

Class Structure

Because this course is about the field of behavior analysis, it is designed according to its principles as well...so don't expect much lecturing from me. It's proven that you will learn better than if you practice the skills to be taught rather than just having me just lecture at you (*as much as I love talking about behavior analysis, fortunately for you, this course is about you and not me...*)

So, what will you be expected to do? Here it is:

- ***Preparation:*** In order to prepare for each class, you will be expected to:
 - **Read** the specified chapter,
 - Print and **complete the chapter homework**,
 - **Email me** your original example slide,
 - **Look over the chapter objectives** to make sure that you know all of the important points for the quiz, and
 - **Prepare any questions** that you may have over materials in the book/homework that weren't clear to

- ***Class period:*** Each class period will include five sections in this order:
 - A time to **go over the homework with a partner** in class, asking and answering any items that either of you were unsure about, and preparing questions that you both are unsure of for me to answer
 - A Q&A section where you can **ask me questions** over the chapter or the homework
 - (*You can revise your homework during these above sections with your red pens*)
 - A section where **I will present** any important points that I want you to know prior to the quiz
 - A section where you will each **present your original examples** from your homework for evaluation by me and your peers
 - The **chapter quiz**

There will occasionally be some exceptions where I will be presenting for parts of the class period, and these are noted in the course schedule.

Miscellaneous Info

Attendance, Making up quizzes, and Late homework

Attendance is up to you. I will work hard to ensure that attending class is so reinforcing that you will never miss a day, but if you do miss class just know that you will be **forfeiting** your opportunity to ask questions, participate, and take the quiz for that day.

To avoid this, if you are aware ahead of time that you will be absent from a class, notify me as soon as you know either in person or via email. It will be your responsibility to **turn in the homework** for the missed class **one class period prior**. When you notify me that you will be missing a class period, we will then make arrangements for you to take the quiz at another time. Failure to notify me, turn in your homework early, and make the appropriate arrangements for taking the missed quiz will result in lost points for those activities.

On the rare occasion that the absence was unexpected a **doctor's note will guarantee you an opportunity** to make up quizzes and turn in your homework late. It will be your responsibility to show me the note and we can make arrangements. If you **do not have a doctor's note**, then the default response will be that you will lose all points for the missed activities. You may, however, explain your situation to me if you would like because I understand that life can be unpredictable, and I have been known to bend the rules for what I deem a good excuse – but don't count on it.

Academic Integrity

I don't understand why anyone would pay for a course and then cheat in it so as to not learn the content – it just shows a lack of imagination. I guarantee you that there are a lot of better things to spend that money on than sitting in this course. However, if this is you, then I recommend that you don't get caught. Otherwise the situation will be handled in accordance with the university's policies as outlined at _____. Oh yeah, plagiarizing is also bad, and I read a lot as well and am pretty adept on the internet, so if you lift someone else's work without giving the original author proper credit, then I will most likely discover it – so don't do it.

Grades

You will generally be provided with printed copies of your grades on a weekly basis so that you can monitor your own performance. At any time, you may ask me to see your grades in person. I will not, however, share them over the internet, and will only share them with another person if I have written consent prior to contact with that person.

Students with a disability

Please notify me as soon as possible if you are a student with a university-recognized disability and I will see that the appropriate arrangements are made for you.

Class Cancellation

If the university cancels classes, then we have no class. Continue to follow the schedule on the syllabus for the next class period (e.g. prepare for the next chapter as it specifies). If I personally cancel class, then I will make every effort to notify you ahead of time, usually in person and with an email as a reminder. If any changes are made to reschedule a class period, then you will be provided with a new, printed schedule to use.

Phones in Class

Very simply, make sure they are in silent mode. Texting during discussion that disrupts your or another student's learning will result in dismissal from class (*and thus the forfeiture of the opportunity to take the quiz, etc.*). Texting during a quiz will result in the immediate loss of **all** points for that quiz.

Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Quiz</u>	<u>Notes/Comments/Reminders</u>
--	--	--	--	- Introduction to the course/review of the syllabus
--	--	--	Over <i>Syllabus</i> and <i>Participation Guidelines</i>	- Presentation: Questions can be asked about the syllabus and participation guidelines to prepare for the quiz, and then I will be presenting on the use of the blue Contingency Diagramming Checklist
1,2		pp. 1-31	Chap's 1-2	- There is no homework for chapter 1, just chapter 2
3		pp. 32-56	Chap 3	--
4		pp. 57-75 (<i>up to the Intermediate Enrichment</i>) AND pp. 79-81 starting at " <i>Informed Consent and Social Validity</i> "	Chap 4	--
5		pp. 82-99 (<i>up to Reversal Designs</i>)	Chap 5	--
6		pp. 102-120 (<i>up to "Moral Necessity..."</i>)	Chap 6	--
7		pp. 124-140 (<i>up to Intermediate Enrichment</i>)	Chap 7	--
8		pp. 144-158	Chap 8	--
9		pp. 159-168	Chap 9	--
10, (30)		pp. 169-177, (<i>and chap 30</i>)	Chap 10	- This entire class period <i>may be optional</i> - remind me to explain how! - There is no homework for chapter 10. - Chapter 30 is located on Blackboard in the <i>Supporting Documents</i> folder - it discusses grad school and future careers in behavior analysis and is OPTIONAL . - Presentation: In class we will review chapter 10, and then I will present/be open for questions regarding careers in behavior analysis.
11		pp. 178-197 (<i>up to "Hedonic and Instrumental..."</i>)	Chap 11	--
12		pp. 201-220	Chap 12	--

	13	pp. 221-236 (<i>up to Advanced Enrichment</i>)	Chap 13	- Ask me about the rat that was taught to discriminate between classical and jazz music - pretty amazing!
	14	pp. 241-253	Chap 14	--
	15	pp. 254-268	Chap 15	--
	16	pp. 269-275	Chap 16	--
	17	pp. 276-285 Review the final project guidelines as well	Chap 17	- There is no homework for chapter 17, - But don't forget to look at the chapter objectives to prepare for the quiz!! - Presentation: I will be covering guidelines and examples regarding the final project today since we won't have original examples to present
	18	pp. 286-299,	Chap 18	- There is no homework for chapter 18, - Due: I will be asking for your group members and a preliminary topic for your final projects, so talk to your peers and have that ready for me today.
	19	pp. 300-320	Chap 19	- Please have an idea of your groups and topics for your final project by today. It'll help me in planning
	20	pp. 321-340	Chap 20	--
	21	pp. 341-360	Chap 21	- Please be careful with this chapter – it presents a completely different model of behavior analysis that does not build on our previous studies. - Reinforcement and everything else that we have learned so far does NOT apply in the respondent conditioning model of thought.
	22	pp. 361-376	Chap 22	- We finally learn how to break the 60-second rule in this chapter!
	23	pp. 377-392	Chap 23	--
	24	pp. 393-410	Chap 24	--
	27,28	pp. 424-444	Chap 27,28	- Sign-up sheets for your final project day will be available today
	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>
Remember that <u>final project papers and projects are due today!!</u> All you have to do is bring to class any materials not emailed and fill out course surveys				
	--	--	Final Project Presentations	--
	--	--	Final Project Presentations	--
	--	--	Final Project Presentations	- Class is from 3:30-5:30 - We've made it! Time to celebrate!!

