

**The University of Mississippi**  
**PSY 323: Applied Behavior Analysis**  
**Spring 2010 (version: 10/2/2009)**

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### **Class meeting information:**

This class meets 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 p.m. on Tuesdays & Thursdays Spring semester, in Peabody 202. We will meet during the scheduled examination time (8am Thursday May 7<sup>th</sup>).

### **Catalogue Description:**

Introduction to current principles of learning and their application to the analysis of human behavior.

Prerequisites: PSY 201. (3).

### **A more elaborate description:**

Frazier, a character in B. F. Skinner's fictional *Walden II* asked, "**What would you do if you found yourself in possession of an effective science of behavior?**" (1948, p.240).

When I ask myself this question, an answer I hear is "teach others about an effective science of behavior using an effective science of behavior". I believe that Behavior Analysis (BA (this is said as letters)) is one such effective science of behavior. I also believe that the application of this science of behavior, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA (also said as letters), can make significant differences in the lives of people who come in contact with it. Thus, this course is designed to arrange conditions under which students are likely to:

- a) develop a preliminary understanding of the basic principles of behavior analysis
- b) know how various Behavior Analysts have answered this question
- c) answer this question for themselves

### **Course Objectives:**

During this course, successful students will demonstrate the ability to:

- 1) discuss practical uses of behavior analytic principles
- 2) discuss potential advantages and disadvantages and the ethical use of behavior change strategies
- 3) develop descriptive and measurable definitions for observable behavior
- 4) develop methods of measuring relevant dimensions of behavior
- 5) identify potential controlling variables of behavior that can be manipulated
- 6) identify methods of testing for functional relationships between behavior and controlling variables
- 7) identify strategies for increasing relevant dimensions of behavior
- 8) identify strategies for decreasing relevant dimensions of behavior
- 9) measure and demonstrate changes in behavior and controlling variables

### **Required Materials:**

- Books & Reading Materials
  1. Chance, P. (2006). *First course in applied behavior analysis*. Waveland Press
  2. One of: Pryor's *Getting Started: Clicker Training* books (e.g., for cats, dogs, horses, birds...)
  3. Skinner, B. F. (1948). *Walden II*.
  4. On-line articles & web-sites
- Materials for every class
  1. Response Card
  2. SAFMEDS (available for purchase at Printing Services)
- Connectivity
  1. Blackboard account and Internet access
  2. Regular access to olemiss.edu email account

## Ways to earn points:

Success in any course, as measured by your final grade and the degree to which your verbal and nonverbal behavior has changed, is dependent upon the effort you and your instructor put into the course. As the instructor, I believe it my job to arrange conditions under which you are likely to successfully meet the objectives of this course. You have probably noticed that only a few of the course objectives are related to changes in your verbal behavior *about* ABA, while many are related to changes in your behavior with respect to behavior. Therefore, instead of relying solely on major exams, this class arranges multiple frequent opportunities for students to practice skills related to the course objectives. The points earned on these opportunities for practice allow students to 'unlock' the final opportunity to demonstrate these skills.

As this points + final system is somewhat unusual, it can be difficult to understand. Please pay close attention to this section of the syllabus and seek additional information as required. University policy provides for reasonable accommodations to be made for students with verified disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis, and I welcome opportunities to discuss potential accommodations.

You may meet the point requirements to allow you to take the final exam by completing all, or some of the assignments listed below (descriptions of each found on Blackboard).

### There are two required assignments:

1. **Plan for Demonstrating Class Objectives (due second week of class)**
2. **Final Exam**

You may choose to earn points by doing any or all of the other assignments. Please note that:

- all assignments have due dates (see late assignments and course schedule below)
- all on-line weekly assignments (SAFMEDS, Blackboard, Reading Quizzes) are due by 6pm on Fridays
- the number of points available on an assignment & the number you earn are not necessarily equal
- it is not possible to pass the class with only the points available in the last half of the semester.

## Assignment Menu

	Maximum Number	Maximum Points Each	Potential Points	Objectives
Plan for Demonstrating Class Objectives	1	5	5	1
In-class Assignments & Quizzes	27	20	540	all
On-Line Weekly SAFMEDS	14	10	140	all
On-Line Weekly Blackboard Assignments	14	10	140	3,4,5,6,7,8
On-Line Weekly Reading Quizzes	14	5	70	all
Live SAFMEDS	3	40	120	all
Behavior Change Proposal (description on bb)	1	50	50	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8
Clicker Training Project (description on bb)	1	75	75	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9
ABA & Social Issues Proposal (description on bb)	1	50	50	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9
Walden II Position Paper (description on bb)	1	75	75	1,2
Participation studies in UM's psychology department	5	4 (per hour) Total	20 <b>1315</b>	1

### Variable Points – can be arrange with instructor

Self-proposed assignments	2	50	100
Resubmission of major assignments with grades of less than a 80% of possible points			

## Grades:

Your final grade in this class is dependent on two related performances:

- the number of points you accumulate during the semester
- your performance on the cumulative final exam

final exam points earned	90%+	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	50-59%	1-49%	0%
1000 or more	A			B			C
900 - 999	A		B				C
800 - 899	A	B			C		
700 - 799	B		C				D
600 - 699	C			D			
0 - 599	F						

## Academic Conduct:

The University is conducted on a basis of common honesty. "Dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are regarded as particularly serious offenses." (2005 Undergraduate Course Catalog, p. 139). In some cases, students are unaware of the specific behaviors which can be considered as plagiarism; however, this is not an excuse for such behaviors (see pages 292-294 of the APA style guide for information). Minimally, a student found cheating or plagiarizing in this class will be given a zero for the assignment. Such actions could lead to failing the course and disciplinary action by the school.

## Grade Appeals:

If the student wishes to dispute a grade on any assignment, he/she may do so by writing an explanation and turning it in with the graded assignment. The instructor and teaching assistants will evaluate this explanation to determine if no, partial, or complete credit will be given.

## Attendance and Classroom Behavior:

I believe that you have the greatest opportunity to learn when you have multiple opportunities to practice, and that classes provide such opportunities. Therefore, I expect students to attend classes, arrive on time, and stay until the end of class. Students have a choice whether or not to attend class; however, I also expect students to reduce the number of potential distractions during class (i.e., no reading other materials, no text messaging, no phone calls, no crossword puzzles, no studying for other classes). In every class period, students have the opportunity to earn up to 20 points. These in-class points may not be made up.

## Late Assignments:

All assignments are due **on-line by 6pm** on the scheduled date, even for students absent during the class period (see the course schedule). Students may turn assignments in early for feedback. For most late assignments, I will take off the following percentage of the possible points before grading:

How Late?	Percent Off	Example: Highest possible for assignment worth 50 points
Next day	5%	47.5
2-7 days	10%	45
7-14 days	50%	25
15 + days	100%	0

*n.b. In-Class Activities and On-Line Weekly activities are not available after the due date.*

## Modifications to syllabus and assignments

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus during the course of the semester with notification to the class.

Week	Day	Date	Topic	Reading	Major Assignments
0	1	21-Jan-10	Introduction	<a href="http://www.bfsr.org/element1.html">http://www.bfsr.org/element1.html</a>	
1	2	26-Jan-10	ABC's of ABA	Chance (C), Chap. 1	
1	3	28-Jan-10	Defining & Measuring Behavior	C, pp 44-60, 85-90	
2	4	2-Feb-10	Visual Inspection & Small N Designs	C, pp 60-85, 90-92 (see blackboard for readings)	Excel Lab
2	5	4-Feb-10	Reinforcement	C, Chap. 3	
3	6	9-Feb-10	Prompting and Fading	C, Chap. 4	APA Style Lab
3	7	11-Feb-10	Shaping and Chaining	C, Chap. 5	
4	8	16-Feb-10	Extinction and Differential Reinforcement	C, Chap. 6	First Day for Live SAFMEDS
4	9	18-Feb-10	Stimulus Preference Assessments	see folder for readings	
5	10	23-Feb-10	Descriptive Analyses & Analog Functional Analyses	see folder for readings	
5	11	25-Feb-10	Functional Behavior Treatments	see folder for readings	
6	12	2-Mar-10	Punishment	C, Chap. 7	
6	13	4-Mar-10	Discrimination Training	C, Chap. 8	
7	14	9-Mar-10	Generalization Training	C, Chap. 9	Behavior Change Proposal
7	15	11-Mar-10	Maintenance	C, Chap. 10	
		16-Mar-10	Spring Break		
		18-Mar-10			
8	16	23-Mar-10	Counterconditioning & transfer of Stimulus Function	C, Chap. 11	
8	17	25-Mar-10	ACT	see folder for readings	
9	18	30-Mar-10	Pets, Service Animals, & Zoos	"Clicker Training" Chapters 1-3	
9	19	1-Apr-10	Wild Animals	see folder for readings	
10	20	6-Apr-10	BA & Parenting	see folder for readings	
10	21	8-Apr-10	Organizational Behavioral Management & Behavioral Safety	see folder for readings	Clicker Training Project
11	22	13-Apr-10	Behavioral Pediatrics & Medicine	see folder for readings	
11	23	15-Apr-10	Behavioral Health	see folder for readings	BA & Social Issues
12	24	20-Apr-10	BA & Education	see folder for readings	
12	25	22-Apr-10	Behavioral Sport Psychology	see folder for readings	Last day for live SAFMEDS
13	26	27-Apr-10	BA & Autism	see folder for readings	All Extra Credit due
13	27	29-Apr-10	BA & Social Issues	see folder for readings	Walden II Paper
14	28	7-May-10	8:00 AM – Final Exam		