

EAB 4184: Behaviorism and Contemporary Society

Fall, 2025

Class

Tues Periods 5-6, 11:45 AM - 1:40 PM

[MAT 0018](#)

Thurs Period 6, 12:50 PM - 1:40 PM

[FLG 0260](#)

Professor

Jesse Dallery, Ph.D.

Office Hrs: Thurs 11-12:00, and by appt

Psychology 92

dallery@ufl.edu

Phone: 273-2182

Teaching Assistants

Charlotte Jones (graduate student TA)

jones.charlotte@ufl.edu

Group: RadB 1

Trinity Chan

chantl@ufl.edu

Group: RadB 2

Rose McDaniel

mcdanielr@ufl.edu

Group: RadB 3

Bre'Anna Grandison-Hinnant

breannagrandison@ufl.edu

Group RadB 4

Overview

Most challenges we face in society are behavioral in nature. Consider: addiction, crime and delinquency, overconsumption, corruption, domestic violence, child abuse, climate change, prejudice, terrorism. This course will explore how a behavior analytic perspective may help us face these challenges, and understand, re-imagine, and change the world in which we live.

During the first part of the course we will analyze the philosophy of modern behaviorism, and become familiar with core concepts and terms that will guide our later discussions. During the next part of the course, we will ask how a science of behavior might shed light on our social ills, and how these insights can mitigate suffering and promote human welfare. Throughout, we will

consider both the potential and the limitations of behavioral science to address the social and environmental crises of our time and to promote human welfare. Like all courses I teach, my more ambitious goal for the course is to change your life.

Format

Class will be held in-person on the specified dates and times. We will use a variety of activities to digest the challenging and provocative issues raised during this class. We will use class discussion, collaborative projects, small group discussion, and interactive lectures.

A behavioral approach to teaching and learning will be used in this class. You will be provided with study guides each week, quizzed frequently, and receive immediate feedback on your performance.

Readings

The required text is Johnston's Talking about Behavior: Radical Behaviorism for ABA Practitioners, Second Edition. And don't worry, you don't need to be an ABA practitioner. A "practitioner" is someone interested in understanding and solving behavior problems. That's everybody in this class. You should buy the [ebook](#) or hard copy by then end of Week 1 (Module 1). In general I recommend the hard copy, and in particular if you plan to pursue advanced academic study or a career in behavior analysis. Articles in pdf format will be available in Canvas.

The readings in this course are central to your understanding of key concepts in behavior analysis and their application to real-world issues. To get the most out of them and succeed in the class, I recommend reading actively and critically. When you come to a new concept, ask yourself if you can explain the concept in your own words or connect it to a real-world example.

During the first half of the semester, I will provide completed study guides for each assigned reading. I suggest reading the chapter/article first, then use the study guide to check your understanding, clarify key points, and reinforce learning. If your takeaways differ from what's in the guide, or something doesn't make sense, please reach out to me or your TA—or bring it up in class.

During the second half of the semester, I will provide blank study guides to guide your reading. These will not be graded, but using them effectively will help you succeed on exams and in-class activities. You're always welcome to ask questions about your answers or interpretations.

If something confuses you or sparks your interest, make a note and bring it to class or office hours. This course is about building your ability to think behaviorally and critically—your questions are a vital part of that process.

Course Communications

Please use Canvas to message me or the TAs. Expect us to respond within 24 hrs during the week and 48 hrs during the weekend. Check Canvas and your email for any updates on a daily basis during the week.

How You'll Be Graded

Quizzes: On most Tuesdays there will be a short quiz that will cover material from the in-person classes since the last quiz, and the assigned module readings. Quizzes will be worth 5-10 points. The format will be multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, and some short answer may be included. Quizzes will be taken either by students individually (5 min time cap), or in small groups (variable time cap). I will let you know the format the day of the quiz.

The cultural design lab: from blueprints to studio: Throughout the semester, a variety of activities will be scheduled in-class. During the first half, these will be "Behavioral Blueprint" activities, and during the second the activities will be part of the "Cultural Analysis Studio." Each activity will be worth 5 points. They will require knowledge from the readings and class lecture. Some activities may be started in class and completed outside of class and submitted via Canvas.

A blueprint refers to a conceptual diagram or understanding of the biological, behavioral, and cultural processes that shape individual and collective action. Just as an architect's blueprint guides the construction of a building, a behavioral blueprint identifies the underlying variables — biological susceptibilities, Pavlovian processes, role models, reinforcers, rules, verbal processes, and metacontingencies—that maintain cultural practices. These blueprints will serve as the foundation for the second half of the course, when we transition to applying this knowledge in the Cultural Analysis Studio, where we will propose, critique, or re-imagine solutions to societal problems.

If a score of 0, 3, or 4 is received, students may work with the TA or instructor to improve the diagram and provide one re-submission by the midterm for Blueprint activities or by the final for Cultural Analysis activities.

Midterm and Final: The midterm and final will be worth 30 points each. Each will consist of about 20 multiple choice questions (1 pt each) and several short answer questions. The midterm and final will be held in-class. Please bring a device (ipad, laptop, etc) to complete the midterm and final in Canvas. Exams are closed-book/closed-notes.

Participation: Participation will be worth 40 points. You will have the opportunity to self-evaluate your participation at 2 timepoints during the semester (midterm and at the end of the course). I will provide a rubric, and you will submit your grade at each timepoint. We will review your self-evaluation and either concur, or we will provide feedback and enter a lower or a higher number.

Grading

	Points	Grade	Percentage Range
Quizzes (~9xTBD points)	~60	A	93-100
Midterm	30	A-	90-93
Final	30	B+	87-90
Participation	60	B	83-87
Cultural design lab	~40	B-	80-83
		C+	77-80
		C	73-77
		C-	70-73
		D+	67-70
		D	63-67
		D-	60-63
		E	<60

Note: There is no rounding.

Specialization Track in Behavior Analysis

The Department of Psychology offers a specialization track in Behavior Analysis. The curriculum includes coursework in behavior analysis, psychology, statistics, mathematics, and biology. Please click [here](#) for more information.

COURSE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

- Laptops/phones are not permitted during class unless explicitly approved for accessibility or academic reasons. Students with DRC accommodations will receive approval automatically upon sharing their letter. See this [link](#) for research that informed this guideline.
- Missed quizzes: If you miss a quiz for any reason, email me (Dr. Dallery) ahead of time or within 24 hrs of the scheduled quiz. The email only needs to state: "I missed the quiz on X date. I am requesting a make-up." I will confirm the request, and only those with confirmations will be able to complete the make-ups. One make-up will be available on the same day as the midterm, and one will be available the same day as the final. The content of the make-up will be announced before the midterm or final. If you miss more than two quizzes, further make-ups will be granted based on University approved [reasons](#) and must include proper documentation as

per University guidelines. If you miss a quiz and don't contact me within 24 hours of the missed quiz, the make-up will be granted based on University approved [reasons](#) and must include proper documentation as per University guidelines.

- Missed design labs: If you miss an in-class design lab activity, you will need to follow the directions in the respective module to complete the activity and turn in the document by the midterm (for blueprint activities) or final (for the cultural analysis activities). If they are not turned in by these dates, a zero will remain in Canvas for that activity. Only one submission of a late design lab is permitted (i.e., no revisions).
- Missed midterm or final: A make-up will be granted based on University approved [reasons](#) and must include proper documentation as per University guidelines. Contact me ahead of time or within 24 hours.
- Leaving class early: Please minimize any disruption by notifying the instructor and sitting near the door if early departure is necessary.
- Announcements will be made periodically about class issues (such as reminders about upcoming assignments). These will be visible on our course's home page. Students are responsible for all announcements made there.
- This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#)
- All work students submit for this course will be their own. Students are not allowed to use any generative artificial intelligence tools (e.g. ChatGPT or Dall-E 2) at any stages of the work process, including preliminary ones. AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be considered as plagiarism.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- Syllabus Change Policy. Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change.