

**EAB 6099: Survey of Behavior Analysis:
Advanced Topics on Behavioral Processes, Fall 2023**

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Office hours: TBD

Time/Location: Tuesdays, 4:05-7:05pm, 1001 Norman Hall

Course Textbook: Rasmussen, E. B., Clay, C. J., Pierce, W. D., & Cheney, C. D. (2023). *Behavior analysis and learning: A biobehavioral approach (7th ed.)*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Course Description: How do **contingencies affect behavior**? This question broadly forms the basis of this class because contingencies between environmental events (classical conditioning) and between behavior and environmental events (operant conditioning) largely comprise what we call the *principles of behavior*. Although the answers are not usually simple nor are they complete, understanding behavioral principles is very important to behavioral researchers and clinicians. Contingencies provide essential tools for understanding and undertaking behavior change. To understand how contingencies affect behavior, we will explore experimental and theoretical approaches to studying basic principles, including predictiveness, reinforcement, punishment, stimulus control, etc. In doing so, this course primarily examines how basic research on behavioral processes contributes to our tentative understanding of behavior ranging from reflexes to verbal behavior. Understanding behavioral processes underlying contingencies will equip you to better implement and design methods both to study and change behavior. By the end of the course, you should understand the fundamentals of operant and respondent behavior, appreciate how basic research in the laboratory contributes to this understanding, and begin to apply this understanding to your experimental and clinical interests.

Course Overview: The course will include **readings and guides** to help with understanding those readings. First, classes will begin by selecting a new partner each week and initiating a **5-min discussion** to discuss any questions or areas of interest you had on the readings and guide. Second, a multiple-choice **quiz** will assess comprehension of the primary reading (typically, the book chapter), followed by a discussion of the quiz items. Third, we will spend approximately one hour clarifying concepts in discussion format from the primary reading. Finally, I will provide an interactive lecture. You will be assessed on quiz performance, class participation, and a final paper.

Course Objectives: By the end of the semester, you should be able to engage effectively in the following behaviors from discussions, readings, and lectures:

- Identify how behavior analysis differs from other approaches to understanding behavior
- Describe how fundamental research on reflexes and classical conditioning provide insight into the relation between learning and biological processes
- Describe how fundamental research on operant conditioning reveals how behavior is a function of its consequences
- Identify how schedules of reinforcement influence the rate, pattern, and persistence of operant behavior
- Describe the different types of aversive control and its importance for survival and the variables

influencing its effectiveness

- Evaluate how stimulus-stimulus contingencies can augment or interfere with the production of operant behavior
- Explain how relatively simple stimulus control contributes to the development of complex discriminations
- Describe how choice is fundamental to understanding operant behavior generally and underlies many socially relevant problem behaviors
- Identify approaches to examining conditioned reinforcement and at least two ways to conceptualize its effects
- Explain social learning and rules are established and control behavior from a behavioral perspective
- Identify how verbal behavior differs from traditional notions of language and how equivalence relations have been used to examine it
- Describe how selection processes are used to understand the evolution of species, operant behavior, and cultural practices

Attendance Policies: Please note this is a weekly class so missing one class results in missing a lot of material and course performance generally is positively related to attendance. For all attendance rules, we will follow the university [attendance policies](#). If you are unable to attend class, be sure to collect notes for any missed classes from a peer. Students must take/submit all assignments at scheduled times, unless you have formal documentation of a university-approved excuse (e.g., university-sanctioned event, illness). If missing a class, contact me as early and as soon as possible and send me formal documentation. Therefore, be sure to provide me with a documented and university-approved excuse if you have to miss class. Traffic problems and trouble finding parking are not legitimate excuses so please ensure you arrive on time. You need to let me know ahead of time if you have a scheduled miss of great importance – you will need to hand in all assignments ahead of time.

Assignments

Reading Guides: 25% of grade. Reading Guides provide (1) a set of questions for all required readings within Files through Canvas and (2) the opportunity to ask questions and (3) the opportunity to research one of your questions for each reading. Completing these guides while reading will assist you in applying and evaluating concepts from the readings more effectively than would a passive read. As with any course material, engaging actively with the material in as many ways as possible (e.g., flash cards, testing) leads to better learning. Reading guides will be checked for completion, as well as relevance and thoroughness of your answer. Answers should be paraphrased and, therefore, should NOT be identical other students', online resources, or the readings. Identical or incomplete answers will not be counted. A Word file in Files provides a template for your answers -- please only number your answers and DO NOT include the question before your answers.

If any answers would benefit from making an image of any kind (e.g., graph), either draw these by hand to take a picture or use graphing software – embed any graphs within the text of your document. Please submit your completed guides to Canvas as a Microsoft Word file by the specified date/time. Late submissions also should be submitted via Canvas but will be penalized 10% per day but complete submissions after 5 days can earn up to 50% until the last day of classes of the

semester. It is your responsibility to ensure the file(s) you upload to Canvas saved properly (e.g., refreshing the screen, opening uploaded file(s), take screen shot).

In addition, you are asked to come up with at least one question for each reading. These questions can help you prepare to participate in class and, therefore, should be substantive. In other words, they should ask more than for simple clarification of something that can easily be confirmed on your own. They can stem from either your own reading or from questions from the reading guide. For at least one question per reading, you also will **conduct some further research to provide an answer to your question** by examining the relevant literature using a database (e.g., Google Scholar, Web of Science) and writing 3-5 sentences to summarize your findings. Some examples here might be to identify additional research findings or provide alternative explanations from those described in readings.

Quizzes: 25% of grade. Weekly quizzes based on the current Reading Guide will begin approximately 5 minutes after class begins. You are welcome to discuss/study with others in the time before the quiz begins. You will have 15 min to take quizzes. Quizzes will have 10 multiple-choice questions. **Please bring a laptop or tablet to every class so you can take quizzes using Canvas.** You will not be permitted to have any window open on your laptop/tablet other than the quiz. You will need to install and use [Lockdown Browser](#) when taking quizzes (see introductory [video](#)). Your lowest quiz score will be dropped, with the exception of any unexcused absences/tardiness, which will result in a zero score for that quiz. Excused absences will result in that quiz not being counted toward your overall quiz grade.

Class Participation: 25% of grade. All students are expected to participate actively in discussions during each class. Active participation involves remaining attentive and engaged throughout classes. This includes posing and answering questions during class discussion by engaging in prompted and unprompted discussion with the instructor and other students. In addition, using electronic devices is discouraged but is welcome during frequent breaks. I recommend taking notes by hand on paper rather than on a computer or tablet. Active engagement with course materials before class facilitates active engagement during class. The questions you develop within Reading Guides, and the subset you answer, can provide you with ideas for interacting during class. Plan to participate regularly throughout every class period. Receiving credit for class participation includes filling out the weekly **Participation Survey** in Canvas following the class meeting. Unexcused absences not meeting university guidelines will result in a zero for the class-participation grade for that week.

A wise person once said, “If you are afraid to look foolish, then you sacrifice knowledge for pride.” Graduate school is the place where it is important to practice public speaking about complex ideas. After graduate school, you will be required to talk a lot in your profession. If you choose now to practice speaking in your classes, your ability to speak fluently about complex concepts with others will improve – a process that will allow you to avoid looking foolish in front of your future colleagues, students, or clients.

Presentation: 25% of grade. Presentations should be approximately 15 min in duration and based on a [thesis statement](#). The thesis statement is your main argument you will support, ideally with research. In other words, your presentation should convey a single idea that is novel, clear, and concisely described relating to any topic we discussed during the course. Presentations should make

explicit links to the behavioral processes revealed in the empirical literature contacted in the readings. Ideas should be of high quality and empirically driven to emphasize the usefulness of understanding behavioral processes. The idea might be to propose a novel experiment, application, insight, treatment strategy, or other interesting suggestion inspired by the behavioral processes discussed in the readings or class (not philosophical). This also should not be an idea developed for another requirement (e.g., thesis). All claims must be justified empirically. If you absolutely must speculate or conjecture about something, provide evidence as to why you think what you do. Grading will be based on quality of your rationale, and the strength, clarity, and organization of arguments during the presentation (see grading rubric in Files). You must submit a recording (MP4 or MOV file) and the presentation (PPTX or KEY file) of your presentation. Policy for late submissions is the same as for Reading Guides.

Essentially, **your thesis statement is a statement of your main argument** and what you want listeners to conclude. Devote the entire presentation to providing supporting evidence for your thesis statement. Be sure to support your thesis statement with your strongest argument (s). It is better to strengthen and refine one great argument than superficially list several arguments. Thus, the idea is to practice developing quality arguments with the idea that all presentations (and writing) should reflect that level of consideration and refinement. Do not spend the entire presentation asking questions – the purpose of the presentation is to support your thesis based on evidence. Provide enough information from peer-reviewed sources for appropriate context, rather than exhaustively reviewing of all aspects of the relevant research.

Relatedly, **it is important to understand and present to your audience**. I will be grading all of your presentations; however, please do not omit relevant information because you assume I already understand the background to your argument. It is very possible that I am not familiar with the particular study, design, procedure, or arguments necessary to make a point clearly. These presentations are to assess your understanding of the material and ability to convey that understanding. Therefore, please present to a generally educated audience and be sure to explain your ideas/evidence sufficiently so your peers could easily understand your presentation.

You want to provide sufficient rationale for novel ideas beyond ‘it would be interesting’ or ‘it would add greater understanding.’ Important ideas, such as novel arguments or studies, need to be introduced within the context of the literature, not simply because they are possible. Similarly, critiques of major points and conclusions should not be limited to single statements, such as simply suggesting that “more research is needed.” Brief criticisms are acceptable for minor points but ideas central to your thesis statement need to be developed fully. When developing this support, you should contact and cite the most relevant literature. Omitting the most relevant literature to your thesis statement omits the most important reasons for presenting your argument. You should use a database (e.g., Google Scholar, Web of Science) to find relevant research. You might find the required and supplemental readings good starting points when developing and expanding your topic. When presenting ideas, it is helpful to clarify what are your original ideas versus summaries of ideas you found in the literature – take credit for your good ideas.

Feel free to give and receive feedback from your peers and anyone else who is willing. Practice giving and receiving feedback is the best way to improve your overall comfort and effectiveness when presenting. When commenting on others’ presentations, merely indicating places in which you get

confused is a big help. Do not expect all of your or your peers' comments to be substantive, as it is likely neither of you are experts in the topic.

Grades:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A	93%+
A-	90-92.9%
B+	87-89.9%
B	83-86.9%
B-	80-82.9%

Course Schedule: Please note there is some chance I might modify the schedule and/or readings but I will let you know ahead of time. Any changes will be announced via Canvas. If a class is canceled (e.g., due to inclement weather), be prepared to cover the missed material and quiz during the next scheduled class meeting.

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share the accommodation letter with the instructor and discuss access needs as early as possible in the semester.

University Honesty Policy: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The [Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class."

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to complete all or portions of your work is considered unauthorized aid in this course and will be considered academic dishonesty. Submitting assignments implies you agree to the following statement: *I certify the submitted work is my own, with all sources correctly attributed and that I did not use artificial intelligence (AI) in its development or completion.*

University Policy on In-Class Recording: Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and

delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

University Policy on Course Evaluation: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual Harassment is not tolerated in this class, in the Department of Psychology, or at the University of Florida. Sexual harassment includes: the inappropriate introduction of sexual activities or comments in a situation where sex would otherwise be irrelevant. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and a violation of state and federal laws as well as of the policies and regulations of the university. All UF employees and students must adhere to UF’s sexual harassment policy which can be found here: <https://hr.ufl.edu/forms-policies/policies-managers/sexual-harassment/>

Please review this policy and contact a university official if you have any questions about the policy. As mandatory reporters, university employees (e.g., administrators, managers, supervisors, faculty, teaching assistants, staff) are required to report knowledge of sexual harassment to UF’s Title IX coordinator. For more information about UF’s Title IX office see: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/> You can also complete a Sexual Harassment Report online (Title IX) at: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/title-ix-reporting-form/>

Health and Wellness Resources

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
- University Police Department: 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>, Call: 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu
- Career Resource Center: <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.
- Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>, Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center: <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- Writing Studio: <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Student Complaints Campus: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf
On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>