

**Applied Behavior Analysis in Complex Community Environments**  
**MHS 6100**  
**Spring 2007**

Professor: Hewitt B. "Rusty" Clark, Ph.D., BCBA  
Office location: MHC 2332  
Office phone: 974-6409  
Office fax: 974-6257  
E-mail: [clark@fmhi.usf.edu](mailto:clark@fmhi.usf.edu)  
Office Hours: By appointment.

**Course Prerequisites:**

EDF 6215 Principles of Learning  
PSY/ESE 6100 Observational Methods / Functional Assessment  
Waiver may be requested through Instructors or Program Director

**Course Goals and Objectives**

This course will prepare students to:

- a) recognize and respond to factors that may affect the application of behavior analysis principles within and across community settings; and
- b) design intervention plans that fit given characteristics of the social and physical context of these settings.

Community contexts and settings considered in this course include families and family homes; schools, service agencies, and facilities; neighborhoods with distinct cultural identities; and places of employment, recreation, and commerce.

**Through participation in this course, students will be able to:**

1. Identify characteristics, resources, and barriers of complex community systems (e.g., families, schools, organizations).
2. Demonstrate competence with transdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to intervention (e.g., establish relationships, enlist participation, facilitate coordination).
3. Assess the impact of cultural, social, and economic variables on community-based behavioral intervention.
4. Identify needs of consumers using behavioral assessment methods, person-centered planning, and strength-based assessment.
5. Engage in productive consultative processes (e.g., facilitating assessment and intervention activities, monitoring and insuring ongoing support, fading involvement).
6. Apply the concepts of contextual fit or ecological relevance in addressing the wide range of considerations associated with designing interventions in complex community environments.
7. Identify and design system-wide interventions using behavior analysis principles.

**Required Texts and Readings**

All readings are posted on Black Board

**Course Readings:**

- Benazzi, L., Horner, R.H., & Good, R.H. (2005, under review). Effects of Behavior Support Team Composition on the Technical Adequacy and Contextual Fit of Behavior Support Plans. *Journal of Special Education*.
- Bullis, M., Tehan, C.J., & Clark, H.B. (2000). Teaching and developing improved community life competencies. In H.B. Clark and M. Davis, (Eds.), *Transition to adulthood: A resource for assisting young people with emotional or behavioral difficulties*, 107-131.
- Carr, J.E., Austin, J.L., Britton, L.N., Kellum, K.K., & Bailey, J. S. (1999). An assessment of social validity trends in applied behavior analysis. *Behavioral Interventions 14*, 223-231.
- Clark, H.B., Deschenes, N., & Jones, J. (2000). A framework for the development and operation of a transition system. In H.B. Clark and M. Davis, (Eds.), *Transition to adulthood: A resource for assisting young people with emotional or behavioral difficulties*, 29-51.
- Clark, H.B. & Hieneman, M. (1999). Comparing the wraparound process to positive behavioral support: What we can learn. *Journal of Positive Behavioral Interventions 1*, 183-186.
- Dunlap, G., Newton, J.S., Fox, L., Benito, N., & Vaughn, B. (2001). Family involvement in functional assessment and positive behavior support. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 16*, 215-221.
- Fox, L., Vaughn, B.J., Wyatte, M.L., Dunlap, G. (2002). "We can't expect other people to understand": Family perspectives on problem behavior. *Exceptional Children, 68*, (4), 437-450.
- Hieneman, M., & Dunlap, G. (2001). Factors affecting the outcomes of community based behavioral support: II. Assessing the relative importance of factor categories. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 3*, 67-74.
- Lucyshyn, J.M., Irwin, L.K., Blumberg, E.R., Laverty, R., Horner, R.H., & Sprague, J.R. (2004). Validating the construct of coercion in family routines: Expanding the unit of analysis in behavioral assessment with families of children with developmental disabilities. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities, 29*, (2), 104-121.
- Moes, D.R., & Frea, W.D. (2002). Contextualized behavioral support in early interventions for children with autism and their families. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disabilities, 32*, (6), 519-533.

Santorelli, G., Koegel, R.L., Casas, J.M., & Koegel, L.K. (2001). Culturally diverse families participating in behavior therapy parent education programs for children with developmental disabilities. *Journal of Positive Behavioral Interventions* 3, 120-123.

Special section on parent-professional partnerships in behavioral support (1997), from the *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (JASH)*, 22, 185-223.

Sugai, G., Sprague, J.R., Horner, R.H., & Walker, H.M. (2000). Preventing school violence: The use of office discipline referrals to assess and monitor school-wide discipline interventions. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 8, 94-101.

Turnbull, A., Edmonson, H., Griggs, P., Wickham, D., Sailor, W., Freeman, R., Guess, D., Lassen, S., McCart, A., Park, J., Riffel, L., Turnbull, R., & Warren J. A blueprint for schoolwide positive behavior support: Implementation of three components. *Exceptional Children*, 68 (3), 377-402.

Walker, H.M., Horner, R.H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J.R., Bricker, D., & Kaufman, M.J. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4, 194-209.

Course Text and Manual:

Koegel, L.K., Koegel, R.L., & Dunlap, G. (1996). *Positive behavioral support: Including people with difficult behavior in the community*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishers.

Hieneman, M., Nolan, M., Presley, J., De Turo, L., Gayler, W., Dunlap, G. (2000). *Facilitator's Guide, Positive Behavioral Support*. Tallahassee, FL : Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services.

### Outline of Course Content and Schedule

Class Date Spring, 07 (Dates to be revised)	Topics and Associated Assignments	Readings Due for Class
1/06	* Class Introduction * Historical Perspective	
1/13	* Contextual Fit * Broad Variables	Text – CH 4 Text – CH 18 Text – Preface Moes & Frea (2002)
1/20	* NO CLASS – Martin Luther King Jr.	
1/27	* Ecological and Setting Factors	Text – CH 12 Text – CH 16 Text – CH 17
2/03	* EXAM 1 * Work session on Special Topic Paper	
2/10	* Planning, Assessment, & Interventions * SECURE APPROVAL FOR PAPER TOPIC BY THE END OF CLASS.	Text CH 19 Facilitators' Guide
2/17	* Design of Interventions I * Cultural Issues	Hieneman & Dunlap (2001) Fox et al. (2002) Santorelli et al. (2001)
2/24	* Design of Interventions II * Transition * Skill Development	Benazzi, Horner & Good (pre-print) Clark & Hieneman (1999) Clark, Deschenes, & Jones (2000) Bullis, Tehan, & Clark (2000)
3/3	* EXAM 2 * Work session on Special Topic Paper and planning for student presentations.	
3/10	* NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK	
3/17	* Design of Interventions III * Families – I	Lucyshyn et al. (2004) Dunlap et al. (2001)
3/24	* Design of Interventions IV * Families – II	Carr et al. (1999) JASH Special Issue (Series of articles)

3/31	* Design of Interventions V * School-wide applications	Turnball et al. (2002) Sugai et al. (2000) Walker et al. (1996)
4/07	* Summary of course * Group Planning * SPECIAL TOPIC PAPER DUE AT START OF CLASS	
4/14 4/21	* Student Presentations of their Special Topic Papers	
4/28	* FINAL EXAM	

### **Special Topic Paper**

The purpose of the Special Topic Paper is to provide you with an opportunity to actively explore some aspect of the application of behavior analysis in complex community environments that you find interesting and challenging. In particular, the assignment is intended to encourage you to consider in some depth the steps you would take to tailor a behavior analytic program so that it best meets the contextual conditions in which the program is to be applied. The paper can take the form of:

- (a) **Literature Review** - a library literature review and discussion of a topic in which you go into greater depth than addressed in the course; or
- (b) **Project Summary** - a detailed, thoughtful summary of a planning process and/or intervention that you have collaboratively designed and/or carried out in home, community, and/or school settings to increase the likelihood of achieving improved outcomes.

The Special Topic Paper is to be an original piece of work written by you individually for this course. It should be separate from the group project that you're participating in (described below). In addition, the topic should be approved in advance by submitting a one-paragraph summary proposal to the instructor(s) prior to your developing the paper. It is strongly recommended that approval be obtained before the end of the fifth class meeting.

The **Special Topic Paper: Literature Review** should provide an extensive review of the literature and concomitant discussion related to an in-depth examination of an issue related to the theme of this course. The paper should include APA type headings throughout the paper that assists the reader in following the thrust of the text. The Literature Review is to be 15-20 pages (typed, double spaced), plus references listed in APA format. It will be graded on the:

- a) clarity of the stated purpose of the paper and how well this is achieved through your manuscript
- b) importance and relevance of the topic to the application of ABA within complex community settings
- c) adequacy of the literature surveyed and discussion of the findings
- d) clarity of the writing, and
- e) insightfulness of the implications and conclusions presented in your discussion.

The **Special Topic Paper: Project Summary** should provide a clear description of the project that was conducted with a direct link to the theme of this course. The paper should include APA type headings throughout the paper that assists the reader in following the thrust of the text. Generally a project summary would be written up using headings typical of a research study, which includes the major headings of: “Introduction”, “Methods”, “Results”, and “Discussion”.

The Project Summary is to be 10-15 pages (typed, double spaced), plus any other relevant documents (e.g., figures, tables, appendices, references listed in APA format). The Project Summary will be graded on the:

- a) clarity of the stated purpose of the project
- b) its relevance to the ABA theme of this course
- c) how well the purpose of the project was achieved through your activities and paper
- d) clarity of the writing and any data presentations, and
- e) insightfulness of the implications presented in your discussion.

### **Student Presentation of His/Her Special Topic Project**

Each student will present the content and findings/recommendations/conclusions from his/her special topics paper/project. Your presentation can involve demonstrations, behavioral rehearsal, lecture, discussion, and/or other engaging class activities. You will have 12 minutes to present, including audience questions and discussion.

Evaluation of each Student Presentation will be made by two sources, all of which will be used by the instructor in formulating a grade for each student regarding this activity. After each Student Presentation, the classmates will rate the presentation. See the attached Student Presentation Rating Form for the dimensions across which the ratings will occur.

### **Format for Examinations**

Three exams will be given throughout the course. Two of them will occur at approximately one-third and two-thirds of the way through the course and will cover the material presented during the preceding third of the course. The final exam will take place during final week and will cover material from the entire course. Each of the exams will take place in class and will consist of 6 to 10 essay-type questions. The week prior to an exam, students will be

given a list of 8 to 14 questions from which the exam will be developed. You will be given 1 ¼ hours to complete as much of the exam you can; working individually. The questions will cover assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions.

**Evaluation of Student Performance and Outcomes**

Students will be expected to attend class and participate in activities. Assignments must be turned in by the designated class start time on the date due. Failure to turn in assignments on time will result in a drop in letter grade for that assignment. For each subsequent week of an assignment not being turned in, will result in an additional grade reduction.

Student participation and products will be weighed as follows in determining the student’s overall grade:

Special Topic Paper	20%
Each of the three exams	20%
Student Presentation	10%
Class Participation	10%

Credit for participation is awarded by the instructor based on a holistic judgment of the following:

- regular class attendance
- active and thoughtful contribution to class discussions and activities
- cooperation with classmates and the instructor

Grades will be assigned as follows:

90 - 100	A
80 - 99	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
Below 60	F

**USF and Class Policy**

Attendance, Exams, and Assignments: As stated in the previous section, students will be expected to attend class and participate in activities. Regular attendance is necessary since active class participation is a learning component and requirement of this course. Assignments must be turned in by the designated date and time specified. Failure to turn in assignments on time will result in a drop in letter grade for that assignment. For each subsequent week of an assignment not being turned in, will result in an additional grade reduction. Exams and other assignments must occur as designated. There are NO activities for making up assignments, earning bonus points, or gaining extra credit. Class lectures and presentations will address material from the readings and related topics beyond the scope of the readings. Content from class activities may be included on exams. If a class is missed, you should ask a classmate for copies of notes and handouts. Find a reliable buddy who will take notes and pass them on to you, so you can find out the details of what happened in your absence and what the next assignments might be. The Instructor will not distribute handouts after the respective class.

USF's Policy on Religious Observances: "No student shall be compelled to attend class or sit for an examination at a day or time prohibited by his or her religious belief. In accordance with the University policy on observance of religious holy days, students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious observance must provide notice of the dates to the instructor, in writing, by the second class meeting.

Plagiarism & Cheating Policy: If you cheat or plagiarize, you will fail the course. See the USF Graduate Handbook for definitions of cheating and plagiarism. Studying together is acceptable. However, the following behaviors are NOT acceptable: unauthorized granting or receiving of aid, cheating on exams (including but not limited to: use of notes, looking at another student's exam, communicating with another student), copying or paraphrasing the work of another person or source without appropriate referencing (plagiarism), submitting the work of another person, and/or otherwise being dishonest. These behaviors will, without exception, result in: 1) an F grade, 2) the strongest recommendation for dismissal from the course, and 3) further disciplinary action by the University.

Audio or video recording policy: You must obtain advance written permission from the Instructor prior to audio recording or video recording any lecture or discussion with the Instructor. Suitable reasons may include a reasonable accommodation for a disability. Even if written permission is granted to a student to record class segments, these are not to be duplicated or sold to others.

Disabled Student Policy: Please notify the Instructor within the first week of class if a reasonable accommodation for a disability is needed for this course. Please include a letter to the Student Disability Services Office.

**STUDENT PRESENTATION RATING FORM**

In order for the student and the instructor to have a broader perspective on the usefulness of each of their Student Topic Presentations, the instructor asks that each of you complete this form after each student’s presentation. This information will be used by the instructor, in combination with his/her own judgments, to determine grades for each of the students presentations. These forms for each student will also be shown to the student to provide him/her with additional information regarding the relevance and usefulness of his/her presentation.

Please provide the ratings and constructive comments. These types of feedback can prove to be valuable in improving future presentations.

Student Presenting: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Presentation \_\_\_\_\_  
(It is not necessary to put your name, as the rater, on this form.)

PLEASE RATE THE GROUP PRESENTATION / DEMONSTRATION:

1 = Poor 2 = Fair 3 = Good 4 = Very Good 5 = Excellent N/A = Not Applicable

PUT RATING ON EACH LINE:

- \_\_\_\_\_ How clearly presented were the objectives?
- \_\_\_\_\_ How well was the relevance of this topic presented described or illustrated?
- \_\_\_\_\_ How coherent was the content of this presentation?
- \_\_\_\_\_ How effective was this presentation in addressing its objectives?
- \_\_\_\_\_ How relevant was this to issues related to the application of ABA in complex community settings?
- \_\_\_\_\_ How responsive was the student to questions from classmates and/or the instructor?

PLEASE PROVIDE THE STUDENT WITH YOUR WRITTEN CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS.

Did you find that this presentation provided information that will be of benefit to you in your current job or your planned future job in applied behavior analysis?  
\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

If yes, please briefly describe:

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What did you like best about this presentation?

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What suggestions do you have for how this student presentation could have been improved to make it a more effective presentation?

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