

Observational Methods and Functional Assessment
EDG 6931
Fall 2006

Professor: Kwang-Sun Blair, Ph.D.
Office location: MHC 2117A
Office phone: 974-2119
Office fax: 974-6115
E-mail: kblair@fmhi.usf.edu
Office hours: By appointment

Course Prerequisites: Enrollment in the Master's program in Applied Behavior Analysis or Special Education, with instructor permission

Course Description:

This course will provide the student with intensive instruction in functional assessment procedures and direct observation methods to be used by the applied behavior analyst in service delivery in community, mental health and education settings. Instruction will include critical analyses of the literature and implementation of procedures covered in classroom discussions and critiques. Methods to demonstrate sensitivity to families, educators, and diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds will be described. Direct observation methods, observer reactivity, and appropriate selection and implementation of time sampling techniques will be described. Examples of their appropriate and inappropriate use will be analyzed. Assessment procedures to identify generalization and maintenance of behavior change will be identified, described, and analyzed.

Course Goals and Objectives

1. The student will state the characteristics and rationale for conducting a descriptive analysis (functional assessment), and will conduct a minimum of one descriptive analysis (functional assessment).
2. The student will state the meanings of the terms "descriptive analysis" and "functional assessment" and will identify the sources of the terms.
3. The student will use methods to demonstrate functional relationships, and will determine the reliability and generality of functional relationships through direct replication.
4. The student will describe issues related to working with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and how sensitivity to these issues can be reflected in the functional assessment process.
5. The student will describe advantages and disadvantages of collecting observational data by a client and by self.
6. The student will describe how reliable data can be obtained for various situations, and how observers can be trained to collect data.

7. The student will appropriately distinguish functional analysis procedures from functional behavioral assessment procedures, and will show competence at implementing functional behavioral assessment procedures.
8. The student will describe how to determine when a representative baseline has been obtained.
9. The student will distinguish direct measures of behavior from indirect measures of behavior.
10. The student will implement direct measures of behavior, using frequency, rate, duration, latency, and inter-response time measures.
11. The student will implement indirect measures of behavior, using percent of occurrence, trials to criterion, partial interval recording, whole-interval recording, and momentary time sampling.
12. The student will select the appropriate data display to effectively communicate quantitative relationships, and will demonstrate appropriate graphing techniques for data display.
13. The student will design, implement, monitor, and evaluate a self-management procedure and will report findings.
14. The student will determine and describe the level, trend, and variability of data that are displayed.
15. The student will use Standard Celeration Charts, including the plotting of data points, the display of baseline, intervention changes, major environmental changes, and interruptions in data collection. In addition the student also will determine level, trend, and variability of data used in Standard Celeration Charts.
16. The student will use cumulative records to display data.
17. The student will demonstrate competence at data interpretation.
18. The student will demonstrate competence in the selection of behavior change targets, and in the ability to describe behavior change targets operationally.

Textbooks:

O'Neill, RE., Horner, RH., Albin, RW., Sprague, J.R, Storey, K. & Newton, J.S. (1996). *Functional Assessment of Problem Behavior: A Practical Assessment Guide (Second Edition)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brookes/Cole Publishing. REQUIRED

Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. (1999). *Functional Analysis of Problem Behavior: From Effective Assessment to Effective Support*. Wadsworth Publishing. REQUIRED

Class Date	Topics and Associated Assignments	Readings Due for Class
Week 1	Syllabus Review/Course requirements Introduction to Repp/Horner Define functional analysis/functional assess./structural analysis/descriptive analysis	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. Introduction pgs 1-6
Week 2	Behavior Analysis Certification Board. Certification task list and requirements Critiques of behavioral research Lecture/discussion of readings	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. Ch 2 Hypothesis-Based Intervention for Severe Problem Behavior, pp 9-31 O'Neill, et al. Ch 1 pp 1-8 Reading packet: Iwata et al. (1994); Stitcher & Conroy (2005); Quiz #1
Week 3	Cultural/Contextual Sensitivity in Assessment Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Readings packet: Harry, B. (1997); Fox & Vaughn (2002); Albin, Lucyshyn, Horner, & Flannery (1996); Horner et al., 2005 Quiz #2
Week 4	Functional Assessment and Analysis Methods Interpretation of Functional Assessments Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. Ch 3, Community-Based Functional Assessment, pp 32-56, Ch.4 Readings Packet: Blair et al., (2000); Cunningham & O'Neill, (2000); Carr (1994); Horner, (1994); O'Neill et al., Ch 2, pp 9-35. Quiz #
Week 5	Continue Functional Assessments Intro to direct obs. measurement Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. Ch. 6 98-146 O'Neill, R.E., et al. Ch. 2 pp 36-64 Readings packet: Bailey & Burch (2002); Kennedy & Itkonen (1993); Lucyshyn, Irvin, & Blumberg (2004) In class activity: direct observation Quiz #4
Week 6	Continue direct obs. Measurement/reliability Visual analysis Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. Ch. 8/9 Readings packet: Horner et al. (2005); Mace, Hock, Lalli, West et al. (1988); Lee, Belfiore, Scheeler, Hua, & Smith (2004). In class activity: direct observation. Quiz #5

Week 7	Competing behavior Hypothesis development Intro to intervention Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. Ch 10/11 Readings packet: Dunlap et al., 1991; Horner & Day, (1991); Carr, Yarborough, & Langdon (1997); Quiz #6
Week 8	Intervention continued/Ethical considerations Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. Ch 12/13 Readings packet: Durand & Merges, 2001; Durand (1999); Scott & Caron (2005) Interview due Quiz #7
Week 9	Social validity Behavior Support plans Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. CH 15 O'Neill et al. 3 Journal Critique #1 Readings packet: Dunlap et al. (1995); Schwartz & Baer, 1991; Vaughn et al.(1997); Wolf (1978) Quiz #8
Week 10	Behavior Support plans continued Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	O'Neill, R.E., et al. Ch. 4 Readings packet: Carr & Carlson (1993); Crone & Horner (2003); Horner, 2000; Kennedy & Itkonen (1995) Quiz #9
Week 11	Generalization and Maintenance Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Repp, A. C. & Horner, R H. Ch. 18 Readings packet: Horner & Albin (1988); Stokes & Baer, 1977; Quiz #10
Week 12	Generalization and Maintenance Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Journal Critique #2 Readings packet: Dunlap (1993); McDuff, Krantz, & McClanahan (1993)
Week 13	Celeration Charts Lecture/discussion of readings/activities	Readings packet: Ogden Lindsley (1991); Potts, Eschelman, & Cooper (1993) Activity: Celeration charting
Week 14	Problem solving final projects Presentation of final projects Lecture/discussion of readings/activities Last week of classes before finals	Readings packet: TBA
Week 15	Presentation of final projects Finals	Instructor evaluations

Course Requirements:

1. Interview: Interview a teacher or caregiver who supports a child/adult with challenging behavior using the Functional Assessment Interview (O'Neill et al., 1997). Students will present and discuss issues with the class. Write up two page summary of interview/ present in class. Summarize in detail the responses from the student. **Due: Week 8** (30 pts.)
2. Comprehensive Functional Assessment Project: Conduct a FAI, develop an observational system, and behavior support plan based on the functional assessment and strategies. **Due: Week 15** (100 pts)
3. Quizzes: Instructor will administer 10 short answer quizzes on readings. **Due: at assigned time** (100 pts.)
4. Participation/Attendance: Students will contribute through discussion of reading assignments, participation in group activities, and **CLASS ATTENDANCE**. **Students earn points for class attendance**. Attendance is defined as being in class between no later than 4:15 p.m. unless there's a valid excuse (e.g., illness, injury, death in the family, etc) or leaving class prior to 6:30 p.m. Please call instructor ahead of time (when possible) and produce documentation for absence, late arrival, or early departure. This point system will allow students to miss an unexcused class without jeopardizing the opportunity for an A. Please obtain notes/assignments from other students. Students may not sell class notes, tapes, or any classroom materials to anyone (10 pts/class=150)
5. Journal Article Summary: Read and summarize two journal articles, two pages each following the guide suggested by instructor. Please use actual journal articles (no book chapters) **Due: Week 8 & 12** (50 pts)
6. In class activities: These will involve completing instructor-determined mini-group activities. **Due: at assigned time** (50 pts.)
Total possible course points=480.

Cheating and plagiarism: See the policy in the USF Graduate Catalog.

If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing in this course, you will receive a "0" for the assignment and possible termination from the course with a letter grade of F.

Cheating: This includes, but is not limited to copying from your neighbor on assignments, during a quiz, etc. It also involves talking during a quiz. Cheating also means using a previous or another student's project and turning it in as your own. In addition, fabricating the interview and final project falls under the guise of "cheating".

Plagiarizing: This means turning in written work that includes copyrighted material taken from someone else, without using quote marks or otherwise giving proper credit to the true author. In other words, plagiarism is the presentation of an author's work in a way that the material might be mistaken to be your own.

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. "*

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. However, students are not permitted to sell notes or tapes of class lectures.

Evaluation System:

The course will use a percentage of points out of 480 possible points. Each required activity has been assigned points and deadlines. To monitor and measure participation, the instructor will provide a sign-in sheet and note late arrivals or early departures. These expectations along with evaluation system will be explained the first class. The evaluation system is:

A+/A=94%or more of earned points/total possible points

A- = 90-93% of earned points/total possible points

B+/B = 84%-89% of earned points/total possible points

B-=80-83% of earned points/total possible points

C+ /C= 76-79% of earned points/total possible points

C-= 70-73% of earned points/total possible points

Readings for EDG 6931-004

All readings are posted on Black Board.

Week 1

Week 2

Fox, L., & Davis, C. (2005.) Functional behavior assessment in schools: Current research findings and future directions. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 14*(1), 1-4.

Iwata, B. A., Dorsey, M. F., Slifer, K. J., Bauman, D. E., & Richman, G. S. (1994.) Toward a functional analysis of self-injury. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 27*(2), 197-210.

Stichter, J. P., Sasso, G. M., & Jolivette, K. (2004.) Structural analysis and intervention in a school setting: Effects on problem behavior for a student with an emotional/behavioral disorder. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 6*(3), 166-177.

Week 3

Albin, R. W., Lucyshyn, J. M., Horner, R. H., & Flannery, K. Brigid. (1996.) Contextual fit for behavioral support plans: A model for “Goodness of Fit”. In L. K. Koegel, L. K., R. L. Koegel, & G. Dunlap (Eds.), *Positive behavioral support: Including people with difficult behavior in the community*. Baltimore: Brookes.

Fox, L., Vaughn, B. J., Dunlap, G., & Bucy, M. (1997.) Parent-professional partnership in behavioral support: A qualitative analysis of one family’s experience. *The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 22*(4), 198-207.

Horner, R. H., Dunlap, G., Koegel, R. L., Carr, E. G., Sailor, W., Anderson, J., Albin, R. W., & O’Neill, R. E. (2005.) *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities, 30*(1), 3-10.

Week 4

Blair, K. C., Umbreit, J., & Eck, S. (2000). Analysis of multiple variables related to a young child’s aggressive behavior. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 2*(1), 33-39.

Carr, E. G. (1994.) Emerging themes in the functional analysis of problem behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 27*(2), 393-400.

Cunningham, E., & O’Neill, R. E. (2000). Comparison of results of functional assessment and analysis methods with young children with autism. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 35*, 406-414.

Iwata, B. A., Dorsey, M. F., Slifer, K. J., Bauman, K. E., & Richman, G. S. (1994.) Toward a functional analysis of self-injury. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 27(2), 197-210.

Week 5

Bailey, J. S. & Burch, M. R. (2002). *Research Methods in Applied Behavior Analysis*, pp. 89-132. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Kennedy, C. H., & Itkonen, T. (1993.) Effects of setting events on the problem behavior of students with severe disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 26(3), 321-327.

Lucyshyn, J. M., Irvin, 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 behavior assessment with families of children with developmental disabilities. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 29(2), 104-121.

Week 6

Horner, R. H., Carr, E. G., Halle, J., McGee, G., Odom, S., & Wolery, M. (2005.) The use of single-subject research to identify evidence-based practice in special education. *Exceptional Children*, 72(2), 165-179.

Lee, D. L., Belfiore, P. J., Scheeler, M. C., Hua, Y., & Smith, R. (2004). *Behavioral Momentum in academics: Using embedded high-p sequences to increase academic productivity. Psychology in the Schools*, 41(7), 789-801.

Mace, F. C., Hock, M. L., Lalli, J. S., West, B. J., et al. (1988.) Behavioral momentum in the treatment of noncompliance. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 21(2), 123-141.

Week 7

Dunlap, G., Kern-Dunlap, L., Clarke, S., & Robbins, F. R. (1991.) Functional assessment, curricular revision, and severe behavior problems. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 24(2), 387-397.

Horner, R. H., & Day, H. M. (1991.) The effects of response efficiency on functionally equivalent competing behaviors. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 24(4), 719-732.

Horner, R. A. (2000). Positive behavior supports. In M. L. Wehmeyer & J. R. Patton (Ed.), *Mental retardation in the 21st century*. Austin Texas: PRO-ED.

Week 8

- Durand, V. M. (1999.) Functional communication training using assistive devices: Recruiting natural communities of reinforcement. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 32(3), 247-267.
- Durand, V. M., & Merges, E. (2001.) Functional communication training: A contemporary behavior analytic intervention for problem behaviors. *Focus on autism and other developmental disabilities*, 16(2), 110-119.
- Scott, T., & Caron, D. B. (2005). Conceptualizing functional behavior assessment as prevention practice within positive behavior support systems. *Preventing School Failure*, 50(1), 13-20.

Week 9

- Dunlap, G., Clarke, S., Jackson, M., Wright, S., Ramos, E., & Brinson, S. (1995.) Self-monitoring of classroom behaviors with students exhibiting emotional and behavioral challenges. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 10(2), 165-177.
- Schwartz, I. S., & Baer, D. M. (1991.) Social validity assessments: Is current practices state of the art? *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 24(2) 189-204.
- Vaughn, B. J., Dunlap, G., Fox, L., Clarke, S., & Bucy, M. (1997.) Parent-professional partnership in behavioral support: A case study of community-based interventions. *The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 22(4), 186-197.

Week 10

- Carr, E. G., & Carlson, J. I. (1993.) Reduction of severe behavior problems in the community using a multicomponent treatment approach. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 26(2), 157-172.
- Crone, D. A., & Horner, R. H. (2003.) *Building positive behavior support systems in schools: Functional behavioral assessment*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Kennedy, C. H., Itkonen, T., & Lindquist, K. (1995.) Comparing interspersed requests and social comments as antecedents for increasing student compliance. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28(1), 97-98.

Week 11

- Horner, R. H., & Albin, R. W. (1988.) Research on general-case procedures for learners with severe disabilities. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 11(4), 375-388.
- Stokes, T. F., & Baer, D. M. (1977.) An implicit technology of generalization. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 10(2), 349-367.

Week 12

Dunlap, G. (1993.) Promoting generalization: Current status and functional considerations. In R. V. Houten & S. Axelrod (Eds.), *Behavior analysis and treatment*. New York: Plenum Press.

Kennedy, C. H., & Haring, T. G. (1993.) Teaching choice making during social interactions to students with profound multiple disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Analysis*, 26(1), 63-76.

Week 13

Lindsley, O. R. (1991.) Precision teaching's unique legacy from B. F. Skinner. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 1(2), 253-266.

Potts, L., Eshleman, J. W., & Cooper, J. O. (1993.) Ogden R. Lindsley and the historical development of precision teaching. *The Behavior Analyst*, 16(2), 177-190.