BEHV 5028

Autism I: Conceptual/Methodological Issues in Applied Behavior Analysis
Credits: 03

Department of Behavior Analysis
The University of North Texas

Fall, 2009

PROFESSOR:  Traci Cihon, PhD, BCBA-D

PROFESSOR CONTACT INFORMATION:
Email: traci.cihon@unt.edu
Phone: (940) 565-3318
Office Hours: Chilton 360B: Mondays 2 pm to 4 pm
            Wednesdays 3 pm to 5 pm
            or by appointment

WEB SITE ADDRESS: https://ecampus.unt.edu/webct/logon/3557159226171

COURSE TIME:  Wednesday 9:30 am to 12:20 pm (Location: Language 402)

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS

Official Course Description
Describes basic conceptual and methodological issues involved in behavioral treatment of children with autism. Topics studied include theories and controversies regarding etiology and assessment, distinctions between behavioral and alternative approaches to treatment, comparisons of treatment formats, and critical review of curriculum options.

Additional Course Description
This course addresses some conceptual and methodological issues surrounding early and intensive behavioral interventions (EIBI) for children with autism. Topics include: diagnosis and assessment as they relate to treatment, rules of evidence and the role of evidence-based treatment, distinctions between various treatment approaches, comparisons of treatment formats, a review of curricular options, and professional and ethical issues specific to the behavioral treatment of autism. The course is designed to meet the educational requirements of students with advanced levels of experience and training in the behavioral treatment of children with autism. To describe diagnosis and etiology issues as they relate to EIBI treatment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
- To describe diagnosis and etiology issues as they relate to EIBI treatment.
- To describe the rules of evidence that allows selection of appropriate treatments for individual children.
- To describe the scientist-practitioner model of service delivery as it applies to early intervention.
- To describe Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) within the context of interventions for children with autism.
- To describe the continuum of ABA program models and to compare and contrast ABA with other approaches.
- To describe and perform selected evidence-based procedures used in behavioral treatment programs.
- To design a data system for an ABA early intervention program or one of its component parts.
- To analyze, through comparison and contrast, at least three curricular textbooks or manuals.
- To explore the relationship between parental descriptions, technical information and personal experience in the behavioral treatment of autism.
- To practice effective and ethical interactions with peers, supervisors, parents and related professionals.

**LEARNING ACTIVITIES & EVALUATION**

*Lecture/discussion*
A lecture introducing the material for that week will occur during each class period. Lectures will encourage active student responding (either chorally or using response cards). Questions and discussions are encouraged.

*In-Class Projects*
Students will complete four in-class projects. For some units (designated on the weekly class schedule) students will be given a topic or a choice between two topics that correspond with the course material for that unit. Students will be given time to work together in small groups on the in-class project with support from the instructor. Following the in-class discussion, each student will be responsible to working on the write-up and associated materials for his/her in-class assignment outside of class. The final write-up should be no longer than 3 pages (not including supporting materials), will be graded on an individual basis (i.e., each student will turn in his/her own completed project), and will be due at the end of the subsequent week’s class session (see weekly class schedule). In addition, the paper must be double-spaced and in 12-point font, Times New Roman. Late papers will not be accepted. Rubrics specific to each in-class project are available on the course website.

*Reflection Papers*
Students will write five, 2-3 page reflection papers across the semester. One reflection paper is due for each of the weeks indicated in the weekly course schedule. The reflection paper should include a parsimonious summary (4-6 sentences) of the main points of the instructor selected readings and a thoughtful analysis and/or application of the key points to one’s past, present, or potential professional experiences related to the class topic. The purpose of these papers is to encourage you to think critically about the readings and to formulate reactions to them as you read. Your papers can take many forms, including critiquing or challenging the arguments made by a particular author, discussing one of the assigned readings in relation to other readings assigned for the week or previous weeks, identifying and evaluating unexpressed assumptions or biases in an author’s papers, discussing your own views or experiences in the context of the readings, exploring the research implications of a particular idea, etc. The paper must be double-spaced and in 12-point font, Times New Roman. A rubric for reflection papers is available on the course website. The papers will be collected at the end of each class period. Late papers will not be accepted. Reflection papers should be prepared prior to coming to class and should function as tools to evoke comments during class discussions.

*Scope & Sequence Paper & Presentation*
Students will review and evaluate at least three curricular textbooks or manuals. Students are expected to address scope, sequence and the extent to which curricular recommendations are data based. The format can include figures and tables. The entire document should not exceed 10 pages. The paper must be double-spaced and in 12-point font, Times New Roman. The reviews will be discussed & presented in class. Rubrics for both the scope and sequence paper and the scope and sequence presentation are posted on the course website.

*Parent Perspectives Paper*
Each student will write a 5 page paper in response to a book written by a parent of a child with autism. The paper should address the content and perspectives presented in the book within the context of personal experience and the technical and conceptual knowledge covered in this class. The paper must be double-
spaced and in 12-point font, Times New Roman. The papers will also be evaluated on the basis of organization, clarity, accuracy and creativity (rubric available on the course website).

Some book choices include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Let Me Hear Your Voice
- Special Children-Challenged Parents
- The Asperger Parent
- See Sam Run
- A Child’s Journey out of Autism
- Understanding Autism: Useful Information for Dealing with Autism from Parents who have Lived it 24/7

**Final In-Class Project Paper & Presentation**

Due the final class session, students will select one of their in-class projects to use for their final in-class project paper and presentation. The final paper should be no longer than 5 pages (excluding any supporting materials) and should incorporate the changes suggested by the instructor on the shorter in-class assignment. The paper must be double-spaced and in 12-point font, Times New Roman. Students will also present their final in-class project to the class. Presentations should be no longer than 20 min and should be constructed using PowerPoint, Keynote, or a similar program. Rubrics for both the final in-class project paper and the final in-class project presentation are available on the course website.

**COURSE GRADES**

In-Class Projects = 4 @ 10 pts each = 40 pts
Reflection Papers = 5 @ 10 pts each = 50 pts
Scope & Sequence Paper = 50 pts
Scope & Sequence Presentation = 30 pts
Parent Perspectives Paper = 50 pts
Final In-Class Project Paper = 50 pts
Final In-Class Project Presentation = 30 pts

**Total Points = 300 points**

**GRADE EQUIVALENTS (% of 300 points earned):**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90 to 92%</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 to 79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 to 72%</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>69% or less</td>
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**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at [http://www.unt.edu/oda/apply/index.html](http://www.unt.edu/oda/apply/index.html). Also, you may visit the Office of Disability Accommodation in the University Union (room 321) or call us at (940) 565-4323.

**POLICIES**

No individual exceptions can be made to the syllabus.
Re-grades: If a student believes an error has been made in grading, a written request for reconsideration of the item(s) in question may be submitted within 1 week of receipt of the graded material. The written request should specify the item(s) in question, and the reason the student believes the answer given was correct, citing relevant sources (e.g., page number from readings on which the answer was based).

Absences: If a student must be absent for any reason, s/he should arrange to submit the applicable written assignment early, as no assignments turned in after the due date can be accepted. Students are responsible for making their own arrangements to obtain information from any missed class period. There will be no additional make-up opportunities for missed examinations.

Student Conduct: Each student automatically certifies that any material submitted for grading is his/her own independent work. UNT policies require reporting of plagiarism or any suspected violations that constitute possible academic misconduct. Students are responsible for being familiar with the Code of Student Conduct.

Group work is encouraged; however, in the past there have been situations in which group work could have been considered cheating or plagiarism. “Legitimate” group work takes advantage of consultation with your peers, provides you with ideas, suggestions, corrections, etc., which you take into consideration in the development of your unique and individual product. Examples include reading the text and writing answers to the study guide items, then working closely with other students to compare study guide answers, and to attempt to resolve different understandings. Failing to do the reading, and memorizing answers that another student has written for the study guide is not legitimate group work; it is cheating. Drafting the assignments, then comparing specific aspects of your product to others’ is appropriate. Copying someone else’s work products (or making your work available to another student to copy) is not legitimate; it is cheating. Always, if you are unsure about boundaries of legitimate group work, please (1) ask for clarification from the instructor, and (2) make full disclosure so that there is no question about your intentions. We are very happy to talk about these boundaries and work with you to maximize your learning and maintain individual accountability.

Assistance: Students are encouraged to contact the instructor (by email or during office hours) or teaching assistant any time clarification or additional help in understanding the material is needed. Any questions that will aid you in mastering the material are welcomed.

Diversity Statement: It is the policy of the University of North Texas (and this instructor) not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made), disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the university through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and educational goals. Direct questions or concerns to the equal opportunity office, (940) 565-2456, or the dean of students, (940) 565-2648. TTY access is available through Relay Texas: (800) 735-2989.

REQUIRED ARTICLES & COURSE MATERIALS
There is not a textbook for this course. These readings will be available for students to copy through the course instructor.

Unit 1: History, Diagnosis, & Assessment
Instructor Selected


**Student Selected (pick two)**


*Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 2: Legislation**

**Instructor Selected**


Student Selected (pick two)


Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.

Unit 3: Treatment Options & Rules of Evidence
Instructor Selected


Student Selected (pick two)


*Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 4: Scientist-Practitioner Model**

*Instructor Selected*


*Student Selected (pick two)*


*Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 5: Overview of Treatment Formats, Procedures, & Curricula**

*Instructor Selected*


**Student Selected (pick two)**


Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.

Unit 6: Relationships, Reinforcement, & Expansions
Instructor Selected


Student Selected (pick two)


*Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 7: Focus on Shaping & Stimulus Control**

*Instructor Selected*


*Student Selected (pick two)*


*Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 8: Naturalistic & Activity Teaching**

*Instructor Selected*


*Student Selected (pick two)*


*Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 9: Discrete & Component Teaching**

*Instructor Selected*


*Student Selected (pick two)*


The Organization for Autism Research. www.researchautism.org


*Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 10: Introduction to Verbal Behavior & Teaching Communication**

*Instructor Selected*


*Student Selected (pick two)*


**Unit 11: Curricula: Overview**

*Instructor Selected*


*Student Selected (pick two)*


Stahmer, A. C., & Ingersoll, B. (2004). Inclusive programming for toddlers with autism spectrum disorders: Outcomes from the children’s toddler school. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 6*, 67-82. *Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 12: Curricula: Scope & Sequence**

*Choose three of the following selections:*


Maurice, Green, & Luce (1996). *Behavioral Interventions for Young Children with Autism*. Austin: Pro-ed. *Or another curriculum of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.*

**Unit 13: Family Dynamics**

*Instructor Selected*


**Student Selected (pick two)**


**Unit 14: Professionalism**

**Instructor Selected**


**Student Selected (pick two)**


Or another article of your choice that has been approved by the instructor.

Technology requirements
An active UNT email account, a computer or access to a computer and on-line access to course web site on Blackboard Vista (https://ecampus.unt.edu/webct/logon/3557159226171). This website will be the vehicle for obtaining key course materials; keeping track of your grades; communicating with the instructor, and classmates outside of class sessions; and other functions.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>September 2, 2009</td>
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</table>
| 2 | September 9, 2009 | **Lecture:** *Unit 1:* History, Diagnosis, & Assessment  
**Reading:** Brown & Snell (2000); Celberti et al. (1993); Filipek et al. (1999); Matson et al. (1996); student choice articles  
**In Class Project 1:** IEP Goal Evaluation |
| 3 | September 16, 2009 | **Lecture:** *Unit 2:* Legislation  
**Reading:** National Research Council (2001); Texas Council on Autism and PDD (2008); Turnbull et al. (2009); student choice articles  
**Due:** Final Draft of In Class Project 1 |
| 4 | September 23, 2009 | **Lecture:** *Unit 3:* Treatment Options & Rules of Evidence  
**Reading:** Freeman (1997); Green (1996); Horner et al. (2005); Kay & Vyse (2005); student choice articles  
**Due:** Reflection Paper 1 |
| 5 | September 30, 2009 | **Lecture:** *Unit 4:* Scientist-Practitioner Model  
**Reading:** Fabrizio & Moors (2003); Wolery (1996); student choice articles  
**Due:** Reflection Paper 2 (Unit 4 readings) |
| 6 | October 7, 2009 | **Lecture:** *Unit 5:* Overview of Formats & Procedures  
**Reading:** Anderson & Romanczyk (1999); Risley (1996); student choice articles  
**Due:** Reflection Paper 3 (Unit 5 readings) |
| 7 | October 14, 2009 | **Lecture:** *Unit 6:* Relationships, Reinforcement, & Expansions  
**Reading:** Bruinsma et al. (2004); Carr et al. (1994); McLaughlin & Carr (2005); student choice articles  
**In Class Project 2:** Choose one: outline the steps involved in (a) establishing a person as a conditioned reinforcer or (b) establishing a token as a conditioned reinforcer |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture:</th>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Unit 7:</td>
<td>Shaping &amp; Stimulus Control</td>
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<td>October 21</td>
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<td>Etzel &amp; LeBlanc (1979); Kazdin (1977); Pryor (1999); student choice</td>
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<td>Due:</td>
<td>Final Draft of In Class Project 2</td>
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<td>In Class Project 3: Choose one: outline the steps involved in</td>
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<td>(a) shaping a specific vocalization or (b) teaching a child to use</td>
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<td>the restroom under the appropriate stimulus control</td>
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<td>Unit 8:</td>
<td>Naturalistic &amp; Activity Teaching</td>
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<td>October 28</td>
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<td>Bricker et al. (1998); Kaiser (2000); McClannahan &amp; Krantz (1999);</td>
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<td>student choice articles</td>
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<td>Due:</td>
<td>Final Draft of In Class Project 3</td>
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<td>In Class Project 4: Choose one: develop a(n) a(n) activity schedule for</td>
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<td>an activity of daily living for an individual with autism or (b) an</td>
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<td>outline of a training protocol to teach parents to embed</td>
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<td>instruction in their day-to-day activities</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Unit 9:</td>
<td>Discrete &amp; Component Teaching</td>
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<td>November 4</td>
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<td>Kubina et al. (2000); Kubina &amp; Yurich (2009); Smith (2001); student</td>
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<td>Due:</td>
<td>Final Draft of In Class Project 4</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Unit 10:</td>
<td>Introduction to Verbal Behavior and Teaching Communication</td>
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<td>November 11</td>
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<td>Barbera (2007); Sundberg &amp; Michael (2001); Sundberg &amp; Partington (1998);</td>
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<td>student choice articles</td>
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<td>Due:</td>
<td>Reflection Paper 4 (Unit 10 readings)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Unit 11:</td>
<td>Curricula: Overview</td>
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<td>November 18</td>
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<td>Harris &amp; Weiss (2007); Rosales-Ruiz &amp; Baer (1997); student choice</td>
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<td>articles</td>
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<td>Due:</td>
<td>Reflection Paper 5 (Unit 11 readings)</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Unit 12:</td>
<td>Curricula: Scope &amp; Sequence</td>
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<td>November 25</td>
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<td>student selections</td>
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<td>Due:</td>
<td>Scope &amp; Sequence Analysis Paper &amp; Presentation</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Unit 13:</td>
<td>Family Dynamics – Guest</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2</td>
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<td>Lecture – Jill &amp; Burke Smith</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reading:</td>
<td>Boyd (2002); Macks &amp; Reeve (2007); National Research Council (2001);</td>
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<td>Scott et al. (2000); student choice articles</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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| December 9, 2009 | **Lecture:** Unit 14: Professionalism  
Reading: Autism Special Interest Group (2006);  
BCBA (2006); Marcus & Schopler (1987); student choice articles  
**Due:** Reaction to Book Written by a Parent of a Child with Autism Paper |
| December 16, 2009 | **Due:** **FINAL WRITE-UP AND PRESENTATION OF ONE IN-CLASS PROJECT**                |

*The professor reserves the right to adjust and modify this schedule based on the needs of the students*

*Components of this syllabus are courtesy of Dr. Shahla Ala’i-Rosales*