REHB 589  
Professional Seminar:  
Verbal Behavior  
Spring, 2016  

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title: Professional Seminar: Verbal Behavior  
Course Number: REHB 589  
Credit Hours: 3  
Location & Time: BAT Off-Campus Locations  
Instructor: Michael E. May, Ph.D., BCBA-D  
  Office: NW Annex A Wing, Suite 143  
  Phone: 618.453.2434  
  Email: mayme@siu.edu  
  Office Hours: meetings by appointment

Course Description and Goals:

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of behavioral approaches to the study of verbal behavior. This course will focus on the application of these techniques, with an emphasis on the conceptual foundation in which the application is based from. After completing the course you should be able to do the following:

  a) Be a knowledgeable consumer of Skinner’s approach to verbal behavior and the related empirical investigations into his account (i.e., understand and critically evaluate research in journal articles and other research presentations).
  b) Have intermediate knowledge of contextual perspectives on verbal behavior, and how they interact with Skinner’s perspective.
  c) Generate novel research questions that incorporate and extend previous verbal behavior research and prepare quality research proposals.

Text & Assigned Readings:


Additional readings are required and are equally important to the textbook. You are responsible for all assigned readings on the due date.

Class Sessions:

Class attendance is expected at all times. This class will be presented as a seminar and class participation is expected. It is also expected that students will have completed the assigned readings on the date on which that topic will be discussed.
Evaluations:

1. Research presentations (40 points total): You will generate two research proposals and present them to the class. Proposals will include an intro and rationale for the project, a complete methods section, expected results, and discussion. Research presentations should incorporate the material covered in the assigned readings for the week, and can include basic or applied research studies. The presentation should be 10 min in length. *Makeup presentations will not be allowed except in extreme and documented cases of emergency.* Each presentation will be worth 20 points, with points allocated as follows:

   No presentation                    0 points
   Presentations lacking novel approach*  15 points
   Presentations with novel approach**  20 points

* Criterion for this type of presentation include the inclusion of methods that do not extend previous research; no link between required readings and presentation; graph displayed in style other than APA. Reading the text on your slides for more than 75% of your displayed verbal behavior.

**Criterion includes novel approaches to independent and dependent variables; incorporates and extends research in required readings

Presentations will be delivered in class, per the class schedule.

2. Class participation (20 pts). You will be responsible for participating in class discussions on the assigned readings. Your comments should be content-specific, and pertain to the relevant topic as discussed in the readings.

3. Mock publication (20 pts). Using a provided template, write a brief report-formatted paper for JABA based off of one of your two presentations. Adhere to the JABA publication guidelines for brief reports (including not longer than 150 lines, 1 figure, less than 10 references, etc.). This paper is due the Sunday AFTER the class has concluded on D2L.

Letter grades will be determined as follows:

A = 90 - 100
B = 80 - 89
C = 70 - 79
D = 60 - 69
F = < 59
**Academic Dishonesty**

Each student is responsible for making himself or herself aware of the policies and procedures in the Graduate Catalog (pp. 44-46) that pertain to Acts of Academic Dishonesty. These policies cover such acts as plagiarism, preparing work for another student, cheating by any method or means, falsifying or manufacturing data, furnishing false information to a university official relative to academic matters, and soliciting, aiding, concealing, or attempting conduct in violation of this code. The student is also responsible for making himself or herself aware of the procedures applicable to cases of academic dishonesty as outlined in the Graduate Catalog (pp. 49-54), including jurisdiction at the department or college level, informal resolution, and formal disciplinary measures. A student must consult with the instructor if he or she has questions pertaining to academic dishonesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

If you wish to drop this course, you must do so after the date designated by the university. A grade of Incomplete will be given under the conditions specified in the university catalog.

*The instructor is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with documented disabilities. It is the responsibility of students with documented disabilities to contact the instructor during the first week of class to discuss appropriate accommodations to ensure equity in grading, classroom experiences, and outside assignments. Documentation is to be provided and accommodations are to be arranged with Disability Support Services.*
## Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekend 1</td>
<td>Course Introduction; Skinner’s Verbal Behavior</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior, Part I and II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skinner cont.</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior, Part III and IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skinner cont.</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior, Part V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend 2</td>
<td>Applications of Skinner’s Verbal Behavior</td>
<td>• Dixon, Small, &amp; Rosales (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Dymond, O’Hora, &amp; O’Donovan (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Partington, Sunberg, Newhouse, &amp; Spengler (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Arntzen &amp; Almas (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Smith, Michael, &amp; Sundberg (1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hoard and Rice (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sunberg, San Jean, Mawdy, &amp; Arguelles (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Kodak &amp; Clements (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Dixon, Baker, &amp; Sadowski (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Synthesizing Skinner’s Verbal Behavior</td>
<td>• Rehfeldt &amp; Root (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Barnes-Holmes, Barnes-Holmes, Cullinan (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Murphy, Barnes-Holmes, Barnes-Homes (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Rosales and Rehfeldt (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Petry, Bickel, Tzanis, Taylor, Kubik, Foster et al. (1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Epstein, Lanza, &amp; Skinner (1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend 3</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior as Relational Responding</td>
<td>• Leigland (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Smyth, Barnes-Holmes, Forsyth (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Gomez, Lopez, Martin, Barnes-Holmes, &amp; Barnes-Holmes (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Barnes-Holmes, Keane, Barnes-Holmes, &amp; Smeets (2000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Assigned Readings

*Applications of Skinner’s verbal behavior:*


Partington, Sunberg, Newhouse, & Spengler (1994). Overcoming an autistic child’s failure to acquire a tact repertoire. *JABA*

Arntzen & Almas (2002). Effects of mand-tact versus tact-only training on the acquisition of tacts. *JABA*


Kodak & Clements (2009). Acquisition of mands and tacts with concurrent echoic training. *JABA*

Smith, Michael, & Sundberg (1996). Automatic reinforcement and automatic punishment in infant vocal behavior. *TAVB*
Hoard and Rice (1988). Establishing a generalized autoclitic repertoire in preschool children. TAVB


**Synthesizing Skinner’s Verbal Behavior**

Rehfeldt & Root (2005). Establishing derived requesting skills in adults with severe developmental disabilities. JABA


Murphy, Barnes-Holmes, Barnes-Homes (2005). Derived manding in children with autism: Synthesizing skinner’s verbal behavior with relational frame theory. JABA


Rosales and Rehfeldt (2007). Contriving transitive conditioned establishing operations to establish derived manding skills in adults with severe developmental disabilities. JABA

Petry, Bickel, Tzanis, Taylor, Kubik, Foster et al. (1998). A behavioral intervention for improving verbal behaviors of heroin addicts in a treatment clinic. JABA

**Relational responding**


Twohig, Shoenberger, Hayes (2007). A preliminary investigation of acceptance and commitment therapy as a treatment for marijuana dependence in adults. JABA