



**REHB 535:  
Behavioral Observation and Assessment  
Course Syllabus**

**Instructor**

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**Required Materials**

Mayer, G. R., Sulzer-Azaroff, B., & Wallace, M. (2013). *Behavior analysis for lasting change (3rd ed.)*. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY: Sloan Publishing.

Bailey, J., & Burch, M. (2006). *How to think like a behavior analyst: Understanding the science that can change your life*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Additional readings made available via D2L

**Course Description & Objectives**

The purpose of this course is to provide instruction on the topics of assessment and measurement of behavior. Course topics will include a variety of components and considerations related to being a professional behavior analyst. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Specify the philosophical orientation underlying behavioral assessment in contrast to psychological or cognitive assessment.
- Recognize the role of behavioral assessment in the context of the current systems of managed care, the medical model, and the DSM.
- Understand the types of assessments in behavior analysis, the conditions under which each is appropriate, and the limitations of each.
- Recognize issues of reliability and validity, and how to best address them.
- Understand the rationale for single-case designs and how experimental control is demonstrated.
- Be able to specify several methods of behavioral observation and the strengths and limitations of each.
- Be able to describe and demonstrate several methods for identifying potential reinforcers for clients.
- Be familiar with functional assessment methods and their purpose.
- Be familiar with several function-based interventions, and how they are chosen.

## Assignments

### Assigned Readings

All readings assigned are required. Students are expected to have completed all assigned readings and to be prepared to engage in meaningful discussion about the content of the readings. Supplemental readings provided via D2L are just as important as those assigned from the textbooks. Any supplemental instruction provided by the instructor is supplemental and will not cover all material from the readings.

### Participation

Students are expected to participate in all course activities and take an active approach to learning. Participation in an online format means being consistently present on discussion boards, web chats, or other avenues of communication. Discussion boards are mandatory each week. A web chatroom will be available each week to ask questions or engage in other course-related discussion. These live web-chats are not mandatory, but students are encouraged to attend.

### Reading Quizzes

There are 10 reading quizzes. The quizzes will cover the readings and supplementary information provided by the instructor between class meetings. Although the quizzes are not explicitly cumulative, students should expect past concepts to remain relevant to later content. Reading quizzes will be multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, or matching type questions.

### Exams

Each exam will consist of five short answer essay questions on the material assigned for the weeks since the previous exam.

### Assignments

Students will complete three (3) assessment assignments during the semester. Each assignment will involve designing, implementing, and interpreting an assessment method. More information about these assignments will be provided in class and on D2L.

### Final Project

A final project will be assigned consisting of a written document in which students will be asked to demonstrate the skills learned during the course. More information will be provided later in the semester.

## **Grading**

Participation	50 pts
Quizzes (10 @ 10 pts)	100 pts
Exams (3 @ 25 pts)	75 pts
Assignments (3 @ 20 pts)	60 pts
Final Project	100 pts
<b>Total:</b>	<b>385 pts</b>

A: 346.5+  
B: 308.0 – 346.4  
C: 269.5 – 307.9  
F: 0 – 269.4

### **A note about being successful in this course**

Success in this course depends largely on putting forth a consistent effort. Students who engage in the bare minimum effort are unlikely to be successful. Do not put off the assigned readings or attempt to complete assignments at the last minute. Rather, try to engage with the material a little bit each day, taking time also to review what you have read and learned previously. Ask questions! I am here as a resource to you.

### **Additional Course Policies**

#### *Classroom Etiquette*

Students should maintain a respectful environment in the classroom at all times. The faculty are committed to maintaining an environment conducive to learning, including being respectful of students and their opinions. In return, you should also maintain respect for the faculty and your fellow students.

To facilitate learning, students are expected to avoid creating distractions in the classroom by speaking out of turn, using cell phones or other non-academically necessary devices or internet services. If you do create distractions during class, you will be asked to leave.

#### *Email Policy*

Communication is key in academia, much like in the world beyond school. When important announcements are made, especially those involving time-critical events, they will be made via email and sent through SIU Online to your registered SIU email address. Students are expected to maintain their email accounts and check email at maximum intervals of 24 hours. Failing to check emails regularly will not be accepted as an excuse for missing important announcements. Relatedly, the instructor is committed to replying to emails within 24 hours of receipt.

The instructor is available to students via email as a resource. Students are strongly encouraged to email the instructor to ask for clarification, or to communicate about course-related issues. However, out of respect for my time, I will ask that students consult the syllabus, email announcements, and the course page on SIU Online prior to emailing questions. If the question was answered on the syllabus, in an announcement, or in the modules on D2L, the instructor will not return the email. This policy is in no way aimed at discouraging students from communicating with the instructor. Rather, self-help and professionalism are important skills for students to master. One way you can demonstrate these professional skills is to refrain from asking questions that have already been answered.

### *Copyright*

The instructor reserves all rights to the intellectual property generated for this course. Slides and other course materials may not be distributed to the public outside the context of this course.

The additional readings made available to you on D2L are covered by the Fair Use clause of the Copyright Act. You are welcome to use these materials for personal and educational purposes, but they should not be re-distributed to the public.

### *Academic Misconduct/Dishonesty*

Students are responsible for understanding the University policy on plagiarism and academic misconduct/dishonesty. Any instance of plagiarism will result—at minimum—in failing the assignment in which the instance of plagiarism was discovered. Depending on the severity of the violation, the instructor may also assign a failing grade in the course, and/or make a report about the incident to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR). Violation of the Code of Conduct, which includes but is not limited to academic dishonesty, may result in sanction, probation, or dismissal from the University.

Incidences of plagiarism include:

- Any presentation of works authored by someone else as your own, original work
- Failure to cite resources consulted or referenced
- Improper citation of works referenced

Failure to read or understand the policies on academic misconduct is not a valid excuse. It is the students' responsibility to read, understand, and adhere to the Code of Conduct. **If you are uncertain whether your assignment contains plagiarism, consult the instructor well before the deadline for the assignment.**

### *Additional University Policies*

Consult the syllabus addendum for information on additional policies including Incomplete grades, disability accommodations, etc.

## REHB 535: Preliminary Course Agenda

*The following agenda is a guide to the course schedule. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the agenda with due notice to students to accommodate unforeseen circumstances that may arise.*

*Additional readings may be required each week and will be posted on D2L.*

<b>Week of</b>	<b>Topic/Assignment</b>	<b>Reading (* = D2L)</b>
1- Jan 16	Course Overview & Introductions	
2 - Jan 23	Introduction to Assessment What is Behavior?	Mayer et al Ch. 1-2 B&B Ch. 1-7
3 – Jan 30	Being Scientist-Practitioners Goals of Assessment	Hayes et al (Ch. 1)* Sidman (2011)* Mayer et al Ch. 3-4
4 - Feb 6	Psychological Assessment Behavioral Interviews Rating Scales & Questionnaires	Spitzer et al (1992)* B&B Ch. 26-27 Faux (2002)* Iwata et al (1982) Miltenberger & Fuqua (1985)*
5 - Feb 13	Reactivity Observation Methods pt.1	Mayer et al Ch. 7 Brackett et al (2007)* Austin & Soeda (2008)*
6 - Feb 20	Observation Methods pt.2 Reliability and Validity	Mayer et al Ch. 8
7 - Feb 27	Observation Methods pt.3 Procedural Integrity Self-Monitoring	Mayer et al Ch. 11 p. 219+ Sanetti & Kratochwill (2009)* B&B Ch. 9 Malott*
8 - Mar 6	Standardized Assessments	PEAK VB-MAPP
9 - Mar 13	<b>Spring Break</b>	
10 - Mar 20	Preference Assessment & Reinforcer Assessment	Mayer et al Ch. 6 & 11 Pace et al (1985)* Fisher et al (1992)* Higbee (2009)*
11 - Mar 27	FBA pt.1: Indirect Assessment	O'Neill et al (1997)* Matson et al (1999)* Nicholson et al (2006)* Iwata et al (2013)*
12 - Apr 3	FBA pt. 2: Descriptive Assessment	Mayer et al Ch. 10 Touchette et al (1985)* Kahng et al (1998)* <i>Additional TBA (ABC)</i>
13 - Apr 10	FBA pt.3: Experimental Functional Analysis	Iwata et al (1994)* Carr (1994)*

14 - Apr 17	Variations on Functional Analysis Identifying Function-Based Interventions	Kahng & Iwata (1999)* Thomason-Sassi et al (2011)* Bloom et al (2011)* Hagopian et al (2013)*
15 - Apr 24	Ethics of Assessment	Mayer et al Ch. 31
16 - May 1	<b>Final Project Due</b>	
17 - May 8	<b>Finals Week</b>	