



**PSYC 587 Section 52699
Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis
Spring 2025**



Course Introduction

Instructor:	Michael J. Cameron, Ph.D, BCBA-D, LBA
E-mail and Phone:	came746@usc.edu (818) 606-8229
Class Location:	Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow Center for International and Public Affairs (DMC): Room 204
Office and Office Hours:	SGM 527: By appointment
Academic Calendar:	Class will be held on Wednesday from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM. We will not have class during the week of Spring Break (Wednesday the 19 th of March). Finally, our last class for the semester will be on the 30 th of April 2025.

Official Course Description

This course will provide supervised practical experience in implementing behavior analytic assessment and treatment services. The course meets the supervision requirements for the Board Certified Behavior Analyst exam. The students will meet with a course instructor to present and discuss cases for 1 hour per week every semester.

Institutional Learning Goals Addressed

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes

The purpose of this course is to provide you with supervised practical experience implementing all of the assessment and intervention procedures you learn about in your coursework throughout the master's program. The total practicum sequence consists of 10 course credits across five semesters. By the end of your last semester of practicum, you will have implemented and reported upon all major Applied Behavior Analysis procedures (see Competencies below).

Course Requirements

Format of Class Meetings/ Supervision: In order to meet the requirements of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board for supervised field experience, this course meets in two formats: 1) group, and 2) individual. Group class meetings will be held for one hour every week, and will include up to 10 students. Individual meetings will be held every two weeks and will be conducted one-on-one with a site-based instructor and a student. In order to comply with BACB requirements (and to ensure the highest levels of quality), students must arrange for the instructor to observe them implementing behavioral interventions during individual meetings. This can be accomplished via live in-person observation, live videoconference, or by watching prerecorded video clips during the individual meetings.

In-Class Participation: Practicum classes will meet every week and attendance is mandatory to accrue supervision hours toward BCBA certification, as well as to pass the class. At each class meeting, all students are expected to bring client data (i.e., for privacy purposes, do not have any identifying information associated with the data) for presentation and discussion. For graphs of data, make sure to exclude real client names, addresses, social security numbers, and any other identifying information (age, diagnosis, and behavior data are not considered identifying information). For videos, make sure to obtain written consent from the client (if over 18) or his/her parent or legal guardian to share videos with the class (sample consent forms to be provided by the instructor) and make sure no identifying information (name, address, and so on) is discussed in the videos. The purpose of discussion is to provide a constructive and supportive forum for peer review. Hostile participation will not be tolerated. Discussion and feedback must be frank but supportive, constructive, and solution-oriented.

Syllabus Summary Points

1. The practicum class will meet each week for one hour.
2. Class will include the following activities: (a) lecture, (b) class discussion, and (c) Competency Performance Testing (CPT).
3. Students will meet with their on-site Board Certified Behavior Analyst supervisor once every two weeks.
4. All student will maintain their documentation (i.e., for supervision) in accordance with the standards and requirements of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB).

Required and Optional Texts and Electronic Reserves

Required Text and On-Line Tutoring Materials

- Behavior Analyst Certification Board. Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts.
- Behavior Analyst Certification Board. Fifth Edition Task List.

Supplemental Articles and Chapters:

- Available on Blackboard and assigned individually, based on clinical needs and competencies
- Case Studies in Applied Behavior Analysis for Students and Adults with Disabilities
<https://www.amazon.com/Studies-Behavior-Analysis-Students-Disabilities/dp/0398091315>

NOTE: The professor reserves the right to modify and adjust this syllabus.

Syllabus Summary Points

1. You will have a weekly reading assignment.
2. Throughout the practicum class, continuous reference will be made to the BACB's Professional and Ethical Compliance Code and the 5th Edition Task List for Board Certified Behavior Analysts.
3. Additional readings (i.e., articles and book chapters) will be assigned during the course of the semester. The supplementary readings, when assigned, will be uploaded to Blackboard.

Competencies

Over the course of five semesters of practicum in applied behavior analysis, you will complete 44 competencies. These competencies represent the major procedures that are broadly considered to constitute the primary assessment and intervention repertoire of professional behavior analysts. Each competency must be completed with a real client for whom it is clinically appropriate. The methods and results of each competency must be described and submitted in a written form that would be suitable for practice in the real world. The written submissions will vary in length, depending on the nature and needs of the individual competency but most will consist of 1-3 typed pages (prose and/or bulleted) plus at least one graph, where appropriate. Additional detail regarding the requirements for each competency will be provided each semester.

Each competency will also involve a Competency Performance Test (CPT). Performance Tests will occur subsequent to the submission of your written assignment and will involve: (1) an evaluation of your verbal abilities, (2) an assessment of your listening literacy skills, (3) an assessment of your text-based literacy skills, (4) an evaluation of your analytic and problem-solving abilities, (5) an evaluation of your motor skills (where appropriate), and (6) an evaluation of your fluency (i.e., speed and accuracy).

Performance Tests will occur in a group setting and also in the context of a one-to-one meeting.

Please note that many competencies overlap with assignments in the other courses in the Masters in Applied Behavior Analysis Program. The difference is that course assignments are hypothetical and competencies are real, to be designed and carried out with real clients. It is acceptable for a single piece of work to satisfy both a course requirement and a competency, if indeed the piece of work satisfies both sets of requirements and is submitted according to the timelines and requirements of both.

In addition, please note that a single real-life intervention can combine many individual competencies, since top-quality ABA services always require more than one competency to be executed simultaneously. It is acceptable to satisfy the requirements of multiple competencies in a single piece of work, provided the practicum supervisor views the work as satisfying the requirements of all. Be sure to clearly indicate which competencies you address in each submission.

Approximately 11 competencies should be completed per semester, to keep pace with the program. In cases where students complete all their competencies earlier than the final semester of practicum, they will not be required to earn points for competencies toward their course grade for that semester and their course grade will instead depend entirely on attendance and participation in discussion and supervision. At the end of the final semester of practicum, students will submit a portfolio of all of their competencies.

Syllabus Summary Points

1. You will complete, at a minimum of 11 competencies during this semester.
2. You are allowed, if you choose, to complete more than eight competencies within a semester.
3. You will demonstrate your understanding of each competency within a paper (one to three pages in length) that includes at least one data display.
4. After the submission of your paper, your Competency Performance Test (CPT) will be scheduled.

5. You will create a portfolio to display your accumulated competencies.

List of Competencies

The following list of competencies do not need to be completed in the order in which they are listed below but the following list maps roughly onto the order in which students will learn about each concept and procedure in their coursework in the program:

1. Evaluate a sample intervention plan in terms of the degree to which it satisfies Baer, Wolf, and Risley's (1968) seven characteristics of Applied Behavior Analysis.
2. Using Microsoft Excel™, make a graph of hypothetical data depicting an ABAB design (including baseline, treatment, return to baseline, and then return to treatment), a multi-element design, and a multiple baseline design (these templates will provide the bases for the graphs that will be required for most of the remaining competencies).
3. Use positive reinforcement on a continuous schedule and thin to an intermittent schedule.
4. Token system / conditioned reinforcement.
5. Manipulate motivating operations.
6. Stimulus control / discrimination training.
7. Chaining / task analysis.
8. Shaping.
9. Extinction.
10. Differential reinforcement of alternative behavior / functional communication training (if you implement extinction also, this can subsume the extinction competency).
11. Verbal behavior training (any verbal operant).
12. Self-management (client, graduate student, or friend/family member).
13. Generalization and maintenance (this can be subsumed within the last phase of another competency).
14. Ethical dilemma involving Responsibility to the Client.
15. Ethical dilemma involving Behavior Analysts as Supervisors.
16. Ethical dilemma involving Behavior Analysts and the Behavior-Change Program.
17. Evaluate potential cultural variables that may impact an assessment or intervention and adjust your procedures to accommodate them.
18. Collect data on behavior using frequency/rate, duration, percent correct, partial interval, and momentary time sampling (these requirements can be met by other competencies in which you are already collecting data with one or more of these methods).
19. Train to reliability with another data collector and collect inter-observer agreement (IOA) data using frequency and percent correct data, documenting agreement above 80% for three consecutive sessions.
20. Procedural integrity data documenting greater than 80% integrity for at least three consecutive sessions.
21. Functional assessment via structured indirect assessment (e.g., the Motivation Assessment Scale or the Questions About Behavioral Function).
22. Functional assessment via antecedent-behavior-consequence data.
23. Functional assessment via experimental functional analysis (brief FA, discrete trial FA, latency FA, or IISCA if acceptable and clinically appropriate).
24. Ecological assessment for challenging behavior (the three types of functional assessment and the ecological assessment can be combined within a single functional behavioral assessment report, where appropriate).

25. Assessment of family or organizational resources and support for behavioral intervention.
26. Skill assessment (e.g., direct observation, Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment Placement Program or PEAK Relational Training System, etc.).
27. Identify and select skill acquisition target based on cognitive development literature.
28. Identify and select skill acquisition target based on social development literature.
29. Assess social validity of goals, procedures, and outcomes of an intervention.
30. Use an ABAB design to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention.
31. Use a multi-element design to compare treatments or in the context an experimental functional analysis.
32. Use a multiple baseline or multiple probe design across clients (concurrent or nonconcurrent) or across settings, behaviors, or people (concurrent) to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention.
33. Paired choice and multiple stimulus without replacement preference assessments.
34. Discrete trial training (can easily be combined with the stimulus control / discrimination training competency, if desired).
35. Use a natural environment training approach (e.g., Pivotal Response Training, incidental teaching, etc.) to teach a skill.
36. Train a parent or other family member of a client in a behavioral intervention procedure.
37. Train one or more staff members in a behavioral intervention procedure.
38. Train and test for derived relational responding in accordance with stimulus equivalence or relational framing.
39. When given a diagnostic or assessment report consisting primarily of results of standardized tests and recommendations from a clinical psychologist, neuropsychologist, or medical doctor, select goals and procedures for behavioral intervention.
40. Collaborate on a treatment goal, protocol, or teaching strategy with another professional (e.g., SLP, OT, teacher) who provides services to your client.
41. Monitor a staff member’s performance (e.g., using a fidelity checklist) and provide him/her with feedback.
42. Use functional assessment to identify variables affecting staff performance / functional based strategies to improve staff performance.
43. Integrate client / parent preference in the development of a skill acquisition or behavior reduction protocol.
44. Monitor client indices of happiness as part of a behavioral program.

Class Schedule, Assignments, & Due Dates

Assignments for this course are as follows:

Date	Comments and Competencies	Lecture Topic	Theme
Week 1 1/15	A Review of the Semester in PSYC 587: Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis	Using the ADDIE Model of Instructional Design to Create Programming for Comprehensive ABA Treatment	Overview of semester plan Assessment

Date	Comments and Competencies	Lecture Topic	Theme
		Behavioral Health Index Individualized Learning Plan	
Week 2 1/22	Competency 1 due by 5:00 PM on 1/21	Supporting and hindering environments for participation of adolescents diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder: A scoping review Tips for Creating Inclusive and Accessible Instruction for Adult Learners: An Overview of Accessibility and Universal Design Methods for Adult Education Practitioners.	Environmental Influences on Behavior
Week 3 1/29	None	Learning and altering behaviours by reinforcement: Neurocognitive differences between children and adults.	Contemporary Understanding of Reinforcement Effects

Date	Comments and Competencies	Lecture Topic	Theme
Week 4 2/5	Competency 2 due by 5:00 PM on 2/4	Examining the Effects of Discrete Trials, Mass Trials, and Naturalistic Environment Training on Autistic Individuals Using Repeated Measures	Instructional Formats
Week 5 2/12	None	Increasing Independence of Adults with Autism in Community Activities: A Brief, Embedded Teaching Strategy	Natural Environment Teaching (NET)
Week 6 2/19	Competency 3 due by 5:00 PM on 2/18	Development and application of a multi-modal task analysis to support intelligent tutoring of complex skills	Contemporary Methodologies for Completing a Task Analysis
Week 7 2/26	None	Using the “Cool Versus Not Cool” Discrimination Procedure to Teach Social Skills Remotely to Adults with Autism	Essential Discrimination Training

Date	Comments and Competencies	Lecture Topic	Theme
Week 8 3/5	Competency 4 due by 5:00 PM on 3/4	Stimulus Control Research and Practice: Considerations of Stimulus Disparity and Salience for Discrimination Training	Stimulus Control Transfer
Week 9 3/12	None	Evaluation of two instruction methods to increase employment options for young adults with autism spectrum disorders	Prompting Methodologies
Week 10 3/26	Competency 5 by 5:00 PM on 3/25	Generalization and Maintenance	Review of Methods for Promoting Generalization
Week 11 4/2	None	Stimulus Control Shaping and Stimulus Control Topographies	Stimulus Shaping, Stimulus Fading
Week 12 4/9	Competency 6 by 5:00 PM on 4/8	Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Token Economy Practices in K-5 Educational Settings, 2000 to 2019	Token Economy Systems: Standards and Practice Parameters

Date	Comments and Competencies	Lecture Topic	Theme
Week 13 4/16	None	Antecedent-Based Interventions: Is There Science Behind That?	Antecedent Control
Week 14 4/23	Competency 7 by 5:00 PM on 4/22	Evidence-Based Practice and Crisis Intervention	Crisis Intervention
Week 14 4/30	Competency 8, 9 by 5:00 PM on 4/29	Toward an Understanding of the Essential Components of Behavior Analytic Service Plans	Behavior Support Plans

Grading

Grading for this course is as follows:

Learning Objective	Assignment	Measurement	Expected Result	Percent of Grade
Participation	In-Class Participation	10 points @ 15 classes = 150 points	Students contribute to class discussions by making interesting or insightful comments and/or asking thoughtful questions.	48%
Competency	Demonstration	20 points @ 11 = 220 points	Students will demonstrate understanding of interconnections and extensions of information from the 5 th Ed Task List for Board Certified Behavior Analysts.	52%
TOTAL POINTS = 370				

University Policy on Religious Observance

University policy grants students excused absences from class for observance of religious holy days. Faculty are asked to be responsive to requests when students contact them IN ADVANCE to request

such an excused absence. The student should be given an opportunity to make up missed work because of religious observance.

The Deans of Religious Life recommend that faculty not schedule an exam on a major holy day or plan something that cannot be made up afterwards. They are also asked to keep in mind that some holy days require additional time for preparation or travel before and/or after the actual observance.

Students are advised to scan their syllabi at the beginning of each course to detect potential conflicts with their religious observances. Please note that this applies only to the sort of holy day that necessitates absence from class and/or whose religious requirements clearly conflict with aspects of academic performance.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Office of Religious Life (213-740-6110) or the Office of Equity and Diversity. A listing of holy days and occasions also appears on the Office of Religious website, which is at <http://orl.usc.edu/>.

Class Presence, Participation, and Follow-Up: Active participation is crucial to the learning process. The point of attending class is to attend to the class. Texting and browsing the Internet are just two examples of behaviors that are incompatible with attending to the class content. Engaging in these behaviors during class may result in you being asked to leave. Unless you are notified that there is a school-wide systems problem, you are responsible to post on time, all the time. Plan to have back-up systems-computers at work, library, or commercial access point.

Late Assignments: Assignments are to be submitted on time. **NO late assignments will be accepted without documentation of the family or medical emergency.**

Recommended Best Practices

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION ETIQUETTE

Learning and working online means that communication often lacks the benefit of visual support of body language and tone of voice. This can easily lead to misunderstandings or unintentional offense. Reviewing what is written in an email or posted in a discussion forum will serve to better support successful online participation.

Students are advised to observe the below guidelines when participating in an online course or communicating with others. Professional behavior is an institutional learning goal, and all are expected to behave as professionals in all aspects of communication.

- Be respectful, professional, and careful about what is said and how it is said.
- Be aware of the image being projecting online. Use clear writing and good form.
- As others cannot read nonverbal cues such as facial expressions or easily interpret the tone of written communication, words and manners of expression must clearly indicate the intended meaning. This is particularly important when using humor (e.g. sarcasm may not be apparent in words alone).
- Respect the time of others. Keep communication short and to the point. Also, be sure to stay on topic.
- With disagreeing with others, be polite and gracious.
- On message boards or in discussion forums, use the subject line appropriately, employing meaningful and succinct labels so that receivers may immediately grasp the topic being advanced.

- When someone else errs and/or does not follow proper protocol, consider whether it is necessary to provide correction. If correction is in order, be polite and, if discretion is advised, address the issue privately rather than in a public way.
- Avoid using ALL CAPS, especially when you are disagreeing! This is perceived as shouting and is considered rude.
- Comply with copyright laws.
- Be mindful of compatibility concerns. Be sure that others can view files uploaded to online platforms.
- Be aware of issues that might arise due to cultural and languages differences.
- Do not to violate the privacy of others. Do not send commercial advertisements or SPAM to other students, instructors, or staff.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

A. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

B. Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.
<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

C. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

D. Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP): (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

E. Sexual Assault Resource Center:

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

F. Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/ Title IX Compliance: (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class.
<https://equity.usc.edu/>

G. Bias Assessment Response and Support:

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and micro aggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response.
<https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

H. Student Support and Advocacy: (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

I. Diversity at USC: <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Tabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students

