

Psychology 532: Ethics for Behavior Analysts

CLASS MEETS: Tuesday & Thursdays 9:30-10:50am

CLASS LOCATION: GFS 107

INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer Harris, Ph.D., LMFT, BCBA-D

Office: SGM 529

Office hours: By appointment or drop-in

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PREREQUISITE: none

TEXTBOOKS AND ON-LINE MATERIALS

Bailey, J. S., & Burch, M. R. (2016). *Ethics for Behavior Analysts, 3rd Edition*. NY: Routledge.

Supplemental articles, chapters, blogs, & podcasts: Available on Blackboard

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides training in legal and ethical issues as they pertain to the professional practice of behavior analysis. We will review the Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts, as well as the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The purpose of this course is to train you on the core principles of how to navigate ethical scenarios in the practice of behavior analysis. Ethical decision-making is not a matter of following rigid and specific rules, since ethical guidelines cannot possibly provide specific guidance in every conceivable scenario that might come up during the course of practice. Instead, ethical decision-making requires careful and thoughtful analysis of ongoing situations, in terms of all of the general ethical principles that behavior analysts are obligated to follow.

This course will teach you this process. During this course, you will learn to:

- Define, describe, and give examples of ethical principles and guidelines for behavior analysts
- Discuss and analyze real-life scenarios in terms of ethical guidelines
- Discuss how to weigh multiple competing ethical guidelines against one another
- Conduct risk-benefit analyses of ethical dilemmas
- Identify and choose and document practical solutions to ethical dilemmas that arise in the practice of behavior analysis

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation & Assignments

The format of each class meeting will consist of lecture, class discussion, and modeling and role-play of ethical scenarios. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions and role-play activities. Much of the content of the course will involve deciding when and why to choose various courses of action, depending upon a variety of ethical imperatives. Often, these choices will consist of telling others (e.g., clients, parents, other professionals) things they do not want to hear. Role-play will include practicing speaking to others about difficult ethical choices and learning from each other. Students will be asked to give examples of the week's content, drawing both from their own clinical experience, as well as hypothetical examples. Additionally, students will produce, share, discuss in-class assignments, some of which will require at home preparation. Each week's discussion will be worth 5 course points. If you miss a class, 2.5 points will be deducted from the week's points. In-class assignments may also earn up to 15 points each towards your total grade.

Written Assignments

Clinical writing is an essential skill for behavior analysts. As such, this course will expose you to various types of writing practices in the context of ethical decision making. Throughout the course, you will use the Professional and Ethical Compliance Code to analyze clinical vignettes and related journal articles, identifying (when relevant) the ethical principle(s) or violation(s) and any competing /conflicting ethical considerations. Submissions should not exceed two pages in length. Each writing assignment may earn you up to 20 course points. Graded papers will be returned to you the following week. Written assignments must be submitted by 9:30am on the due date via blackboard's TURNITIN. Late submissions will result in an automatic 10% penalty for each day late and papers submitted more than 2 days late will receive a zero.

Final and Midterm Examinations

The course will include midterm and final examinations to assess mastery of the material. Exams will be cumulative and consist primarily of multiple-choice questions and essay format responses. Questions will probe for definitions and examples. In addition, questions will include vignettes of ethical dilemmas which challenge students to select the course of action that is most appropriate, given the multiple competing ethical demands of the situation. The midterm and final exams will each be worth 125 course points, comprising a total of 50% of your final grade. Makeup tests will be permitted only when students provide documentation of illness or death in the family.

UNIVERSITY POLICY REGARDING RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

As Dr. Soni, Dean of Religious Life, University Religious Center, states:

"Fostering a vibrant university community that encourages the pursuit of meaning through spiritual reflection and free inquiry, provides fair opportunities to participate in religious life, advances mutual understanding and respect among different traditions -- and in all these ways, strengthens us to actively engage in building a just and peaceful world."

Students may be excused from class and exams when observing religious holy days necessitates absence or the religious requirements clearly conflict with aspects of academic performance. Please review the course syllabus and notify me as soon as possible if you anticipate an excused absence and/or need to reschedule an exam. For absences, I will prepare make up “participation” work to ensure you have the opportunity to earn participation points missed due to the religious observance. Similarly, if you anticipate missing the Midterm or Final exam due to religious observance, please notify me immediately and we will plan an alternative date for you to complete the exam(s).

Should you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me, Dr. Tarbox or feel free to 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/>.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis program at the University of Southern California values diversity and equity in all aspects of graduate education in applied behavior analysis, the provision of behavior analytic services to the community, and in society more broadly. We believe that the value of diversity derives from the basic tenet that all humans are created equal and are equally deserving to be treated with dignity and respect. We believe that we, as a program, have a duty and an opportunity to contribute to a kinder and more compassionate world by living our values of diversity and equity in all of our daily operations as a program. Therefore, we value the input from all members of our community, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, disability status, socioeconomic background, first language, country of birth origin, or country of legal emigration status. We value diversity, not only for the sake of creating a more equitable future, but because when we provide a more diverse learning environment for our students, we provide a richer and more meaningful educational experience for all.

GRADING BREAKDOWN (out of 500 total points)

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Discussion Participation (15 weeks x 5 points)	75	15%
Writing Assignments (5 x 20 points)	100	20%
In-class assignments (5 x 15 points)	75	15%
Midterm Exam	125	25%
Final Exam	125	25%

CLASS SCHEDULE (ANY REVISIONS WILL BE POSTED ON BLACKBOARD)

		Topic	Readings	Deliverables
1	8/27	Intro to Psych 532: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syllabus, Grad School 101 Q & A 	WELCOME TO PSYCH 532	Schedule Interview with a BCBA: Note the most frequently encountered ethical dilemma AND the most unusual ethical dilemma reported. Prepare to share next week and offer your thoughts on resolution.
	8/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical Perspectives Framework for Ethical Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B&B: Preface, Disclaimer, Chapters 1-5 <u>Journal Article</u>: Van Houten et al. (1988) <u>Journal Articles</u>: Rosenberg & Schwartz (2019). Guidance or compliance: What makes an ethical behavior analyst? <p><u>FOR YOUR REFERENCE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior Analyst Certification Board. Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts. http://bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/160321-compliance-code-english.pdf American Psychological Association. Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/principles.pdf 	
2	9/03	Responsible Conduct: Evidence Based Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B & B (2016), Chapter 6 Green, G., & Perry, L. (1999). Science, Pseudoscience and Anti-science. <i>Science in Autism Treatment</i>, 1(1), 5-6. <u>Journal Article</u>: Smith, T., & Wick, J. (2008). Read pgs. 243-251 only. 	Share and discuss your BCBA interviewee's most reported ethical dilemmas.
	9/05	Responsible Conduct: Controversial/Fad Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Journal Article</u>: Jacobson, J W., Foxx, R. M., & Mulick, J. A. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, (2004). Helping parents separate the wheat from the chaff: Putting autism treatments to the test 	IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: Present your assigned, non-evidenced based intervention. Provide a theory for its popularity and continued endorsement. (7 min/student)

3	9/10	Responsible Conduct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope of Practice and Competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Journal Article</u>: Brodhead, Quigley, Wilczynski (2018). A call for discussion about scope of competence in behavior analysis. 	Continue with any remaining discussion regarding non-evidence-based practices.
	9/12	Responsible Conduct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity, • Professionalism, • Avoiding dual relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Journal Article</u>: Wang, Kang, Ramirez, Tarbox (2019). Multilingual Diversity in the Field of Applied Behavior Analysis and Autism: A Brief Review and Discussion of Future Directions • <u>Journal Article</u>: Fong et al. (2016). Developing cultural awareness skills of behavior analysts. 	WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT VIA TURNITIN : Briefly describe your current scope of practice vs. your current scope of competence. In what areas/populations/settings do you want to become (more) competent? How will you do so?
4	9/17	Responsibility to Clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting clients • Working with Others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B &B, Chapter 7 • <u>Journal Article</u>: Brodhead (2015). Maintaining Professional Relationships in an Interdisciplinary Setting: Strategies for Navigating Nonbehavioral Treatment Recommendations for Individuals with Autism • <u>PODCAST</u>: Cicoria, M. (2019). 11 tips for consulting in public school settings, Session 74. See link on blackboard. 	
	9/19	Responsibility to Clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Rights • Records • Declaration of Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B & B, Chapter 18 	WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT VIA TURNITIN : Review the vignette on Blackboard and using the ethical decision-making framework, document for a client's medical record your course of action.
5	9/24	Responsibility to Clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Parties – Health Insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BACB (2014). ABA for ASD. Practice guidelines for healthcare funders and managers (2nd Ed). • BACB & APBA (2019). Clarifications regarding ABA for ASD: Practice guidelines for healthcare funders and managers (2nd ed). • <u>Journal Article</u>: Graber & O'Brian (2018). The promise of accountable care associations. 	

6	9/26	Responsibility to Clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Journal Article</u>: Papatola, K. & Lustig, S. (2016). Navigating a managed care peer review: Guidance for clinicians using applied behavior analysis in the treatment of children on the autism spectrum. • <u>Journal Article</u>: Kornack, J., Herscovitch, B., & Williams, A. (2017, May). A response to Papatola and Lustig's paper on navigating a managed care peer review: Guidelines for clinicians using applied behavior analysis in the treatment of children on the autism spectrum. • Beier (2018). Letter to the editor: An autism parent's response to Papatola. 	WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT VIA TURNITIN: Briefly summarize each article, noting the ethical considerations. Did these articles make you think differently about working with health care organizations? What will you take from these as articles as you begin your career as a behavior analyst?
	10/01	Guest Speaker via Skype: Bonnie Yates, Esq.	Bring your funding and ethics questions!	
	10/03	Responsibility to Clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment Efficacy • Referrals • Termination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FILM: Lovaas 1987 Study • <u>Journal Articles</u>: Read only those assigned to you on blackboard. 	IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: Present your assigned research in a scholarly fashion. Be sure to review the rationale / purpose, a brief review of methods, and results. Discuss YOUR thoughts regarding the study, its implications, and how you might use the information to address an ethical dilemma.
7	10/08	Responsibility to Clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment Efficacy • Referrals • Termination 	Brand, D. (2014). Topical articles: Treatment Integrity: Why it is important regardless of discipline. <u>Science in Autism Treatment</u> , 14(2), 6-7, 9-11. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	Continue presentations and discussions from last Thursday
	10/10	Assessment Midterm Review Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B & B, Chapter 8 	

8	10/15		Midterm: Bring blank notebook paper OR a laptop if you would like to type your essay responses	
	10/17	NO CLASS	FALL BREAK	
9	10/22	Behavior Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual Consistency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&B, Chapter 9 • <u>Journal Article:</u> Schreck, K. & Miller, V. (2010). How to behave ethically in a world of fads. <i>Behavioral Interventions</i>, 25, 307-324. 	
	10/24	Behavior Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including Clients 	<u>Journal Article:</u> Taylor & LeBlanc (2018). Compassionate Care in Behavior Analytic Treatment: Can Outcomes be Enhanced by Attending to Relationships with Caregivers?	IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: Discuss what compassionate care means to you. What behavior is consistent with this approach? How will you measure if effective?
10	10/29	Behavior Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized Treatment & Approvals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Blog Article:</u> Wiedemann 2017, July 19). "Touch your head" or "make the bed"? Staying true to the applied dimension of ABA when creating program goals for students with profound cognitive impairment. • <u>Podcast:</u> Cicoria, M. (Producer). (2017) Session 31: Pat McGreevy on Teaching Functional skills. See link on blackboard. 	
	10/31	Behavior Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions of Treatment 	Walkup, A. (2012). How does a behavior consultant who is invested in the child's best outcome encourage parents to actively participate in home-based intervention? <i>Science in Autism Treatment</i> , 9(4), 4-6.	WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT VIA TURNITIN: List at least 2 minor and 2 significant barriers which may interfere with client progress. How would you ethically address the most significant barrier you list?
11	11/05	Behavior Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection from Harm • LRE • Punishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Podcast:</u> Cicoria, M. (2018). Straight talk on restraint with Merrill Winston, Session 87. See link on blackboard. • Statement on Restraint and Seclusion (2010) Retrieved from https://www.abainternational.org/about-us/policies-and-positions/restraint-and-seclusion,-2010.aspx 	

12	11/07	Behavior Change: Service termination		IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT: With your partner, read the prompt, and write an ethical & professional termination letter.
	11/12	Behavior Change	B&B (2016) chapter 9	...Continued from last week....each group to present termination letter with class discussion and feedback
	11/14	Special Guest (via skype): The client experience	Please prepare questions to ask our guest.	
13	11/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B & B (2016), Chapter 10 <u>Journal Article:</u> Sellers, T., LeBlanc, L., & Valentino, A. (2016). Recommendations for detecting and addressing barriers to successful supervision. <u>Journal Article:</u> Sellers et al. (2019). BCBA's supervisory practices of trainees. 	IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: Present a written essay (which you will also turn-in at class) about what you learned from our guest speaker. Stay away from the obvious, and dig deeper. How does/will this information shape/change/influence your work and commitment to the individuals you serve?
	11/21	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B & B (2016), Chapter 10 <u>Journal Article:</u> LeBlanc et al. (2018). Establishing consumer protections for research in human service agencies. <u>Journal Article:</u> Pellicano et al. (2014). What should autism research focus on? Community views and priorities from the UK. 	WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT VIA TURNITIN: Reflection on Supervision: Discuss what can you do in both your current role as supervisee and future role of supervisor to facilitate healthy professional relationships with supervisors and supervisees.

14	11/26	<u>ZOOM CLASS</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABA Organizations Your first job 	See Blackboard for Login instructions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B&B, Chapter 19 <u>Journal Article</u>: Brodhead, Quigley, and Cox (2018). How to identify ethical practices in organizations prior to employment. <u>Journal Article</u>: Brodhead, M. & Higbee, T. (2012). Teaching and maintaining ethical behavior in a professional organization. <u>Blog</u>: Druskis (2017, July 26). Protecting the future of our field. <i>Behavioral Science in the 21st Century</i>. Retrieved from CLICK HERE 	
	11/28	NO CLASS	HAPPY THANKSGIVING	
15	12/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Statements / Disseminating ABA Responsibility to the Profession Responsibility to Colleagues Responsibility to the BACB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B&B, Chapter 11,12,13, 15, 17 <u>Journal Article</u>: O’Leary, P. et al. (2017). Blurred lines: Ethical implications of social media for behavior analysis. Journal Article: Carr & Nosik (2017). Professional credentialing of practicing behavior analysts. <u>Podcast</u>: Cicoria, M. (Producer) (April, 2017). Session 25: Jim Carr on the state of the practice. See link on blackboard. 	IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: Search the internet for misconceptions / misinformation and anti-ABA comments about ABA. Discuss strategies and content to correct the record.
	12/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Wrap-Up Ethical Jeopardy Class Evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Journal Article</u>: Bannerman, D., Sheldon, J., Sherman, J., & Harchik, A. (1990). Balancing the right to habilitation with the right to personal liberties: The rights of people with developmental disabilities to eat too many doughnuts and take a nap. 	
	12/10	NO CLASS	STUDY WEEK	
	TBA		Final Exam: Bring blank notebook paper OR your laptop if you would like to type your essays. ENJOY THE WINTER BREAK!!	

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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>.

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/>

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>

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/>

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/>

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/>

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/>

Student Support & 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/sssa/>

Diversity at USCTabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>