

BEHV 5815.707
Practicum
Course Syllabus



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Welcome to UNT!

As members of the UNT community, we have all made a commitment to be part of an institution that respects and values the identities of the students and employees with whom we interact.

UNT does not tolerate identity-based discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. UNT's full Non-Discrimination Policy can be found in the UNT Policies section of the syllabus. Please also see course policies on respect and communication.

We are so happy you are here and we look forward to being part of your education, to helping you climb this amazing professional mountain!

Course Description

“When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don't adjust the goals, adjust the action steps.”

Confucius

(via Dr. Rosales-Ruiz)

This course is designed to help first year students successfully complete the initial semester of grad school and meet their professional goals in the Master of Science in Behavior Analysis graduate program. Experience and data tell us that engaging and responding increase the chances of success in every sphere of human activity. For that reason, we have chosen several activities that are likely to give students an initial boost and to set up a system that will flag conditions that a student may need extra support. If there are “flags” (in your monthly uploads, you tell us, or faculty see challenges) that you are struggling in classes and/or in connecting with others in the department, we will develop a plan to change the action steps and/or seek other options.

This syllabus explains the course structure, the activities and the evaluation process.

Course Structure

This course is designed to help you come into contact with activities that will increase your success in graduate school. For that reason, there are only two formal meetings: **Orientation on 8/19.23 and a mid-semester check-in on 10/7 12-2pm room 363 Chilton.** You will be responsible for engaging in a series of activities (see below) and to communicate your progress so we can encourage you and provide you with feedback. Part of this will happen through a self-monitoring and shared GEM card (or alternative if you hate paper☺), via personal connections in the activities themselves, and the monthly progress uploads.

Course Prerequisites

Basic Behavior Principles undergraduate or leveling course

Course Objectives & Activities

1. Students will learn to talk about the process of success & mentoring; learning to reflect and evaluate their own progress and support the progress of others in their community
 - Attend 2 semesterly GEMs meetings
 - Orientation and 10/7 12-2pm room 360 Chilton
2. Students will participate in a formal community of practice around research and practice in behavior analysis.
 - Attend at least 3 Behavior Analysis Research Colloquiums (BARC)
 - **2nd & 4th Fridays**
3. Students will learn to initiate and connect with other students, especially 2nd and 3rd year students who can help guide and give advice
 - At least 4 times invite another student to a meal together, take a walk, talk after BARC, etc.
 - You can each get **2 FREE** meal cards from Yvette **2 times** a semester
4. Students will learn to visit a lab, learn about different areas of research and practice, and understand the conditionality of scientific practices in behavior analysis, and find a thesis home.
 - Attend at least 3 different lab meetings
 - Sample and then commit to meetings and lab work
 - Begin to think about thesis topics
5. Students will learn to connect with faculty in order to learn, seek support and develop mentoring relationships
 - Talk after classes, chat in hallways, talk after BARCs, visit office hours
 - At least 2 non-class contacts
6. Students will learn to initiate study sessions with classmates, talk about and delve into subject matter and form strong professional relationships.
 - In person or on zoom, can include group projects
 - At least 3 study sessions
7. Students will refine their writing skills.
 - Visit the UNT writing center
 - At least 1 visit
8. Students will learn to pay attention and communicate about what interests them, what is meaningful to them, and what they are learning.
 - Make notes to yourself as the semester progresses, talk to faculty, peers, family and friends
 - Create an infographic about the five most interesting things you learned this semester. Upload before the end of the semester.
9. Students will learn to develop working goals to organize your time, attention and activities in ways that best optimize success.
 - In person or on zoom, can include group projects
 - Post a 1-page description of your working goals for the year. Upload before the end of the semester.

Materials

The GEM card (given at orientation). If you don't want a paper card, you can use an electronic version. In any case, it has to show your cumulative progress. After every five activities completed, you can come by Shahla's to get a super cool sticker or pin. These are really just symbolic tokens and a chance to check in with the advisor. Tokens exchanges are not required☺ What is required is that you take a picture and upload progress to the canvas page. You can also use that opportunity to ask questions, rejoice, or freak out (lol) and I will respond. An example of a completed GEM Card:

Department of Behavior Analysis 5815 Encouragement Plan☺

CODE

Activities

- GEM** 2 semesterly all GEMs meetings on Saturday afternoons
8/19 during orientation and 10/7 12-2pm room 360 Chilton
- BARC** 3+ Behavior Analysis Research Colloquiums "BARC"
Fridays of every month
- MS** 4+ connections with another student (lunch, walk, talk, etc)
- LAB** 3+ different lab meetings or more during the semester
- FAC** 2+ meetings with faculty
* Any contact counts! office hours, before/after class, BARC*
- SS** 3+ study sessions with classmates -in person or on zoom
- WRITE** 1+ visit to the UNT writing center
- WOW** Infographic about the 5 most interesting things learned this fall
- GOALS** A one-page description of goals and areas of future focus

Department of Behavior Analysis 5815 Encouragement Plan☺

Date and write in the code for each activity in the cell and initial.
Come by Shahla's office or after BARCs to collect success markers after every 5!
The practicum grade is based on minimum completion

<i>GEM</i> 8/19	<i>Vannon La4</i> 8/25	<i>FAC</i> 8/25	<i>MS lunch</i> 9/1	<i>BARC</i> 9/15
<i>Neuro/EVO</i> Lab 9/18	<i>SS</i> 9/20	<i>FAC</i> 9/21	<i>TR,AL Lab</i> 9/21	<i>BARC</i> 10/6
<i>GEM</i> 10/7	<i>MS hall</i> talk 10/10	<i>MS dinner</i> 10/25	<i>UNT</i> writing lab 11/1	<i>BARC</i> 11/3
<i>SS</i> 11/5	<i>MS walk</i> 11/14	<i>SS</i> 12/2	<i>WOW</i> 12/4	<i>Goals</i> 12/6

Upload dates (take a picture, upload and comment, if you like)

Check in uploads: 9/1, 10/6, 11/3, 12/1

Completion uploads: Gem card, WOW infographic and goal sheet uploaded by 12/15

Student Evaluation

Your grade in the course will be based on completion of the minimum GEM activities. These activities are meant to help you be successful and are the minimum. If you are able to engage at this level, it is highly likely that you will be successful as a full-time student. You will earn 10 points for each completed activity. There are 20 required activities and the points equal 200. The grade percentages are as follows:

- **A = 90-100%**
- **B = 80-89.9%**
- **C = 70-79.9%**
- **F = below 70%**

Course Evaluation

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT and allows students the ability to confidentially provide constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course

Lab Schedule and Information

Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	BARC 11:30-1	CaPS Lab 12-1		Varnon Lab 1-3	CSJ Lab 12-2
	Drs. Joe Dracobly & Rick Smith In collaboration with Denton State Supported Living Center (DSSLC), BARC serves as a unit behavior analyst for residents of DSSLC and operates an assessment and treatment clinic for residents with severe behavior disorders and difficulty with medical procedures.	Dr. Joseph Dracobly The primary goal of this laboratory is to pursue knowledge about the variables that influence behavioral variability and creativity. To that end, the laboratory conducts translation and applied research.		Dr. Chris Varnon This lab focuses on analyzing behavior from comparative and computational perspectives. We use invertebrate models to study behavior, learning, drug use, and neuroscience. We are also interested in quantifying behavior and learning to create mathematical models and real-time agent-based simulations in the Unity game engine.	Drs. Shahla Ala'i & Alicia Re Cruz This is an interdisciplinary lab engaging in collaborative community building. Our goal is to develop and try third way approaches to address community needs in the most loving & progressive ways possible.
A+ Lab 3-5	NRRL & Evo Culture Lab 3:30-5:30		ORCA Lab 3-5	TRAIL Lab 4-5:30	Neurobehavioral EEG Lab 1-3
Dr. Jesús Rosales-Ruiz The A+ lab focuses on the treatment of children with autism. However, the name includes a plus because sometimes we include other populations. One of our main focuses is therapist-learner interactions and how the therapist's behavior can promote optimal teaching situations.	Dr. April Becker his lab explores culture-behavioral phenomena, biological and social systems, and social learning with an emphasis on animal culture, emergent and dynamical systems concepts, multi-level selection, and radical behaviorism.		Dr. Jesús Rosales-Ruiz In this lab, students learn about animal behavior and training, conduct research projects related to animal training, and volunteer with local community organizations.	Drs. Sam Bergman & Karen Rader TRAIL is dedicated to conducting applied research and providing supervised professional practice opportunities related to behavioral interventions for children & young adults with autism spectrum disorder.	Dr. Daniele Ortu The lab focuses on real time measures of behavior and brain activity, specifically Event Related Potentials, and how they relate to a Skinnerian perspective.
BEHV 5100 Observation & Measurement 6-9		BEHV 5000 Intro 6-9		BEHV 5810 PORTL 6-9	BARC 3-5 -Lab sharing and invited topical speakers

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Course Policies

Attendance

Students are expected to attend the two GEM meetings and complete the activities. If for some reason you are unable, please talk to me as soon as possible and we will develop a reasonable alternative plan.

Syllabus Change Policy

The professor reserves the right to make changes and updates to the syllabus as needed. Any

updates to the syllabus will be posted on Canvas and an announcement will be made regarding relevant changes.

Basic Needs Policy

Your basic safety and well-being are more important than anything in this class. If you are experiencing any food or housing insecurity or personal adversity, please contact the Dean of Students <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu>. If you want to talk or need help with making contacts, please feel free to reach out. I will help as best as I can.

Respect for Diversity and the Importance of Communication

This is adapted from a statement developed from colleagues in Behavior Analysis: Corina Jimenez-Gomez (Auburn University), Lynn Hernandez (Brown University) and Marlesha Bell (Cal State).

Although scientific endeavors strive to be objective, it is important to acknowledge these endeavors are the work of individuals whose unique perspective and experiences impact their work and interpretations of scientific findings. I acknowledge scientific work in the field of behavior analysis is disproportionately built by and influenced by a small subset of privileged individuals. As a result, it is possible there may be both overt and covert biases in the material assigned for this course due to the lens through which it was written, even though the material appears to be of a primarily scientific and objective nature. I invite you to critically consider issues of diversity as you read these texts and evaluate the potential implications for the work of applied behavior analysts. Integrating a diverse set of experiences is important so that science is reflective of the context, questions and methods that advance understanding and action for all.

It is my intent and sincere hope that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. I hope the activities are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, ability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

Important Note:

Applied behavior analysis is a science of behavior and environment interactions and encompasses many areas of inquiry and action. Throughout the semester we will discuss the science of applied behavior analysis across research and practice arenas. Because the class is primarily discussion based, there will be diverse points of views, fluid understandings and, hopefully, learning.

It is imperative that there be an atmosphere of trust and safety in the classroom for learning to occur.

I will do my best, and continually try to improve, to foster an environment in which each class member is able to talk, listen and respect each other.

It is critical that each class member show respect for the diversity and value of worldviews expressed in class.

It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions, please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own.

Please let me know if something is said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, that is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense. While our intention may not be to do so, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention.

If and when this occurs, there are several ways to alleviate some of the discomfort or hurt you may experience:

- Discuss the situation privately with me. I try to be open to listening to students' experiences and want to work with students to find acceptable ways to process and address the issue.
- Discuss the situation with the class. Chances are there is at least one other student in the class who had a similar response to the material. Discussion enhances the ability for all class participants to have a fuller understanding of context and impact of course material and class discussions.
- If for any reason you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with me, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address the issue. This might include your academic advisor, a trusted faculty member, or a peer.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Use of AI

(Adapted from Temple University & Dr. Kenda Morrison)

Artificial Intelligence is defined as any text-generating software (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot or Botowski). There is significant value of such technology and you will likely use it during your careers. At the same time, for those you serve, there is value in being able to produce independent work demonstrating skills such as integration, reflection, analysis, and application of the content being taught.

Acceptable use. It is acceptable to use AI as an additional support when studying course content (e.g., seeking clarification about a concept). However, please keep in mind that AI has limitations of which to be aware:

- AI may generate content that is inaccurate or incomplete.
- AI models have built-in *biases* and *unjust* frameworks since they may be based upon limited, unreliable, or problematic sources.
- AI may have limitations such as evaluating information and thinking critically.

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas; Finding information on your topic; Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts; and Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is NOT permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Writing a draft of WOW infographic or Goal assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs to complete WOW infographic or Goal assignment.
- You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content use). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited *See these resources for [APA guidance](#)*. Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways *through “Turn it in” originality or AI detection will receive a “0”*.
- When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification. This is new and exciting, but complicated territory. We will learn together☺

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. In this course, engaging in academic dishonesty will result in a 0 on the assignment where academic dishonesty occurred.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the [ODA website \(https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access\)](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access).

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and

comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's [Code of Student Conduct](#) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Survivor Advocacy

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940.565.2648.

Academic Support & Student Services

Mental Health

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](#)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](#)
- [UNT Care Team](#)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](#)
- [Individual Counseling](#)

Chosen Names

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- [UNT Records](#)
- [UNT ID Card](#)
- [UNT Email Address](#)
- [Legal Name](#)

**UNT EUIDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.*

Pronouns

Pronouns (she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in-person. Just as we ask and don't assume someone's name, we should also ask and not assume someone's pronouns.

You can [add your pronouns to your Canvas account](#) so that they follow your name when posting to discussion boards, submitting assignments, etc.

Below is a list of additional resources regarding pronouns and their usage:

- [What are pronouns and why are they important?](#)
- [How do I use pronouns?](#)
- [How do I share my pronouns?](#)
- [How do I ask for another person's pronouns?](#)
- [How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?](#)

Additional Student Support Services

- [Registrar](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Student Legal Services](#)
- [Career Center](#)
- [Multicultural Center](#)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](#)
- [Pride Alliance](#)
- [UNT Food Pantry](#)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](#)
- [Academic Success Center](#)
- [UNT Libraries](#)
- [Writing Lab](#)