BEHV 5540
Legal, Ethical, & Professional Issues in Behavior Analysis
Credits: 03

Department of Behavior Analysis
University of North Texas
Spring 2020

PROFESSOR: Traci M. Cihon, PhD, BCBA-D
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WEB SITE ADDRESS: https://unt.instructure.com/

COURSE TIME: Monday 6:00 pm to 8:50 pm (Location: Curry 210)

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS
Official Course Description
Addresses and reviews the effects of court decisions in development and implementation of behavioral interventions, ethical requirements of the Behavior Analysis Certification Board, and professional conduct in treatment, intervention and consultation settings. Topics include accountability, confidentiality, quality of services, quality of life, emergency management, research, professional collaborations, and ethical safeguards.

Additional Course Description
This course introduces students to the Guidelines for Responsible Conduct adopted by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) in 2013, the BACB Code of Ethics (Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analyst [the Code]) approved by the BACB in 2014 and in effect in 2016, and the Code of Ethics that has been adopted by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI). In addition, this course provides a cursory overview of legal issues common to practicing behavior analysts and how such legislation may impact our profession in research and applications. Further, this course has a strong emphasis on professionalism the development of the associated skill sets related to professional behavior and to the profession itself. Some focus areas regarding professional behavior include perspective-taking; bias; working in diverse, international, and interdisciplinary settings; philosophic doubt; and constructive and respectful problem solving, dispute, and collaboration.

Behavior analysts find themselves working in a wide variety of professions and as such represent the discipline of behavior analysis to many individuals. In addition, many of the arenas in which behavior analysts’ work require collaboration with other professionals and the application of behavior analytic principles to disadvantaged populations. The confluence of these variables requires a solid understanding of core ethical principles, one’s own personal assumptions and biases, and the professional guidelines for ethical
behavior, as well as the ability to make professional and personal decisions that adhere to the BACB and ABAI codes of ethics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will:
⇒ Develop familiarity with the Ethical Considerations and governing organizations for the discipline of Behavior Analysis
⇒ Summarize the 10 sections of the BACB Professional and Ethical Compliance Code and provide examples and non-examples of behaviors that correspond to each section
⇒ Develop the characteristics and skills associated with professionalism in a variety of contexts including class participation and role plays
⇒ Create hypothetical scenarios dealing with ethical and professional considerations within the discipline of Behavior Analysis
⇒ Shift in and out of other’s perspectives through in-class activities, self-reflection exercises, scenario descriptions, and role plays
⇒ Think critically and work collaboratively to solve difficult problems facing Behavior Analysts as they pertain to legal, ethical and professional issues in the discipline, society, and culture
⇒ Think critically and work collaboratively to solve difficult problems facing the discipline, society, and culture
⇒ Create a CV/resume and personal statement/letter of interest that reflect knowledge and skills in Behavior Analysis as applied to the student’s area of application in preparation for entering the workforce or continuing one’s education

LEARNING ACTIVITIES & EVALUATION
Student-Led Discussion
Students will work, in dyads or triads to develop a presentation that (a) introduces the BCBA ethical guideline, (b) ties the BCBA principle to the corresponding articles/book chapters, and (c) creates a meaningful class discussion of the topic through discussion questions, anecdotes, real-life experiences, journal article summaries, etc. Presentations should not simply detail each component of “the Code” for the chosen topic; rather, they should introduce the ethical guideline and corresponding components in an integrated fashion with the readings, real-life experiences (may be hypothetical), examples, and activities for class participation. Presenters should also build in time for others to Role Play their Scenario Descriptions during the class time. Presentations should be prepared using PowerPoint or an equivalent program and should be emailed to the professor within 24 hours of the scheduled presentation so they can be posted to the course website. Students should prepare their presentations early and build time in their schedules to meet to rehearse together prior to presenting in class. Some points will be allocated to the cohesion of the student group’s presentation. One grade will be earned for each group of students for each of the presentations (1 opportunity x 40 pts = 40 pts).

Tips for a Stronger Presentation
One of the most difficult components of giving a presentation with multiple presenters is to make the presentation look unified. When you present as a team in
any other environment outside of the graduate program classroom (ABAI, in-services, workshops, etc.), your presentation should look integrated, not like each person prepared a component of it and then it was all put together. This can be hard due to other commitments, time schedules, etc. but it is often the biggest weakness in graduate student class presentations. So, here are some tips for how to create a cohesive presentation this semester.

- First, plan time to prepare your presentation with the other member(s) of your group.
- Second, decide on a few measurable outcomes for your “students” to achieve throughout the course of the presentation (the BACB actually has a nice framework for this for preparing talks that qualify for CEUs as does ABAI for their requirements for submissions for workshops at the annual conventions). This set of measurable outcomes then drives the content of your presentation and your activities are linked to your assessment of your effectiveness at delivering the learning opportunities that would create those outcomes.
- Next, consider your presentation like you would consider a paragraph – and not to be silly but the hamburger metaphor actually works well here. Basically, you have an intro and a conclusion for your presentation – the buns – the beginning of your presentation sets it up and the end of your presentation summarizes the main point – it brings you back full circle. What you do in between then is the meat and toppings (cheese, lettuce, catsup, etc.); these are your supporting points, information, etc. that get you from the top bun to the bottom bun or from your main idea to your conclusion. What this means, likely, in the context of presenting the Code and the corresponding readings is that your group derives the big idea of the unit after looking over all of that information. So, rather than summarizing each item in the task list or the articles individually, you look for the big picture – the big picture is the introduction or the top bun – and likely the conclusion or the bottom bun. Then you select what is important from the various components of the Code and/or the articles and/or any other information you find that helps you to get your participants to see that big idea. This will also help each group to ensure that activities, examples, etc. are on topic and are relevant to helping your participants to see the main idea (and will help you to select videos, memes, etc. that contribute to participant learning and fit conceptually within the scope of what you want to convey to your learners).
- Finally, you need to practice and revise and practice again. You need to have clear roles for who is the primary presenter for each section(s) of your presentation. You need to have clear roles for who can step in to support the others if they are struggling or you have a point that can clarify things for your participants. You need to have clear roles for who your timekeeper is. You need to have clear roles for who can decide under what conditions and/or can communicate to others that you are going to continue a conversation based on participant interest and/or learning.
opportunities that are emerging and what is going to be cut due to time as a result. You have to communicate with each other and have an ongoing dialogue with each other during the presentation that others can see but not really see...They need to see you are working together but not the actually dialogue about it or hesitations when it is unclear.

Group presentations are a really difficult thing to navigate, especially if it is your first time working together and it requires a lot of adjusting and trust in your colleagues and it requires a lot of practice and communication and maybe most importantly a clear openness to adjusting when your colleagues give you feedback on things you do that are working or are not working toward the ultimate aim of the group – which is the change in your participant behavior throughout and at the end of the presentation.

**Resource Booklets**

A resource booklet to be distributed to classmates should accompany the presentation. The booklet should include useful: 1) article references, 2) web sites, 3) relevant governmental agencies and contact information, 4) relevant legal citations, and 5) a detailed outline of the class presentation. Resource booklets must include resources beyond what are available in the syllabus. One resource booklet should be prepared per triad and presentation. And, only one grade will be earned for each group of students for the research booklet. Resource booklets should also be emailed to the professor within 24 hours of the scheduled presentation so they can be posted to the course website. A rubric by which the Resource Booklets will be evaluated is posted on the course website (1 opportunity x 10 pts = 10 pts).

**Class Participation**

Class time will involve class discussions, role-play, and in-class student presentations. Students are expected to read the textbook chapters and any additional required readings assigned for each class. Students are expected to participate during each class session. Remember, you too will be leading a class discussion each week. Students should be prepared to provide a brief summary of the material assigned for each week if asked. Three points will be available for participation during each class period. Class participation will be evaluated on a 3 pt scale in which 0 pts will be received for no participation, 1 pt will be received for low quality participation (e.g., restating a point that has already been made, sharing an irrelevant anecdote, making an off topic comment, talking just to talk and receive points), 2 pts will be received for average quality participation (e.g., paraphrasing something read in this class or another class, pointing out the obvious), and 3 pts will be given for high quality participation (e.g., extending ideas from an in-class discussion or reading, contributing a novel example or idea, pushing the class discussion in a new and relevant direction). Students will be given one “bye week” in which they can waive their class participation requirement (10 opportunities x 3 pts = 30 pts).

**Scenario Descriptions**

For each course unit noted, students will turn in one scenario description that illustrates an example and a non-example of and ethical, professional, or legal conflict that a
behavior analyst may encounter. Students will construct each of their Scenario Descriptions in groups of at least two students but no more than three students. Dyads/Triads can vary or remain consistent throughout the semester at the students’ discretion.

Scenario Descriptions should include at least two and no more than four “roles” where a role is defined as a person who participates in the scenario (see Role Play section below). Scenarios should be written in enough detail such that if a scenario created by a dyad requires additional participants (e.g., has four roles), that the recruited volunteers (peers or the instructor when beneficial) can respond appropriately given the scenario. You may script the full scenario or provide sufficient character and contextual detail for improvisation. Further, each scenario should include alternative endings – one ending that details what the student group determines is an appropriate response to the scenario that is both professional and ethical and one ending that details what the student group determines to be a realistic but inappropriate response to the scenario that is unethical.

The purpose of the scenario descriptions is to help students apply the guidelines/topics considered in real life situations and to make discriminations between ethical and unethical behavior and professional and unprofessional behavior in application/research/workplace/etc. Students are required to submit a paper copy of written description of each scenario and to role-play the scenario during class (emailed submissions will not be accepted). One written description of the scenarios can be handed in per dyad/triad. One grade will be earned for both students. Due to the variability in topics and possibility for creativity and thinking outside the box, there is not a rubric for the Scenario Descriptions; rather, they will be graded based on the topic chosen and the adherence to that topic and the guidelines outlined in the course syllabus (9 opportunities x 5 pts = 45 pts).

**Role Plays**
During each class session, student dyads/triads will have the opportunity to “act out” their scenario descriptions – both appropriate and inappropriate responses. Students will be required to act out at least three Scenario Descriptions throughout the semester and those who 1) exceed the required number of Scenario Description Role Plays and 2) volunteer to serve as a confederate or actor/actress in other students’ Scenario Description Role Plays will have the opportunity to earn extra points toward his/her final grade. The course instructor will always be available to serve in a confederate/actor/actress role when needed/requested and may choose to take on any role in any Role Play at her discretion. A rubric by which Role Plays will be evaluated is posted on the course website (3 opportunities x 5 pts = 15 pts).

**Discussion Questions**
Students should prepare at least two discussion questions prior to each class session. Discussion questions should be based on the readings, be open-ended, and focus on topics that the student will be interested in discussing further in class. Students should send their discussion questions to the course instructor and scheduled presenters via email.
as soon as they are completed for each class session but no later than midnight the Saturday prior to class (13 opportunities x 10 pts = 130 pts).

**In-Class Activities**
Toward the end of the course, the instructor will give students two projects that will be worked on, completed and shared in class. An additional amount of 20 points will be allocated to student performance during each of these activities which will be allocated at the discretion of the course instructor based on students’ participation, cooperation with peers, competence in the subject matter, ethical behavior, and oral communication (2 opportunities x 10 pts = 20 pts).

**CV & Personal Statement**
Students will draft an individualized CV and Personal Statement. The CV should reflect the academic, clinical, research and volunteer positions held by the student during their career and career preparation. The Personal Statement should be modeled for a currently posted job opportunity for a master’s level behavior analyst (see the ABAI website for current job postings) or for an application for a doctorate degree in the student’s chosen area of emphasis (see university websites for specific instructions. Students may turn in one draft of each document to the professor for feedback prior to turning in the final draft for points. A rubric by which CVs and Personal Statements will be evaluated is not posted on the course website as only completion points will be awarded given the individual nature and personal impact of these course components. Developmental feedback will be provided to assist students to improve their professional appearance to employers and/or universities (10 pts each for 20 points total).

**Mock Exam**
Students will complete an online BACB Mock Exam mid-semester as a follow-up to the exam taken in Techniques in their first year of the master’s program. The points for this activity are pass/fail contingent upon submission of submission of the full report form (1 opportunity x 10 pts = 10 pts).

**Extra Credit Opportunities**
There are several extra credit opportunities available throughout this course. Most are mentioned previously in the syllabus. To summarize, students may earn up to two extra credit points each time s/he volunteers to serve as an individual confederate/actor/actress during another student dyad or triad’s Role Play and may earn up to five extra credit points for each Role Play s/he chooses to engage in beyond the minimum number of Role Plays required for the course.

**COURSE GRADES**
1 Student-Led Discussion @ 40 pts each = 40 points
1 Resource Booklet @ 10 pts each = 10 points
10 Class Participation Opportunities @ 3 pts each = 30 points
9 Scenario Descriptions @ 5 pts each = 45 points
3 Role Plays @ 5 pts each = 15 points
13 Discussion Questions @ 10 pts each = 130 points
2 In-Class Activities @ 10 pts each = 20 points
1 CV & 1 Personal Statement @ 10 pts each = 20 points
1 Mock Exam @ 10 pts each = 10 points
Total Points = 320 points

GRADE EQUIVALENTS (% of 320 points earned):
A = 90%-100%  B = 80%-89%  C = 70%-79%  F = below 69%

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at http://www.unt.edu/oda/apply/index.html. Also, you may visit the Office of Disability Accommodation in the Sage Hall (room 167) or call them at (940) 565-4323.

POLICIES
No individual exceptions can be made to the syllabus.

Re-grades: If a student believes an error has been made in grading, a written request for reconsideration of the item(s) in question may be submitted within 1 week of receipt of the graded material. The written request should specify the item(s) in question, and the reason the student believes the answer given was correct, citing relevant sources (e.g., page number from readings on which the answer was based).

Absences: If a student must be absent for any reason, s/he should arrange to submit the applicable written assignment early, as no assignments turned in after the due date can be accepted. Students are responsible for making their own arrangements to obtain information from any missed class period. There will be no additional make-up opportunities for missed presentations and/or participation points.

Student Conduct: Each student automatically certifies that any material submitted for grading is his/her own independent work. UNT policies require reporting of plagiarism or any suspected violations that constitute possible academic misconduct. Students are responsible for being familiar with the Code of Student Conduct.

Group work is encouraged; however, in the past there have been situations in which group work could have been considered cheating or plagiarism. “Legitimate” group work takes advantage of consultation with your peers, provides you with ideas, suggestions,
corrections, etc., which you take into consideration in the development of your unique and individual product. Examples include reading the text and writing answers to the study guide items, then working closely with other students to compare study guide answers, and to attempt to resolve different understandings. Failing to do the reading, and memorizing answers that another student has written for the study guide is not legitimate group work; it is cheating. Drafting the assignments, then comparing specific aspects of your product to others’ is appropriate. Copying someone else’s work products (or making your work available to another student to copy) is not legitimate; it is cheating. Always, if you are unsure about boundaries of legitimate group work, please (1) ask for clarification from the instructor, and (2) make full disclosure so that there is no question about your intentions. We are very happy to talk about these boundaries and work with you to maximize your learning and maintain individual accountability.

Assistance: Students are encouraged to contact the instructor (by email or during office hours) or teaching assistant any time clarification or additional help in understanding the material is needed. Any questions that will aid you in mastering the material are welcomed.

Diversity Statement: It is the policy of the University of North Texas (and this instructor) not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made), disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the university through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and educational goals. Direct questions or concerns to the equal opportunity office, (940) 565-2456, or the dean of students, (940) 565-2648. TTY access is available through Relay Texas: (800) 735-2989.

Emergency Notification and Procedures: The University of North Texas informs students, faculty and staff persons about emergency situations (e.g., severe weather, campus closings, public safety) through the Eagle Alert system. Notifications are sent via phone so it is important that your contact information is current. Please visit www.my.unt.edu to update your contact information so that you are able to notifications in the event of an emergency. Additional information regarding emergency preparedness is available at https://emergency.unt.edu/emergency-guidelines-0.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND COURSE MATERIALS

Online Mock Behavior Analysis Exam© https://www.fit.edu/continuing-education/applied-behavior-analysis/mock-exams/

Unit 1: Course Introduction & Syllabus Review

Course Syllabus

Unit 2: Exploring Ethics, Morals, and Values

Unit 3: Perspective Taking, Ethical Decision Making, & The History of Ethics in the Profession of Behavior Analysis
ABAI Code of Ethics
(https://www.abainternational.org/about-us/policies-and-positions.aspx)
Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapter 4

Unit 4: Responsible Conduct of a Behavior Analyst: BACB “the Code” 1.0
Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapters 1-2, 5-6

**Unit 5: The Behavior Analyst’s Responsibility to Clients: BACB “the Code” 2.0**
Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapter 7

**Unit 6: Assessing Behavior: BACB “the Code” 3.0**
Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapter 8

**Unit 7: Individual Behavior Change Program: BACB “the Code” 4.0**
Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapter 9


**Unit 8: The Behavior Analyst as a Supervisor (& Teacher)**

BACB “the Code” 5.0

Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapter 10


**Unit 9: Responsibility to the Profession (& Discipline) of Behavior Analysis; Public Statements:** BACB “the Code” 6.0 & 8.0

Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapters 11 & 13


**Unit 10: Legal Considerations for Behavior Analysts**


**Unit 11: The Behavior Analyst & Research: BACB “the Code” 9.0**

Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapter 14


**Unit 12: Responsibility to Colleagues & the BACB (& in organizations) & Disciplinary Standards: BACB “the Code” 7.0 & 10.0**

Bailey & Burch (2016) – Chapters 12 & 15


offense or arousing resentment. In How to win friends and influence people (pp. 205-250). Pocket Books.


**Unit 13: Ethical Responsibility to Society**


Skinner (1953) Chapter 27: Culture & Control
   Chapter 28: Designing a Culture
   Chapter 29: The Problem of Control


**Unit 14: Looking Ahead - Designing a Culture & Skinner’s (1948) Walden Two**


Mattaini, M. A. (2016). Editorial: We are not powerless. Behavior and Social Issues, 25, 1-3. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.5210/bsi.v25i0.7301


**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

An active UNT email account, a computer or access to a computer and on-line access to course web site on Canvas. This website will be the vehicle for obtaining key course materials; keeping track of your grades; communicating with the instructor, and classmates outside of class sessions; and other functions.

**Portions of this syllabus were created in collaboration with Drs. Shahla Ala’I Rosales Diana Walker, Einar Ingvarsson, & Aécio Borba**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Unit 1: Course Introduction &amp; Syllabus Review</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong> DTC&lt;br&gt;<strong>Readings:</strong> Syllabus&lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> Assign Groups for Student-Led Discussions</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Unit 2: Exploring Ethics, Morals, &amp; Values</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong> A. Borba&lt;br&gt;<strong>Readings:</strong> Day (1977), de Melo et al. (2015), Holcutt (2013), Malott &amp; Trojan Suarez (2004); Newman (1992); Ruiz &amp; Roche (2007)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> DQ 1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Unit 3: Perspective Taking, Ethical Decision Making, &amp; the History of Ethics in the Profession of Behavior Analysis</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenters:</strong> DTC&lt;br&gt;<strong>Readings:</strong> ABAI Code of Ethics, B&amp;B (2016) chp. 4, Hansen &amp; Goldberg (1999), Kidder (1995), Mattaini (2001), Skinner (1978), Wright (2019)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> DQ 2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Unit 4: Responsible Conduct of a Behavior Analyst</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenters:</strong> Jackie &amp; Whitney&lt;br&gt;<strong>Readings:</strong> BACB “the Code” 1.0, B&amp;B (2016) Chps. 1-2, 5-6, Freeman et al. (2019), Ghezzi &amp; Rehfeldt (1994), Leaf et al. (2015), Rosenberg &amp; Schwartz (2018)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> Scenario Description 1; DQ 3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Unit 5: Responsibility to Clients</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenters:</strong> Marla &amp; Andia&lt;br&gt;<strong>Readings:</strong> BACB “the Code” 2.0, B&amp;B (2016) chp. 7, DeAngelis (2008), Miller et al. (2019), Reid et al. (2018), Schlinger (2015), Van Houten et al. (1988)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> Scenario Description 2, DQ 4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Unit 6: Assessing Behavior</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenters:</strong> Valeria &amp; Nick&lt;br&gt;<strong>Readings:</strong> BACB “the Code” 3.0, B&amp;B (2016) chp. 8, Bannerman et al. (1990), Cameron (2005), Leaf et al. (2018), Lindsey (1996), Schroeder et al. (1990)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> Scenario Description 3, DQ 5</td>
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*The professor reserves the right to adjust and modify this schedule based on the needs of the students*