

PSYCHOLOGY (PSY)

Courses and Descriptions

PSY 501 Introduction to Applied Psychology Skills 3 Credits

This course will provide students with an examination of several facets of applied psychology with a focus on consuming research, understanding differences in methods and perspectives, writing according to APA style, and demonstrating understanding of several methods and perspectives in applied psychology. These are necessary skills to function meaningfully in the field. We will review and evaluate scholarly literature from across several psychology application areas. This course is available to MA Applied Psychology students only and should be taken near the beginning of entering the MA program.

PSY 509 Principles of Behavior 3 Credits

This course will provide an introduction to behavior analysis. Students will learn the history and defining features of the field. Behavior analysis will be presented as a member of the family of biological sciences. The basic concepts and principles of respondent and operant conditioning will be covered.

PSY 513 Functional Assessment 3 Credits

This course is designed to provide knowledge and skills of methodologies to conduct a thorough behavioral assessment, interpret the assessment data, and identify goals for treatment. Topics will include direct observation/data collection methods, data analysis, functional assessment, stimulus preference and reinforcer assessments, and ethical and professional issues. The second half of the course will deal specifically with functional analysis including the history of and variations to the methodology. The relationship between assessment techniques and the development of the least-restrictive but most effective behavioral intervention will also be discussed.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509.

PSY 514 Single Subject Research Design and Analysis 3 Credits

Students will be introduced to the basic evaluative methods used in behavior analysis including various models of single subject design such as multiple baselines, reversal designs, and alternating treatment models. Students will design analyses, collect data, graphically display their data, and provide an analysis of findings. Students will read original behavior analytic research articles and practice analysis of findings.

PSY 515 Psychological Tests 3 Credits

Examines the history of psychological testing. Issues concerning the construction of psychological tests are discussed, including concepts concerning reliability, validity, and item analysis. The rationale and structure of the major tests of intelligence, aptitude, and personality are reviewed, including the Rorschach, WAIS, TAT, MMPI, and Bender-Gestalt. In the last section of the course, students are given hands-on experience in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of a standard test battery.

Prerequisite(s): any statistics course.

PSY 516 Ethics for Behavior Analysts 3 Credits

This course will familiarize the student with ethical issues and responsibilities of behavior analysts working in applied settings. Informed consent, due process, protection of confidentiality, and selection of least intrusive, least restrictive behavior change procedures will be presented and discussed within the context of case method. Ethical decision making processes will be emphasized, and the relationship between ethics and law will be explored.

PSY 518 Organizational Behavior Management 3 Credits

This course will provide an overview of research and practice in the field of Organizational Behavior Management (OBM), also referred to as Performance Management in organizational settings. Performance Management is a behaviorally-based area of specialization within the broad field of Industrial-Organizational Psychology. The concepts and techniques used in Performance Management originated from the field of behavior analysis.

PSY 519 Models of ABA Instruction 3 Credits

This course provides students with a general knowledge of the different procedures used to teach new skills and new behaviors in the field of applied behavior analysis. Areas covered will include the assessment of relative strengths and deficits, use of discrete-trial and naturalistic teaching procedures, use of reinforcement procedures to strengthen behaviors, use of motivating operations and discriminative stimuli, use of prompting and prompt-fading procedures to transfer stimulus control, use of shaping procedures to teach new behavior, use of task analysis and chaining procedures to teach new behaviors, use of precision teaching and fluency-based instruction, and use of personalized systems of instruction. Additionally, various components of the aforementioned areas will be integrated and culminate in two modules: one designed to teach communicative behavior and the other to perform discrimination training.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509.

PSY 520 Interventions for Challenging Behavior 3 Credits

Students will review principles of behavior in the context of application to functional assessment and treatment of socially significant problem behavior. Topics including extinction, functional communication training, differential reinforcement, choice, environmental manipulations, and punishment will be covered. Students will move through the process of developing function-based interventions and writing behavior plans.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509 and PSY 513 or concurrent enrollment.

PSY 521 Supervision and Management in ABA 3 Credits

This course provides students with skills needed to provide supervision and management in the field of applied behavior analysis. Students will apply the basic principles of behavior analysis to supervision and management of their staff and trainees. Areas covered include establishing performance expectations, selecting supervision goals based on assessment of current skills, how to train personnel to competence, performance monitoring and feedback, functional assessment and function-based strategies of personnel behavior, and how to evaluate the effects of supervision. Additional areas of discussion will include professional behavior, leadership, ethics, and professional development.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509, PSY 513 and PSY 514.

PSY 522 Recent Research in ABA 3 Credits

This course provides an overview of recent behavior analytic research. Topics will vary semester to semester to capture changes in the field as they occur. Students will have the opportunity to practice reviewing, discussing, and interpreting research methodology, results, and potential areas for future research.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509.

PSY 523 Theory and Philosophy in Behavior Analysis 3 Credits

Students will be introduced to the philosophical foundations and theories of behavior analysis including versions of behaviorism. Students will read and interpret writings on the theoretical and conceptual issues surrounding the behaviorist philosophical approach.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509.

PSY 525 Cognitive Development 3 Credits

Compares and analyzes the major theories of cognitive development: Piaget, Information Processing, Vygotsky, Gardner, and Sternberg. The course describes cognitive growth from infancy to adulthood. Particular topics will include: concept formation, language acquisition, memory reading and writing, mathematical skills and sociocultural skills. Also of interest will be the use of cognitive theory in education, and understanding variations from the typical pattern of cognitive development as in mental retardation and prodigies.

PSY 530 Interventions for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities 3 Credits

The purpose of this course is to prepare students to work with individuals with a broad spectrum of developmental disabilities. The course will begin with a discussion of typical child development and milestones, address how development might differ from the norm, introduce subsequent assessment and diagnosis and ultimately, introduce appropriate interventions. The main focus of this course is applied behavior analysis [ABA] and common ABA strategies for intervention.

PSY 533 Interventions for Autism 3 Credits

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a general understanding of the clinical characteristics of autism spectrum disorders. The course will briefly address etiology and neurocognitive underpinnings of these disorders but will focus on psycho-educational interventions. The course will be taught from an applied behavior analytic perspective.

PSY 535 Language Assessment and Intervention 3 Credits

Students will be introduced to the classification of verbal responses, both vocal and non-vocal. Using videotaped examples, students will categorize observed verbal behavior. Students will be provided with practical tools for the assessment of verbal behavior, as well as an array of intervention strategies. A focus will include the design of teaching strategies to enhance language acquisition, as well as ongoing evaluation of intervention efficacy will be employed.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 510, PSY 511.

PSY 536 Social Skills Assessment & Intervention 3 Credits

Students will be introduced to the development of social skills and the identification social skills deficits. Using videotaped examples, students will categorize observed social behavior. Next, students will be provided with practical tools for the assessment of social and emotional behavior, as well as an array of intervention strategies. Tools for the collection of data and the evaluation of the success of target interventions will be stressed.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 510, PSY 511.

PSY 540 Aging, Health, and Behavioral Gerontology in Autism 3 Credits

The course provides an overview of adult lifespan development, aging in the autism population, physical and mental health issues for adults with autism, and recent research in behavioral gerontology. Students will have the opportunity to practice reviewing, discussing, and interpreting research methodology, results, and potential areas for future research. This course is part of the Adult Services and Behavioral Gerontology sequence designed to prepare graduate students and behavior analysts for careers focused on serving adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509 or concurrent enrollment or BCaBA or BCBA certified professionals in good standing.

PSY 541 Employment and Vocational Skills for Adults with Autism 3 Credits

This course will provide an overview of the skills and competencies that influence the acquisition and maintenance of competitive employment for adults with developmental disabilities. Topics will include vocational planning, the importance of choice when selecting employment opportunities, social competence on the job, the development and implementation of support strategies, programming for the generalization and maintenance of work behavior, fading supervision and support, and collaborating with parents, family members, co-workers, and employers. Students will use information obtained from lectures and reading assignments to design and write individualized programs addressing employment and life-skills for adults with disabilities. This course is part of the Adult Services and Behavioral Gerontology sequence designed to prepare graduate students and behavior analysts for careers focused on serving adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

Prerequisite(s): PSY540.

PSY 542 Support Services, Habilitation, and Independent Living for Adults with Autism 3 Credits

This course covers 1) extant services and resources for adolescents and adults with ASD, 2) supervision, management, and training of support staff who work with adults with ASD, and 3) assessment and teaching of skills adults with ASD need to live independent, self-sufficient, and fulfilling lives. Throughout the course we pay special attention to issues surrounding personal liberties, choice making, and self determination. Students will have the opportunity to navigate support services, propose empirical research focused on training staff using Behavioral Skills Training, and construct individualized skill acquisition programs. This course is part of the Adult Services and Behavioral Gerontology sequence designed to prepare graduate students and behavior analysts for careers focused on serving adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

Prerequisite(s): PSY 540.

PSY 543 Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis for Adults with Autism 3-4 Credits

This course is part of the Adult Services and Behavioral Gerontology sequence designed to prepare graduate students and behavior analysts for careers focused on serving adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Students will have frequent, direct, onsite supervision of behavior analytic activities in settings for adults with autism. Students will have the opportunity to apply the skills acquired in coursework.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 540, PSY 541, PSY 542.

PSY 545 Health Psychology 3 Credits

This course focuses on the biopsychosocial model of health in which biological, psychological and social factors contribute to health and wellbeing, as well as illness and disease. After a brief introduction to systems of the body, i.e. nervous, endocrine, respiratory, cardiovascular, digestive, immune, this course will examine health enhancing behaviors such as exercise and nutrition, as well as health compromising behaviors such as drug abuse and other reckless behaviors, along with models that explain behavior maintenance and change. Additionally, attention is devoted to a discussion of how health psychology can function in shaping health care policy.

PSY 550 Behavior Analytic Approaches to Health and Physical Activity 3 Credits

The application of behavior analytic methods, practices, and principles has been demonstrated through research and clinical applications to be effective at changing health and fitness behavior. This course will provide an overview of research and practice in applying behavior analytic principles to changing health behavior and physical activity. Behavior change across various populations will be covered including both adults and children with and without disabilities. Discussion will focus on both functional assessment as well as interventions effective at changing health and physical activity including self-management, self-monitoring, goal setting, contingency management, etc. Students will spend the semester implementing self-management projects for their own health and/or fitness behavior.

PSY 551 Behavioral Appro to Addiction 3 Credits

Evidence from laboratory and clinical settings suggests that addiction can be conceptualized and effectively treated through the application of principles of conditioning. This course provides an overview of behavior analytic research in understanding and intervening on addictive behavior. Behavioral technologies for change regarding substance-related and behavioral addiction will be covered.

Prerequisite(s): Graduate students in Applied Psychology.

PSY 565 Drugs and Human Behavior 3 Credits

Presents the student with an in-depth analysis of the effects of alcohol and selected chemical substances on the behavior and body of the user. Commonly abused substances will be discussed in terms of their history, sources of production, routes of administration, distribution, metabolism and excretion, neurophysiology, tolerance, properties of addiction, withdrawal course and symptoms, and potential beneficial and harmful effects.

PSY 567 Multicultural Perspectives in Applied Psychology 3 Credits

In this graduate level course, students will examine in-depth, culture and identity formation, social relationships, the perception and manifestation of mental illness, and treatment seeking among other areas. Additionally, given the increasing diversity of communities in the US, the course will also focus on immigration, acculturation, discrimination, and the psychological correlates of each. Implications of these factors for emerging practitioners will also be covered.

PSY 572 States of Consciousness 3 Credits

This course explores the variety of states that comprise normal and altered consciousness. It highlights how these states are determined by complex interactions between conscious and unconscious mental functions. Key psychological concepts are applied in an investigation of various states of consciousness, especially meditative states and dreams. The course examines both the psychopathological aspects of altered states, as well as their potential beneficial effects on creativity and the development of the self.

PSY 574 Psychology of the Family 3 Credits

This course examines the significance of family in human development. Using prominent themes of developmental psychology, such as: the role of attachment in forming human relationships, the significance of context in understanding human development, and the resilience of development; this course will explore the existing research on the family. Students are asked to consider their own experiences as members of a family, as well as to understand the varieties of ways family impacts development across the lifespan.

PSY 577 Developmental Psychopathology 3 Credits

This course provides an in-depth view of developmental psychopathology as an applied and prevention science. Developmental psychopathology is concerned with the emergence and continuity or discontinuity of psychopathology, or maladaptive behaviors, across the lifespan. An emphasis is placed on exploring individual, environmental, social, and especially cultural influences in explaining normal and abnormal behavior.

PSY 582 Aging, Brain, and Cognition 3 Credits

This course covers the biological structures and processes underlying cognition in humans and explores modulating factors such as age, sex, disease, stress, and environment. The theoretical and methodological issues of developmental cognitive neuroscience research are addressed. Focus of the course is on brain structure and function in the largest growing segment of our population, persons over the age of 65, and the link between structure and cognitive abilities, both intact and declining. Special attention is paid to those factors related to successful aging and treatments with putative cognitive enhancers.

PSY 584 Positive Psychology 3 Credits

Historically, the field of psychology has placed great attention on the question of, "What is wrong with people and how do we fix it?" This course will focus on the question of, "What is right with people and how can we build on that?" We will explore this by examining empirical research centered on the nature of happiness and psychological well-being. Positive psychology is the rigorous study of what is right and positive about people and institutions. Positive psychologists call for as much focus on strength as on weakness, as much attention on positive emotions as negative emotions, as much interest in building the best things in life as in repairing the worst, and as much attention to promoting the fulfillment of lives of healthy people as to healing the wounds of the distressed. This course will first present an introduction to the core assumptions and research findings associated with human strengths and positive emotions, then move on to explore interventions and applications informed by this perspective in counseling and psychotherapy, as well as in domains personally relevant to the lives of students such as school, work, family and other close relationships. PSY 584 is crosslisted with PSY 384.

PSY 590 Field Placement in Applied Behavior Analysis 3 Credits

The applied behavior analysis practicum includes a required field placement of 15 hours per week and periodic on campus meetings. The practicum experience will allow students to experience the professional life of a behavior analyst in one of several preapproved sites. Sites approved include those for children, adolescents or adults with disabilities. Placements will be selected in consultation with the Practicum Coordinator and will require a written practicum plan from the cooperating field supervisor.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 510, PSY 511, PSY 513, PSY 514.

PSY 595 Selected Topics in Applied Psychology 3 Credits

Students will actively engage in an in-depth inquiry into a special topic area concerning applied psychology. Though the topics will change, students will be required to read and discuss current literature as well as considering the application of tools of the discipline to research questions of their own.

PSY 690 Independent Research and Study 1-4 Credits

Provides students with an opportunity to design and carry out original research in an area of their choice. Students designate a faculty supervisor and work closely with him/her during the semester. Permission of Instructor.

PSY 700 ABA Thesis I 1 Credits

The expectation of the thesis experience is for students to generate a scholarly work of professional presentation and/or publication quality. In Thesis I, students will first complete a comprehensive survey of the research literature in a particular area within applied behavior analysis. They will then develop a research question and methodology using the principles of ABA and an appropriate single-case research design. Prerequisite(s): PSY 509 Co-Requisites(s): PSY 514.

PSY 701 ABA Thesis II 3 Credits

In Thesis II, the student will finalize their research proposal and present to members of the MAP: ABA thesis committee. Following any recommended revisions, the proposal will be submitted to the IRB for approval. Once IRB approval is obtained, the student will recruit participants, obtain informed consent, and begin data collection.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509 and PSY 514.

PSY 702 ABA Thesis III 3 Credits

In Thesis III, the student will complete data collection, analyze their data, and write up their study in American Psychological Association (APA) style. The student will present an oral defense to a committee of faculty members. Following a successful defense, the student will finalize their work as a professional presentation and/or publication submission.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 509 and PSY 514.

PSY 720 Practicum in ABA 3 Credits

The Master in Applied Psychology - Applied Behavior Analysis (MAP-ABA) program's practicum offers students supervision from Rider's MAP-ABA faculty and a variety of high quality in-vivo experiences, under the direct supervision of a Rider-Approved Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), during which students apply the skills acquired in coursework.

Prerequisite(s): PSY 510, PSY 511.