



## Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis I

Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP)  
Rutgers University, New Brunswick  
18:820:511:01, Fall 2025

- Instructor:** Cara L. Phillips, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA-MA (she/her)
- Contact Info:** Email: [cp1263@gsapp.rutgers.edu](mailto:cp1263@gsapp.rutgers.edu)  
Office Phone: 848.445.9347
- Time/Place:** Wednesday 6:15-8:45 PM: [SMH-219](#)
- Office/Hours:** Office: Nelson Biology Laboratories, D-311  
Hours: By appointment. The instructor will make every reasonable effort to meet with students whenever necessary. Meetings may be held over Zoom or in-person. Please email me to schedule.
- Course Description:** The purpose of the practicum course is to provide students with the opportunity to integrate course knowledge with clinical and professional skills. Practicum 1 focuses on the application of foundational knowledge in Applied Behavior Analysis. This includes opportunities to practice core procedures and case conceptualization. **Students must be involved in the practice of, or research in, ABA for a minimum of 225 hours per semester** (about 15 hours per week). These hours must be **at an approved ABA practicum placement**, in which all programming and/or research is designed and monitored by a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). All students are required to document their hours on a practicum experience log. Some students will work under the direct supervision of a BCBA with at least one year experience and may be eligible to begin accruing supervised fieldwork hours. *However, this is not a requirement for the course and supervised fieldwork resulting in accruing hours toward your BCBA credential is not guaranteed as part of practicum enrollment.* Successful completion of this course is necessary to graduate.

*This practicum is not sufficient to fully meet the BACB's Fieldwork requirements. Please refer to the BACB's BCBA Handbook.*

- Objectives:** At the end of this course, you will be able to:
1. Describe the BACB experience requirements for certification and required documentation of the same.
  2. Identify the key clinical competencies for graduate training in ABA.

3. Demonstrate competence in basic clinical procedures (e.g., preference assessment, reinforcer assessments, ABC data analysis).
4. Learn to actively seek supervision and demonstrate availability to both receive and provide feedback, thus becoming an educated consumer of clinical supervision.
5. Demonstrate understanding of the critical role of ethical and legal principles in ABA practice.
6. Demonstrate skills in interpreting assessment results to engage in case conceptualization.
7. Gain confidence in participating in and presenting case reviews.

#### **Text/Readings:**

Behavior Analyst Certification Board (2022). Board Certified Behavior Analyst Handbook. Littleton, CO: [BCBA Handbook \(bacb.com\)](https://www.bacb.com/)

[Behavior Analyst Certification Board, Inc. \(2016\) 5<sup>th</sup> edition task list](#)

Other readings may be assigned throughout the semester and will be available on Canvas (See reading list at end of syllabus). These readings will facilitate discussion and allow further exploration of the topic.

#### **Assessments:**

**Attendance (0 pts):** It is expected that students will attend every class. I will provide one opportunity to make-up activities missed due to absence.

**Syllabus Quiz (10 pts. x 2):** There will be **two quizzes covering the syllabus**. The first quiz will be presented in class following the syllabus review. There will be a second quiz focusing on the syllabus/Canvas at the mid-way point of the semester.

**Practicum Hours Log (5 pts. x 4):** Students must accrue a **minimum of 225 experience hours** (about 15 hours per week) **at an approved ABA practicum placement**, in which all programming and/or research is designed and monitored by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). You will submit a log of your hours and activities for four months using either the practicum hours log provided in Canvas or the BACB Monthly Fieldwork Verification Form (MFVF), if applicable.

**Professional Development Activities (5pts x 4):** You will submit a series of assignments via Canvas throughout the semester that are designed to help prepare you for completing your hours, sitting for the BCBA exam, and gaining employment as a BCBA. These include: providing verification of a BACB account, enrolling in our state-wide professional organization (NJABA), preparing a resume/CV, and writing a cover letter.

**Case Review Presentation (40 points):** You will select an individual from your placement to present as a case review. Over the course of the semester, you will have the opportunity to practice basic procedures in class and then with this individual, as

described immediately below. You will present a brief (i.e., 15 – 20 min) case review, focusing on a behavior targeted for increase or decrease. The review should include: a brief review of demographics (**please deidentify student**), presenting problem (operational definitions & graphs), previous interventions, the results of your assessments (preference, reinforcer, indirect, ABC data), and your interpretation of those results. You will upload your presentation to canvas prior to presenting. Your grade will be based on the following: inclusion of all required components, thoroughness, use of appropriate terminology, and strength of interpretations of data.

**Activities (10 pts each x 8; 80 total):** You will have several group activities and in-class opportunities to complete portions of the case review project. You are expected to actively participate in these activities and to upload permanent products for some of these, including: a self-assessment tool, operational definitions, graphs, and data sheets (amongst others). See the schedule below for more information.

**Evaluations (5 pts each x 4; 20 total):** At the start of the semester, you will complete a site survey. At the mid- and end-points of the semester, your supervisor will be asked to complete an evaluation of your performance on-site. The instructor will send these evaluations out two weeks prior to the deadline. Please follow-up with your supervisor the week that they are due. You will also complete an evaluation of your supervisor and your practicum site at the end of the semester.

#### Grading:

Assessment Tool (Category)	Total Points	Percentage of final grade
Attendance	0	0%
Syllabus Quiz (10pts each)	20	10%
Professional Development (5pt each)	20	10%
Case Review	40	20%
Activities	80	40%
Hours Logs (5 pt each)	20	10%
Evaluations (5 pt each)	20	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following grading standards will be used in this class.

Grade	Description	Numerical Equivalent
<b>PA</b>	Passing	Above 79.5
<b>F</b>	Failing	79.4 or below (0.0)
<b>INC</b>	Incomplete	

<b>Standards:</b>	All MAP and Graduate Certificate in ABA students must achieve a grade of B or better and maintain a GPA of 3.0, or academic remediation will be enforced.
<b>Attendance:</b>	It is expected that each student attends every scheduled class. If you are unable to attend or will be late, please email me prior to class. Students are excused from class when observing religious holidays, in accordance with Rutgers University policy. Students will be responsible for all material covered during their absence.
<b>Timeliness:</b>	Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines. Late work may be accepted with a serious and compelling reason and approval. However, assignments that are submitted after the due date may be subject to a 10% penalty per day (with a 24-hour grace period).
<b>Technology:</b>	If students expect to send or receive urgent e-mails, texts, or calls during class, their needs should be communicated to and approved by the instructor prior to class. All cell phones should be turned off or placed in silent mode. All computing devices should be used only for the purpose of class-related activities.
<b>Email:</b>	Prompt communication is essential. On weekdays I will try my best to respond to emails within 18 hours. Over the weekend, please allow 36-48 hours for a response.
<b>GSAPP Diversity:</b>	The Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP) at Rutgers University-New Brunswick is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). We view individuals from a variety of backgrounds, lived-experiences, identities, and perspectives across our community members as critical to our threefold mission of world-class education, scholarship, and public service. We aim to honor diversity through a variety of means, such as inclusive groups, events, initiatives, curricula, and our organizational composition. We strive to create and maintain a safe space in which all voices are heard and valued, consistent with Rutgers University's Beloved Community. GSAPP acknowledges the current, historical, and systemic practices that have been used to marginalize and oppress some identities and give power and privilege to others in and beyond the United States. Additionally, we are keenly aware of the destructive effects, including on mental health and personal well-being, of prejudice, stigma, microaggressions, and violence in all its forms. We engage in a critical examination of our own biases and behaviors, both past and present. We utilize evolving methods to address, incorporate, and celebrate DEI through our scholarship, service, and training of future health service professionals.
<b>Accessibility:</b>	Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for

reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form (<https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration>).

**Integrity:** Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot and other similar programs should only be used when and as indicated within each task. Specific parameters can be found in the assessment/assignment descriptions in Canvas. All use of GenAI should be transparent (i.e., the student should indicate that GenAI was used, which engine, and in what capacity). Students who use ChatGPT and similar artificial intelligence tools on assignments without permission, who use them in improper ways, or who use them without disclosing their use are violating the academic integrity rules of the University: <https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/current.pdf>. " After reviewing this policy, please access the sign-off sheet in Canvas confirming that you are aware of and will follow this policy.

**Safety:** As the semester goes on it will become darker earlier. If you need a safety escort: <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/publicsafety/rupd/escorts>

**Librarian:** Samantha Kannegiser, Liaison to Psychology  
Schedule meeting: <https://libcal.rutgers.edu/appointments/samantha>  
Phone number: (856) 225-2832 (leave a message)  
Email: [samantha.kannegiser@rutgers.edu](mailto:samantha.kannegiser@rutgers.edu)  
<https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/ask>

**Freedom of Speech:** <https://www.rutgers.edu/president/academic-freedom-free-speech>

**Other Resources:** <https://gsapp.rutgers.edu/current-students/important-links>

**Title IX:** <http://compliance.rutgers.edu/resources/resources-for-facultystaff>

**Counseling:** Students often experience personal problems or difficulties during the term that may interfere with learning and their daily activities. If you or someone you know needs to talk to someone regarding such personal issues, the University provides free counseling services through the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and their information can

be found at <http://psychologicalservices.rutgers.edu>. They also offer several useful workshops for general stress management and techniques for promoting mental health. If you have any questions about CAPS or other services, I am happy to speak with you privately.

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

<b>Modules/ Meetings</b>	<b>Topics/Readings</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
Week 1 <b>Cohorts A &amp; B: 9/3</b>	<b>Introductions</b>  <b>Course goals</b>  <b>Career Pathways</b>	Syllabus Review Establish your baseline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part 1: Self-assessment tool</li> </ul> Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you hope to get out of this course?</li> <li>Career Pathways</li> </ul> Practice Exam 1	By end of class: BACB Account Set-up Practice Exam 1  By 9/10: Complete practicum site survey. Upload signed supervision contract (if receiving BCBA hours), proof of NJABA student membership
Week 2  <b>Cohort A: 9/10</b>  <b>Cohort B: 9/17</b>	<b>All things data: Selecting measures of interest &amp; data collection methods</b>	Syllabus Quiz 1 Establish your baseline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part 2: Self-assessment tool</li> </ul> Discussion: identifying the (real) problem & barriers in practice  Small group 1: test out operational definitions Activity 2: choose/ develop a data sheet (or other)	By end of class: Self-assessment Tool  Data sheet (w/ operational definition of behavior of interest) for Case Review
Week 3  <b>Cohort A: 9/24</b>  <b>Cohort B: 10/1</b>	<b>All things data: Creating graphs &amp; Visual analysis <i>*bring baseline data</i></b>	Guest presenter: graphing tips and tricks  Small group: practice making graphs Discussion: interpretation of data  Small group: review practice data and discuss interpretation	By end of class: Practice graph (BL data)  Cohort A by 9/30; Cohort B by 10/7: Submit self-management learning plan
Week 4	<b>Assessments: Stimulus Preference &amp; Reinforcer</b>	Syllabus Quiz 2 Activity 1: Review and practice	By end of class: submit graph of PSA and MSWO results from practice

<b>Cohort A:</b> 10/8  <b>Cohort B:</b> 10/15		single/paired/multiple stimulus Graph results Discussion – why are the reinforcers not reinforcing? Activity 2: Review and practice reinforcer assessment	By 10/15: Upload September M-FVF/hours log
Week 5  <b>Cohort A:</b> 10/22  <b>Cohort B:</b> 10/29	<b>Assessments: Indirect &amp; Descriptive</b>	Discuss methods of indirect assessment. Groups: Research available indirect measures. Try them out within groups.  Discuss options for descriptive assessment (e.g., ABC data, scatterplot, structured DA) Small group: develop ABC data sheet & research other tools for completing indirect assessments	By end of class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indirect measure that you will use for your case review</li> <li>Your version of an ABC data sheet</li> </ul> Cohort A by 11/12; Cohort B by 11/19: Upload resume and cover letter
Week 6  <b>Cohort A:</b> 11/5  <b>Cohort B:</b> 11/12	<b>Depicting and Interpreting Assessment Results</b> *bring completed graphs to class	Discussion of barriers encountered and what we can learn from incomplete data  Groups: review data and discuss interpretation	Cohort A by 11/12; Cohort B by 11/19: Upload case review presentation
Week 7  <b>Cohort A:</b> 11/19  <b>Cohort B:</b> 11/26	<b>Case Reviews</b>	Presentations	By 11/15: Upload October M-FVF/hours log
Week 8  <b>Cohort A:</b> 12/3  <b>Cohort B:</b> 12/10	Case Reviews (if needed) & <b>THE EXAM: what to expect and how to prepare</b>	Accuracy vs fluency Examples from the field Best good answers and least worst answers  Activity: Practice Exam 2	By end of class: Practice exam  By 12/10: Upload November M-FVF/hours log

**NOTE:** The dates, readings, and assignment are subject to change. Any changes will be announced in canvas with as much lead time as possible.

### **Rutgers University Mission**

As the premier comprehensive public research university in the state's system of higher education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, has the threefold mission of:

- providing for the instructional needs of New Jersey's citizens through its undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education programs,
- conducting the cutting-edge research that contributes to the medical, environmental, social, and cultural well-being of the state, as well as aiding the economy and the state's businesses and industries, and
- performing public service in support of the needs of the citizens of the state and its local, county, and state governments.

Each component of the university's mission reinforces and supports the other two.

As the University of New Jersey®, Rutgers is dedicated to teaching that meets the highest standards of excellence, to conducting research that breaks new ground, and to provide services, solutions, and clinical care that help individuals and the local, national, and global communities where they live.

### **GSAPP Mission**

The mission of GSAPP is threefold: education, research/scholarship, and public service. Its goal is to prepare well-educated, qualified, and competent direct-service psychologists who have a special commitment to direct community involvement and to underserved populations--professionals who can integrate scientific knowledge with innovation in the delivery of psychological services to individuals, families, groups, and organizations. Professionals receiving a doctoral degree in psychology should be capable of extending psychological knowledge and exhibiting the high level of analytic skills and theoretical understanding needed to use existing and emerging psychological knowledge.

Core Values. We are guided by four core values that are apparent in our learning environment, centers, and clinics:

1. **Academic excellence** in preparing students for careers in clinical and school psychology.
2. Commitment to **social justice** and helping **underserved populations**.
3. **Diversity** of students trained, approaches used, theoretical orientations followed, and populations served.
4. **Knowledge generation and dissemination** using contemporary research approaches.

### **MABA Statement**

The Master of Applied Behavior Analysis (MABA) Program in the Department of Applied Psychology at GSAPP trains students to become highly-skilled behavior analysts who apply evidence-based behavioral interventions that promote independence and address the behavioral challenges of individuals in need. This program perfectly aligns with Rutgers University's and GSAPP's mission to train professionals who can integrate scientific knowledge with innovation in delivering clinical care that helps individuals and the local, national, and global communities where they live. Students learn through coursework and real-world experiences in clinical, school, healthcare, and community-based settings. Graduates will be well-educated, qualified, and competent direct-service behavior analysts and clinical

researchers with a special commitment to direct community involvement and underserved populations.

Students who enter our program will receive a 42-credit Master of ABA degree, which includes a strong **foundation** in conceptual knowledge alongside education and training in **applied** areas of behavior analysis.

- The **foundation** comprises the theory, philosophy, and science of ABA as well as our school's values--civic and global citizenship, social justice and helping the underserved, and cultural responsiveness. We expect that these values will become the lens through which students view human interactions and will be emphasized in their supervision groups.
- The **applied** emphasis of the program includes opportunities for students to receive training in socially significant areas of behavior analysis, participate in practicum, and have opportunities to integrate their didactic and applied learning experiences. This program will prepare graduates to become BCBAs who can independently practice ABA or continue their education to obtain their doctorate in behavior analysis.