



Master of Applied Psychology (MAP)
Master of Applied Behavior Analysis (MABA)
Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP)
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey
Fall 2025

Ethics for Behavior Analysts

18:820:521

Credits: 3

Level: Graduate

Tuesdays, 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Eden Autism Services

2 Merwick Road, Princeton, NJ

Tadie Conference Room

Instructor: James C. Maraventano, Ed.D., BCBA-D
Office: Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services (RCAAS)/Rutgers, New Brunswick
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Office Hours: By appointment: *the instructor will make every reasonable effort to meet with students whenever necessary.*

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 providing 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 evidenced-based behavioral interventions to address the behavioral challenges of individuals in need. Our program is perfectly aligned with Rutgers University's and GSAPP's mission *to train professionals who can integrate scientific knowledge with innovation in the delivery of clinical care that helps individuals and the local, national, and global communities where they live*. Students have the opportunity to learn through coursework as well as real world experiences. Graduates will be well-educated, qualified, and competent direct-service behavior analysts and clinical researchers who have a special commitment to direct community involvement and to underserved populations.

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

MAP Statement: The program embraces the mission of the school by offering instruction that has an emphasis on civic and global citizenship, social justice and cultural diversity. This course of study provides students with knowledge needed to understand individual and collective behaviors; develop quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis and research design needed to analyze the corresponding physical and environmental contributors to human behavior; and a beginning understanding of the analysis and treatment of behavior problems and disorders.

The MAP degree will prepare students with the requisite theoretical knowledge; critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to successfully participate in employment or scholastic activities. Students will have opportunities to pursue scholarly activities that prepares them to successfully compete for admissions into doctoral level psychology and related academic programs, and pursue Master's level career pathways through available concentration and certificate programs (see examples of concentration areas listed below). In addition to completing the required coursework (36 credits), completion of the MAP degree will be marked by a culminating academic experience—Capstone project (either a research project/presentation (3 credits) and experiential learning activity (6-credit practicum training). In general, students will acquire a knowledge base grounded in psychological theory and experiential learning (research or practicum) designed to further advance their personal and professional career development.

Course Description/Overview:

This course will familiarize the student with ethical issues and responsibilities of special educators and behavior analysts in the fields of education and mental health. 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.

Objectives for the course:

The student will be able to:

1. Know the core principles of ethical conduct
2. Understand how these principles apply to ABA
3. Understand frequent ethical problems encountered by behavior analysts
4. Understand responsible conduct of a behavior analyst
5. Understand their ethical responsibility to clients
6. Understand how to ethically assess behavior
7. Understand the application of ethical principles to individual behavior change programs
8. Understand their ethical responsibilities as a teacher, supervisor, and co-worker
9. Understand their ethical responsibility for the behavior analysis field, their colleagues, & society.
10. Understand the ethics of conducting research
11. Understand risk-benefit analyses

Assignments and Evaluation Method:

Assessment Tool (Category)	Percentage
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam (Cumulative)	40%
Position Paper	20%
Attendance/Homework	10%

Homework:

Rather than submitting a homework question each week prior to class, you will complete homework questions assigned by the instructor. These questions are based on the readings assigned for the upcoming class. Students can bring hard copies of their questions to class or email them to me.

Grades and Grading Policy:

Grade	Description	Numerical Equivalent
A	Outstanding	90-100 (4.0)
B+	Intermediate grade	85-89 (3.5)
B	Good	80-84 (3.0)
C	Grades of C do not count toward graduation	70-79 (2.0)
F	Failing	69 or below (0.0)
INC	Incomplete	
U	Unsatisfactory	
PA	Pass	
NC	No credit given	

Program requirement: All MAP, MABA, 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.

Required Text:

Bailey, J. & Burch, M. (2022). *Ethics for Behavior Analysts. Fourth Edition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence-Erlbaum.

Course Outline:

Week	Date	Topic	Assigned Readings / Notes
1	9/2	Course Overview	
2	9/10 ***WEDNESDAY NOT TUESDAY***	Background for Ethics in Behavior Analysis Topics: Core ethical principles, application in ABA	Bailey and Burch: Chapters 1-5
3	9/16	Understanding and Following the BACB Guidelines for Responsible Conduct Section 1: Responsibility as a Professional Section 2: Responsibility in Practice Section 3: Responsibility to Clients and Stakeholders	Bailey and Burch: Chapters 6-8 Van Houten et al. (1988)
4	9/23	Ethical Implications for Practice: Inclusion and Nonbehavioral Treatment Evaluation	Lipsky & Gartner (1987) Mock & Kauffman (2005) LaRue et al. (2008) Lerman et al. (2008) National Autism Center National Standards Project (2016) DiGennaro-Reed & Reed (2008)
5	9/30	Ethical Implications for Practice: Assessment and Intervention with At-Risk Populations Topics: culturally sensitive treatment selection/neurodiversity, ethical practices in assessment and intervention, individual behavior change programs	Hastings & Noone (2005) Hawkins et al. (2021)
6	10/7	Ethical Issues when Using Punishment Topics: Use of aversives	Singh et al. (1990) Hanley et al. (2005) Feldman (1990)

			<i>Optional:</i> Butterfield (1990)
			Manente & LaRue (2017)
7	10/14	Understanding and Following the BACB Guidelines for Responsible Conduct Topics: Choice, respecting the right to autonomy for clients served	Bannerman et al. (1990)
8	10/21	Midterm Review	
9	10/28	Midterm Examination	
10	11/4	Cultural Responsiveness in Service Provision	Fong et al. (2016) Beaulieu & Jimenez-Gomez (2022) Fong et al. (2017)
11	11/11	Sections 4 and 5 of the Ethical Code Section 4: Responsibility to Supervisees and Trainees Section 5: Responsibility in Public Statements	Bailey and Burch: Chapters 9-11
12	11/18	Ethics of Research Ethical issues in behavior analytic research	Broad & Wade (1982) Chapters 1, 2, 5 Weiss (2018)
13	11/25	Understanding and Following the BACB Guidelines for Responsible Conduct Topics: cost-benefit analyses/declaration of services	Bailey and Burch: Chapters 12-15
14	12/2	Review for Final Examination	
15	12/9	Final Exam	

Position Paper

Each student will be required to complete a 4-8 page position paper (double-spaced) on a controversial topic related to ABA. Students can choose from the following topic areas:

- The use of specific nonbehavioral treatments
- The ethics of providing choice to people with developmental disabilities
- The use of punishment
- The use of aversives
- The ethics of inclusion
- The ethics of using traditional FA models

Students will be allowed to choose alternative topics not included on this list with permission from the instructor(s).

The paper should be structured in the following way:

- Introduction of the controversial topic
- Argument in favor of the position
- Argument opposing the position

- Your stance on the topic based on your research

All four sections must be included to receive a passing grade.

Important Note: Plagiarism essentially means that you cannot use the words and ideas of another person without giving them credit. Therefore, “quotation marks” should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author you will need to credit the source in the text. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism please see me. Students who plagiarize any material will earn a grade of F for the assignment

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance and class participation are a major part of this class. You are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time. *Only one unexcused absence is permitted. Missing more classes will result in a deduction for each additional day of absence from your final grade point.* If you are forced to miss an excessive amount of classes, you will be encouraged to withdraw from the class. Students who arrive to class more than 10 minutes after the class has started are considered tardy, and will be marked absent if they arrive more than 30 minutes after class has started. After three late arrivals, an unexcused absence will be marked in your record. The only excused absences are those that are serious or required (e.g., personal medical emergencies or serious illness/injury; death or serious illness in the family; military duties; jury duty). They will always require some form of documentation: Examples include a doctor's note (on letterhead and signed by the doctor); obituary or funeral program; court order/notice; etc.). You must always supply me with the original or a copy of your documentation, which I will keep on file. Only students with approved documentation can be given an excused absence. Students will not be penalized for missing class for religious reasons/religious holidays.

Computer/Cell Phone Use in Class

If students are expected to send or receive urgent e-mails, texts, or calls during class, their unanticipated and urgent needs should be communicated to and approved by the instructor prior to class. All cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode. All computing devices should be used only for the purpose of class-related activities.

Academic Integrity

All Rutgers students should review and adhere to the University principles of academic integrity, available at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/>
APA Citation Style. All papers MUST be written using the APA style (7th ed.).

Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

For this course, the allowed use of AI is **limited**. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT are permitted for brainstorming and initial research. Any work submitted for this course must be your own original creation and clearly cite any AI-generated content used, as per university academic integrity policies. Students who use ChatGPT and similar artificial intelligence tools on assignments without permission, or who use them in improper ways, are violating the academic integrity rules of the University. Students who use ChatGPT and similar programs improperly are seeking to gain an unfair advantage, which means they are committing academic dishonesty. pdfUsing AI to produce substantial portions of assignments without proper disclosure will be considered plagiarism.

<https://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy>

Student Resources

For more information visit: <https://gsapp.rutgers.edu/current-students/important-links>

Accommodations due to Disability

If you seek accommodations due to a documented disability, you may arrange for these through the Office of Disability Services, Kreeger Learning Center, 151 College Avenue; dfoffice@rci.rutgers.edu or you can visit: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

Title IX: <https://nbttitleix.rutgers.edu/resources/faqs-student-complainants-and-respondents>

Counseling services. 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: <https://gsapp.rutgers.edu/centers-clinics/center-psychological-services-cps>. They also offer a number of 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.