I. Course Title: Seminar in Behavior Modification with Practicum

Course Number: PSY 795

Credits: 3

Date of Revision: January 2005

II. Course Prerequisite(s): Advanced Psychology of Learning

III. Catalogue Description:

This course provides the student with the knowledge and skills needed to design, implement, and evaluate behavioral interventions. Interventions applicable to school settings are emphasized and students are required to develop a functional behavior assessment and to develop implement behavior intervention plan.

IV. Primary Competencies Addressed:

Assessment – data collection through indirect and direct procedures in a context that is responsive to the individual needs of the client. Emphasis is placed on the synthesis of assessment data to ensure valid and reliable results that can be utilized in the development of an appropriate intervention.

Intervention – knowledge, design, and implementation of strategies for behavioral or academic problems.

V. Course Objectives:

A. The students will comprehend the technical vocabulary, concepts and principles of applied behavior analysis, as presented in the psychological literature;

B. The student will systematically observe and describe behavior using various direct and indirect procedures.

C. The student will comprehend the technical vocabulary and procedures associated with functional behavioral assessment, manifestation determination, and positive behavioral intervention/support plans.

D. The student will, in an applied setting:
   • conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and
   • design, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of a positive behavioral intervention/support plan (BIP).
VI. **Course Outline:**

A. Lecture Outline:

1. Principles of operant behavior/conditioning
   (a) Review of basic concepts: ABCs of behavior, reinforcement schedules, types of reinforcement (positive and negative), extinction and spontaneous recovery
   (b) Establishing new behaviors
      1. Simple responses: shaping
      2. Complex behavior: shaping and chaining
   (c) Weakening operant behavior
      1. Presentation punishment
      2. Withdrawal punishment
      3. DRO, DRI, and DRL schedules
   (d) Stimulus control
   (e) Real-world applications: contingency contracting, token economy, response cost, time-out, over-correction

2. Legal and Ethical Issues in Behavior Management
   (a) IDEA
   (b) Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavioral Assessment Plan
   (c) Manifestation Determination

3. Functional Behavioral Assessment
   (a) Basic principles: antecedents, behavior, consequences
   (b) Observing and recording behavior/direct assessment
   (c) Indirect assessment
   (d) Report formats

4. Positive behavioral interventions and supports: Behavioral Intervention Plan
   (a) Plan development
   (b) Plan implementation
   (c) Plan evaluation: Research designs
      (1) Reversal designs
      (2) Multiple-baseline designs
      (3) Changing criterion designs
      (4) Control group designs

5. Principles of respondent conditioning
   (a) Review of basic concepts
   (b) Real-world applications
      (1) Relaxation training
      (2) Systematic desensitization

6. Cognitive behavior modification
VI. Course Outline (continued):

B. Principles of Practicum Experience:

This activity is focused on the Program goals of behavioral assessment, intervention plan, and consultation. It also addresses skill development in professional school psychology such as legal ethical issues.

1. The student will be trained in the objective definition, observation and measurement of ongoing behavior.

2. The student will prepare a preliminary report objectively detailing the behavior problem(s) of one or more individuals (preferably school-age children) and the situation(s) in which the problem(s) is/are manifest and describing the behavior modification techniques to be used in their amelioration.

3. The student will describe the behavior change program to be utilized and its underlying rationale to concerned parties (e.g., parents, school personnel) and will cooperate fully in the solution of any logistical problems arising before or during its implementation.

4. Should the program be implemented by a person or persons other than the student, the latter will be responsible for training the implementer(s) to objectively observe and record behavior, to apply the specific procedures of the target behaviors. The student will monitor performance of the implementer(s); otherwise the student will perform these functions.

5. The student will submit formal reports utilizing both APA and Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) formats.

6. The student will record the date and arrival and departure times of each visit to the practicum site on a standard log form. Each entry will be verified by a professional person at the practicum site who will retain the form until completion of the project.

VII. Teaching Methodology:

A. Lecture, group discussion, performance-based activities and professional readings will be used to present basic concepts and the extension of such concepts to the remediation of behavioral problems.

B. Study materials

VII. Teaching Methodology (continued):


VIII. Evaluation of the Student:

A. Mastery of course content will be evaluated by use of oral and written assessments, including conventional written tests.

B. Other:

1. The student's competence in functioning as a behavior modifier will be assessed through the evaluation of:
   a. The student's development of a functional behavioral assessment (See attached scoring rubric).
   b. The student's cooperation with staff and practicum supervisor (See attached rating form).
   c. The students' proficiency in developing and implementing a behavioral intervention plan (See attached scoring rubric).

2. Objective performance scores and the instructor's judgments of performance in areas where qualification is not feasible will be combined to determine course grades.

IX. Bibliography:


Hintze, J.M., Volpe, R.J., & Shapiro, E.S. (2002). Best practices in the systematic direct observation of student behavior. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), Best practices in school psychology IV. (pp. 993-1006).

IX. **Bibliography (continued):**


