Overview

During this course we will explore the theoretical foundations of behavior analysis. We will move from general historical precursors in philosophy and psychology, to specific intellectual antecedents of contemporary behavior-analytic thinking. We will cover a number of critical issues and questions, such as the relationship between biology and behavior analysis, analytic units in a science of behavior, self-awareness, emotions, the role of theory in behavior analysis, and cultural analysis. As the title of the course implies, the emphasis will be on foundations, but we will also cover a few contemporary perspectives. By the end of this course, your conceptual and philosophical repertoire with respect to behavior analysis should rest on a solid... foundation.

Readings

The following texts will be used:


All other articles will be available online in Sakai.

Web Site

Class materials will be available on Sakai. Go to http://lss.at.ufl.edu/. Click the “Sakai” icon. Log on using your Gatorlink username and password. If you cannot log on, send me an email with your Gatorlink username.

Class Format

The readings provide the basis for our weekly class discussions, so I expect them to be read carefully and on time. To make the most of our time together we will try a number of different discussion formats over the course of the semester (e.g., small-group discussions, debates, etc.). You should come to class prepared to actively discuss (not just summarize) this material.

To facilitate class discussions, I will provide study guides for all of the material covered in the Skinner texts. You are responsible for preparing three discussion questions on any required non-Skinner readings (i.e., the articles in Sakai).

In addition to the required readings, there will be 2-3 recommended papers each unit. I strongly encourage you to read these articles.
Grading

I expect you to be actively engaged in the class. Your performance at several levels should reflect your engagement. The number of comments you make in class is not a measure of engagement. If you make several interesting observations (even in the small group discussions), and your quizzes and other class-related behavior reflect considered thought, curiosity, critical analysis, and so on, then you are actively engaged in the class. I’ll ask myself if you dug deep or just scratched the surface, and I prefer quality rather than quantity. Participation will be worth 200 points.

There will be weekly quizzes based on the study guide questions.

There will be a written take-home final exam on which you will write extended essays on 3-4 topics.

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<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes (~13x10pts.)</td>
<td>130</td>
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<td>90-92%</td>
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<td>Final</td>
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Course Outline

August 22: Introduction & Overview

August 29: Historical Background


Recommended reading:


September 5: General Background

SHB: Can Science Help? (1), A Science of Behavior (2), Why Organisms Behave (3)

**Recommended reading:**

CR: Reinforcement Today (10), Why Are the Behavioral Sciences Not More Effective? (29)

**September 12: The Analysis of Behavior**

SHB: Reflexes and Conditioned Reflexes (4), Operant Behavior (5)

CR: “Superstition” in the Pigeon (38)


**Recommended reading:**

CR: A Second Type of “Superstition” in the Pigeon (39), How to Teach Animals (44), Some Responses to the Stimulus “Pavlov” (47)

**September 19: Biology and Behavior**


**Recommended reading:**


**September 26: The Controlling Environment**

SHB: Shaping and Maintaining Operant Behavior (6), Operant Discrimination (7), The Controlling Environment (8)

**Recommended reading:**

CR: Two “Synthetic” Social Relations (40), Pigeons in a Pelican (46)


**October 3: Emotion & Motivation**
SHB: Deprivation and Satiation (9), Emotion (10)

CR: Some Quantitative Properties of Anxiety (37)

Recommended reading:


October 10: Analytic Units

CR: The Generic Nature of the Concepts of Stimulus and Response (31)


Recommended reading:

CR: Two Types of Conditioned Reflex and a Pseudo-type (32), Two Types of Conditioned Reflex: A Reply to Konorski and Miller (33)

CoR: From “Stimulus and Response” to “Contingencies of Reinforcement” (Note 1.2)

October 17: Aversive Control

SHB: Aversion, Avoidance, Anxiety (11), Punishment (12)


Recommended reading:


Plus Commentaries by Sidman, Baum, Hineline, Bersh, Branch, Michael & Clark, Baron & Perone, and Williams, and response by Dinsmoor.

October 24: Theory?

Skinner: Preface to Contingencies of Reinforcement
CR: A Case History in Scientific Method (8), Current Trends in Experimental Psychology, (20), The Operational Analysis of Psychological Terms (25)

Recommended reading:
CR: Are Theories of Learning Necessary? (7), What is Psychotic Behavior? (17)

October 31: Problem-Solving & Creativity

Skinner, B. F. An Operant Analysis of Problem Solving (6) + notes 6.1-6.4


Recommended reading:
CR: Creating the Creative Artist (22), A Lecture on “Having” a Poem (23)

November 7: The Inside Story

SHB: Thinking (16), Private Events in a Natural Science (17)


Recommended reading:


November 14: Awareness and Self-Knowledge

SHB: “Self-Control” (15), The Self (18)

Skinner, B. F. Behaviorism at Fifty. Science

Recommended reading:


November 28: Culture


**Recommended reading:**


**December 5: Review and reappraisal**