STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CANTON, NEW YORK

COURSE OUTLINE
ABAP 310 - Companion Animal Behavior Training

Prepared By: Dr. Stephen F. Ledoux

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS
SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT
APRIL 2015
A. **TITLE:** Companion Animal Behavior Training

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** ABAP 310

C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** No

E. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks face-to-face or asynchronous

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall or Spring

G. **HOURS OF LECTURE, LABORATORY, RECITATION, TUTORIAL, ACTIVITY:**
   3 lecture hours per week

H. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

   This course introduces the contributions of the natural science of behavior, behaviorology, to the area of animal behavior training. Students are educated about (a) the successful, non-coercive animal training practices, derived from basic principles, that are used by professional animal trainers around the world, and (b) how to teach the owners of companion animals how to train their pets. After reviewing basic principles and the significance of species differences, relevant practices are differentially applied to the pro-active, non-coercive, positive, and effective behavior training of four representative companion animal species: (a) cats, (b) dogs, (c) birds, and (d) horses. The generic application of these non-coercive practices to training other species also receives attention.

I. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES:**
   a. Pre-requisite(s): (ABAP 245) Introduction to the Science and Technology of Behavior, or (VSCT 102) Companion Animal Behavior, with (VSCT 100) Human Companion Animal Bond highly recommended, or permission of instructor
   
   b. Co-requisite(s): none

J. **GOALS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):**

   By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course Objective</th>
<th>Institutional SLO</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. Analyze the basic, natural-science principles of behavior for how they can be</td>
<td>2. Crit. Thinking</td>
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<td>non-coercively applied to companion animal behavior training</td>
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<td>b. Describe the general, non-coercive behavior training practices as they</td>
<td>1. Communication</td>
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<td>differentially apply to each of these representative companion animal species:</td>
<td>3. Prof. Competence</td>
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<td>(a) cats, (b) dogs, (c) birds, and (d) horses</td>
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<td>c. Evaluate the significance and list the benefits of the non-coercive nature of</td>
<td>1. Communication</td>
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<td>the covered behaviorological practices for training members of any other</td>
<td>2. Crit. Thinking</td>
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<td>species (including humans)</td>
<td>4. Inter-Intrapersonal Skills</td>
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K. **TEXTS:**

- *The Science and Technology of Animal Training* by Dr. James O’Heare
- *Study Questions for The Science and Technology of Animal Training* by Dr. James O’Heare
- Supplemented by other books and articles as appropriate.
  (See references).

L. **REFERENCES:**


M. **EQUIPMENT:** Smart classroom.

N. **GRADING METHOD:** A-F

O. **MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**

To be determined by the instructor.

Possibilities include but are not limited to:
- assigned homework completion
- research papers
- book reports
- group oral/written reports
- individual oral/written reports
- essays
- class participation
- projects
- journals
- quizzes
- tests
- exams
P. DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:

I. General behaviorological principles and practices.
   A. Postcedent principles and practices.
      1. Reinforcing contingencies.
         a. Added / positive reinforcers.
         b. Subtracted / negative reinforcers.
         c. Unconditioned / primary reinforcers.
         d. Conditioned / secondary reinforcers.
            i. Clicker reinforcers.
            ii. Clickers as a single signal.
            iii. Clickers as repetitious signals.
         e. Generalized reinforcers.
         f. Timing of reinforcers.
         g. Magnitude of reinforcers.
         h. Accidental reinforcers.
      2. Punishing contingencies.
         a. Added / positive punishers.
         b. Subtracted / negative punishers.
         c. Unconditioned / primary punishers.
         d. Conditioned / secondary punishers.
      3. Extinction.
      4. Basic schedules of reinforcement.
         a. CRF, FR, VR, FI, VI.
   B. Antecedent principles and practices.
      1. Respondent conditioning.
         a. Unconditioned.
         b. Unconditioned.
      2. Stimulus Control.
         a. Discrimination.
            i. Evocative stimuli.
            ii. Function–altering stimuli.
         b. Generalization.
      4. Signal magnitude.
   C. Response related considerations.
      1. Short–duration behaviors.
      2. Long–duration behaviors.
      5. Superstitious behaviors.
      6. Adjunctive behaviors.
      7. Deprivation / satiation.
   D. Things that can be done with reinforcers to change / expand / improve behavior repertoires.
      1. Differential reinforcement.
      2. Shaping.
b. Methods.
c. Ten laws of training.

E. Things that can be done with evocative stimuli to change / expand / improve behavior repertoires.
1. Fading.
2. Chaining.

F. Applying principles and practices to training.
1. The training game.
   a. Targeting.
   b. Mimicry.
   c. Modeling.
   d. Imitation.

2. Training to end single unwanted behaviors.
   a. Eight methods.
   b. Discriminating among methods.
      i. Positive methods.
      ii. Negative methods.

3. Training to end complex unwanted behaviors.

G. Expanded training concept: clicker training.
1. Short–term effects.
2. Side effects.
3. Long–term effects.
   a. Repertoire maintenance.
   b. Accelerated learning.
   c. Expansion of creativity.
   d. Freedom from fear.
4. Fading the clicker.
5. Uses beyond pets.

H. Managing species differences.
1. Respondent conditioning.
   a. Species history.
   b. Individual conditioning history.
   c. Access to controlling variables.
   d. Problems of, and solutions for, limited access.

2. Operant conditioning.
   a. Species history.
   b. Individual conditioning history.
   c. Access to controlling variables.
   d. Problems of, and solutions for, limited access.

I. Some other, related areas of non–coercive practices beyond the world of other animals.
1. Habits.
2. Sports.
3. Addictions.
5. Education.

J. General use of non–coercive training practices for any species.

II. Non–coercive training practices for cats.
A. General non–punishing training practices.
B. Applying general training practices.
C. About cats.
D. Cat treats and clicker use.
   1. Treats and clickers.
   2. Timing is everything.
E. Clicker training basics for cats.
   1. How should training sessions be structured?
   2. How long should training sessions last?
   3. How should training sessions be ended?
   4. Improving your cat’s daily life (and yours).
F. Props for cats.
   1. Standard clicker training equipment.
   2. Specialized props.
G. Easy behaviors to train with a clicker.
   1. Without props.
   2. With props.
H. Moving to more complex behaviors.
   1. Without props.
   2. With props.
I. Training some useful behaviors.
   1. Coming when called.
   2. Staying put.
   3. Permitting a leash.
   5. Allowing grooming and handling without a struggle.
J. Some problems and solutions.
   1. Litterbox concerns.
   2. “Aggression” toward humans.
   3. Ambushes from above.
   4. Scratching (curtains, upholstery, you).
   5. Getting stuck in trees.
   7. Getting along with other pets.
K. Expanding beyond basic training.

III. Non–coercive training practices for **dogs**.
A. General non–punishing training practices.
B. Applying general training practices.
C. About dogs.
D. Dog treats and clicker use.
   1. Treats and clickers.
   2. Timing is everything.
E. Clicker training basics for dogs.
   1. How should training sessions be structured?
   2. How long should training sessions last?
   3. How should training sessions be ended?
   4. Improving your dog’s daily life (and yours).
F. Props for dogs.
   1. Standard clicker training equipment.
2. Specialized props.

G. Easy behaviors to train with a clicker.
   1. Without props.
   2. With props.

H. Moving to more complex behaviors.
   1. Without props.
   2. With props.

I. Training some useful behaviors.
   1. Coming when called.
   2. Staying put.
   3. Permitting a leash.
   5. Allowing grooming and handling without a struggle.

J. Some problems and solutions.
   1. “Aggression” toward humans.
   3. Begging at the table during meals.
   4. Getting along with other pets.

K. Expanding beyond basic training (e.g., into the show ring).

IV. Non-coercive training practices for birds.
A. General non-punishing training practices.
B. Applying general training practices.
C. About birds.
D. Bird treats and clicker use.
   1. Treats and clickers.
   2. Timing is everything.
E. Clicker training basics for birds.
   1. How should training sessions be structured?
   2. How long should training sessions last?
   3. How should training sessions be ended?
   4. Improving your bird’s daily life (and yours).
F. Props for birds.
   1. Standard clicker training equipment.
   2. Specialized props.
G. Easy behaviors to train with a clicker.
   1. Without props.
   2. With props.
H. Moving to more complex behaviors.
   1. Without props.
   2. With props.
I. Training some useful behaviors.
   1. Fly to me.
   2. Allowing handling without a struggle.
   3. Gentle beak and claws.
   4. Gentle chirping (as opposed to screeching).
   5. Stay on shoulder (small birds only, if at all).
   6. Staying at play area.
   7. Returning to play area on cue.
8. Interesting talking.

J. Some problems and solutions.
   1. Excess flying.
   2. Inappropriate cued screaming.
   4. Getting along with other pets.

K. Expanding beyond basic training.

V. Non-coercive training practices for horses.
   A. General non-punishing training practices.
   B. Applying general training practices.
   C. About horses.
   D. Horse treats and clicker use.
      1. Treats and clickers.
      2. Timing is everything.
   E. Clicker training basics for horses.
      1. How should training sessions be structured?
      2. How long should training sessions last?
      3. How should training sessions be ended?
      4. Improving your horse’s daily life (and yours).
   F. Props for horses.
      1. Standard clicker training equipment.
      2. Specialized props.
   G. Easy behaviors to train with a clicker.
      1. Without props.
      2. With props.
   H. Moving to more complex behaviors.
      1. Without props.
      2. With props.
   I. Training some useful behaviors.
      1. Generally expected useful behaviors.
      2. Special purpose useful behaviors.
   J. Some problems and solutions.
      1. Biting.
      2. Stubbornness.
      3. Getting along with other pets.
      4. “Aggression” toward humans.
   K. Expanding beyond basic training.

Q. LABORATORY OUTLINE: No laboratory