

Title 1: Scientist Practitioner Model #1: Introduction and Application to Clinical Practice and Staff Training

Many graduate programs in behavior analysis use the science practitioner model of training students. I will first review the history of this training model to provide a proper context. Next, I will discuss a scientist practitioner model that is being tested at Florida Tech in conjunction with two clinics in the Orlando area. In this model, scientific inquiry is integrated into clinical practice. The results of these inquiries are used, then, to guide clinical practice. For example, I will review the stimulus control analysis technique and show one way of using it to assess the effects of discrimination training. If stimulus control is shown to be faulty, procedures to fix and/prevent these issues will be discussed. Flow charting will also be introduced. I will show examples of flow charts that can depict programmatic procedures such as schedules of reinforcement, prompting and fading, and error correction. Finally, I will introduce how flow charts can be used for diagnostic and prescriptive purposes with both staff and caregivers.

Title 2: Scientist Practitioner #2: Acquisition Diagnostics, Flow Charting, and Identifying Mechanisms of Action

In this, the 2nd hour of the scientist-practitioner model of clinical practice and staff training, I will introduce acquisition diagnostics (AD), which is a method for using science to guide the modification of programs that are not working as planned. In AD, a program that is not making progress is identified; next, hypotheses regarding the cause of this problem are identified. Then, tests of each hypothesis are conducted. Some tests are brief experiments and others involve gathering facts about the learner that might provide clarity. For example, some learners may not have the requisite foundational skills (e.g., echoic behavior) to learn a more complex skill. Still others involve close examination of the flow-charted procedures using color coding to identify potential procedural flaws that can be tested or modified. I will present several cases that will demonstrate the AD procedure. One presentation will involve clients who appear to be waiting to be prompted, or who frequently respond incorrectly to seemingly get prompted. Given the hypothesis that prompts might function as reinforcers, and therefore strengthen waiting/incorrect responses, I will show how a reinforcer assessment of prompts might be conducted and how the results translated into more effective procedures.