

Statement of Mentoring and Supervision Philosophy

My mentoring and supervision philosophy is grounded in the belief that effective preparation in behavior analysis requires more than the acquisition of technical competencies. Students must learn to think critically, make ethical and data-informed decisions, evaluate scientific evidence, communicate effectively, and translate behavioral principles into socially meaningful practice. As an educator, researcher, and behavior analyst, I view mentorship and supervision as a developmental process in which structure and support are gradually adjusted as students gain competence, confidence, and professional independence.

Mentoring Future Behavior Analysts

My approach to mentorship is individualized, collaborative, and competency based. Students enter graduate education with different professional experiences, learning histories, strengths, and goals. I therefore begin by establishing clear expectations while identifying the student's current competencies and areas for development. From there, I use goal setting, modeling, guided practice, performance feedback, reflection, and ongoing assessment to support progress.

I believe effective mentorship requires both support and accountability. Students should feel comfortable asking questions, discussing mistakes, and acknowledging uncertainty, while also understanding their responsibility to meet professional, academic, and ethical expectations. I encourage students to view feedback as an essential component of professional growth rather than simply an evaluation of performance. As students demonstrate competence, I intentionally shift from direct guidance toward consultation and collaborative problem solving so they develop the independence required of practicing behavior analysts.

An important goal of my mentorship is helping students move beyond asking, *"What should I do?"* toward asking, *"What does the evidence suggest, what do the data indicate, and what are the ethical and contextual considerations?"* Developing this type of clinical and scientific reasoning prepares students to address complex situations for which there may not be a single prescribed solution.

Supervision Philosophy

My supervision practices are informed by behavior-analytic principles and emphasize observable competencies, measurable performance expectations, and meaningful feedback. Supervision should model the same scientific approach we expect students to use in their professional practice. Expectations should be operationally clear, progress should be monitored, and supervisory decisions should be responsive to performance data.

At the same time, competency involves more than completing a checklist. I emphasize the development of conceptual understanding, ethical reasoning, professional communication, cultural responsiveness, and the ability to generalize skills across clients, settings, and professional responsibilities. Students should understand not only how to implement a procedure, but also why it is appropriate, what evidence supports it, how outcomes will be evaluated, and when modifications are warranted.

I also view supervision as an opportunity to model professional behavior. How supervisors respond to disagreement, uncertainty, errors, competing priorities, and ethical challenges teaches students as much as formal instruction. I strive to model humility, transparency, collaboration, and a willingness to revise decisions when data or new information indicate that a different approach is warranted.

Supervising Student Research

Research mentorship is a particularly important component of my philosophy. I view student research as an opportunity to teach students how to become both critical consumers and thoughtful producers of behavioral science. My role is not to design a student's study for them, but to provide the structure and methodological guidance necessary for the student to progressively assume ownership of the research process.

I support students through the development of meaningful and answerable research questions, literature review, operational definition of variables, selection of appropriate research designs, development of measurement systems, data collection and analysis, interpretation of findings, and scholarly dissemination. My background in single-case research particularly informs my emphasis on experimental logic, repeated measurement, visual analysis, treatment fidelity, interobserver agreement, and demonstrating functional relations when appropriate.

I also emphasize that methodological rigor begins well before data collection. Students must understand the importance of research ethics, informed consent, participant protections, Institutional Review Board requirements, data integrity, confidentiality, and transparent reporting. Research decisions should reflect both scientific rigor and the dignity, preferences, and well-being of participants.

As students progress through a project, I use a scaffolded mentorship model. Early in the process, I may provide greater structure through examples, modeling, targeted questions, and frequent feedback. As competence develops, responsibility increasingly shifts to the student. This progression is intentional: successful research mentorship should ultimately produce a scholar who can identify problems, evaluate literature, defend methodological choices, interpret data, recognize limitations, and communicate findings with increasing independence.

Creating Inclusive Mentoring Relationships

I recognize that students bring different identities, perspectives, professional histories, and educational experiences to graduate training. Effective mentorship therefore requires understanding that identical supervision is not necessarily equitable supervision. I maintain consistent standards while remaining responsive to individual learning needs and providing multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate growth.

I strive to establish mentoring relationships in which students can engage in respectful disagreement, ask questions, and contribute perspectives that differ from my own. This is particularly important in behavior analysis, where contemporary practitioners must consider culture, context, social validity, client autonomy, and the perspectives of the communities receiving behavioral services. I want students to leave supervision prepared to collaborate with people whose experiences and perspectives may differ substantially from their own.

Developing Independent Professionals and Scholars

Ultimately, I measure the success of mentorship not by how dependent a student becomes on my guidance, but by how effectively that student eventually functions without it. The goal of supervision is progressive independence.

Whether I am supervising clinical practice, professional development, or student research, I want students to leave the mentoring relationship with stronger analytical skills, greater confidence in evaluating evidence, an appreciation for ethical and culturally responsive practice, and the ability to recognize the limits of their own competence. I want them to become professionals who seek consultation when appropriate, respond constructively to feedback, question assumptions, and continue learning throughout their careers.

My responsibility as a mentor is therefore both immediate and long term: to help students meet today's competencies while preparing them to address tomorrow's challenges in behavior analysis. Through structured supervision, rigorous research mentorship, individualized feedback, and progressive independence, I seek to develop behavior analysts who are not only technically competent, but also ethical, reflective, scientifically minded, collaborative, and prepared to contribute meaningfully to the profession and the communities they serve.

Sincerely,



Ramella Lee, PhD, BCBA-D