##### Thank you for your interest in the Center for Applied Behavior Systems (CABS). In the following pages you will find everything you need to know about CABS to decide if being involved in CABS is a commitment you are willing and able to make. This handbook provides information regarding what CABS does, what projects we are currently working on, what is expected of you if you join CABS, and what you can gain from involvement in CABS. *Please thoroughly review the information provided*, as it will answer many of the questions you may have concerning CABS. Furthermore, some important aspects of CABS are explained here that, should you join, you will be responsible for knowing.

Following the information section of this application is a brief section where we ask for some general information about you and your expectations for CABS. This section will allow us to ensure you are a good match for CABS and vice versa. **All new students should fill out an application, returning students will be sent a different form**.

##### Mission Statement

The Center for Applied Behavior Systems (CABS) was developed to:

1. help students, undergraduate and graduate, learn how to conduct research that combines the technology of applied behavior analysis with theories from experimental, social, and applied psychology,
2. give students real-world, hands-on research experience, from designing methodology and data-analysis strategies to documenting findings in professional publications,
3. teach community-based research and intervention techniques and approaches,
4. give students the opportunity to participate in leading-edge professional activities,
5. improve quality of life in the community, and
6. teach and demonstrate the value of “actively caring.”

##### Project Descriptions

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| --- | --- |
| ***Projects*** | ***Description*** |
| * **Pedestrian Gratuity** | The aim of this project is to increase communication and safety between pedestrians and drivers. How can an intervention influence people’s overall gratuity in other aspects of life? Improving and increasing the frequency of interaction between pedestrian and drivers promotes safety. |
| * **Thank You Professor** | We are conducting research on the importance of Thank You cards to help increase the gratuity within the Virginia  Tech community. Through this study we are measuring the impact expressing gratitude has on your mood by assessing students who give their professors a custom thank you card. |
| * **Individual Mask Wearing Assessment (**Systematic Observations of Facemask Wearing and Interpersonal Distancing: Risk Compensation vs. Response Generalization) | Our research assesses both mask wearing and social distancing behaviors among individuals to determine whether risk compensation is occurring. The theory of risk compensation presumes individuals take more risks when they feel more protected. For example, someone wearing a facemask may feel safer and subsequently stand closer to others. To test this theory, research students observed facemask wearing and social distancing in various indoor and outdoor locations. These students recorded three different observations on a Qualtrics survey: an individual’s gender, his/her mask wearing behavior (wearing a mask, wearing a mask incorrectly, or not wearing a mask), and the estimated distance between the individual and the nearest person within a six-foot radius. |
| * **Bagless Blacksburg** * **Gratitude in the Community** | The ultimate goal of this project is to reduce the number of plastic bags used in grocery stores in Blacksburg. This project will make a very small, but very important impact on the world.  The aim of this project is to take the Pedestrian Gratuity project one step further, looking at gratitude expressions across the community. Examples include holding the door for others and saying thank you to the bus driver when getting off the bus. |

**Training and Orientation**

For each research project, appropriate training is provided in the areas of data collection, data entry, and data analysis as needed. Training sessions (for data collection and entry) are scheduled near the beginning of each semester by project leaders and periodically throughout the semester as needed. All new and returning students must attend these special training meetings.

In addition to regular training sessions provided for research teams, CABS hosts several “orientation” style meetings **at the request of students**. Orientation includes more in-depth instruction regarding the operating procedures and facilities of CABS. Additional topics may be covered at the request of the undergraduate students.

##### Educational Core

The Educational Core of CABS is designed to provide undergraduates with opportunities to learn more about the theories, models, and research methods commonly used in applied research. It is also designed to ensure students become involved in all aspects of the research process. Completion of the Educational Core involves several components:

1. Attend a weekly Center meeting: Tuesday, 5:00- 6:30 pm, Williams Hall (room TBD).
2. A minimum of 39 hours (for 1 credit hour), 78 hours (for 2 credit hours) or 117 hours (for 3 credit hours) completed over the course of the semester.
3. Creation of a Curriculum Vita.
4. Attend training or brainstorming meetings for particular research projects.
5. IRB Human Subjects Certification

##### Grading Criteria

You will be required to work **three hours per week** **for every one credit hour** for which you are signed up. Students registered for **two credit hours must work 6 hours a week totaling 78 hours per semester.** Students registered for **three credit hours must work 9 hours a week totaling 117 hours.**  Forms are provided to keep track of your hours, and it is strongly suggested to keep track of your own hours. Hour forms must be filled out through the online form and submitted to the Coordinator *before* the Tuesday night meeting. Hours not returned by Tuesday at 11:59 P.M. **will not be counted.** There are many ways to earn hours in CABS, nd in order for things to run smoothly, hours must be submitted at a reasonable time. Hours can be earned by:

1. Collecting data and completing required summary and reliability sheets.
2. Entering, verifying, and updating computer databases.
3. Attending meetings.
4. Reading articles and completing literature searches for independent study projects.
5. Completing special assignments.
6. Attending conference workshops, symposia, and presentations.
7. Doing administrative activities to help the Coordinator and/or Leaders.

CABS also requires that each undergraduate student enrolled for university credit complete a **Curriculum Vita** (an academic résumé listing research experience for graduate school applications). There will be training for this at one of the weekly meetings.

All students working for academic credit will be expected to complete their required hours before Reading Day at the end of the semester. Failure to do so will result in a grade of “**F”**. CABS is not a “walk-in-the-park,” it is a major research Center producing quality research and needs the participation of you--the undergraduate research student.

The fact that a student has completed the requirements listed here does not ensure the student will be invited to reapply to CABS the next semester. The decision of whether a student will be invited to reapply is based on several criteria, including:

* Feedback from CABS leaders.
* Meeting attendance.
* Complete of your total 39 hours (1 credit) or 78 hours (for 2 credits) or 117 hours (for 3 credits).
* Creation and submission of a Curriculum Vita.

**General Expectations of CABS**

Every Tuesday night we have a general CABS meeting. This is where we review and discuss the current status and activities of our projects, debrief students on how to improve data collection procedures, and give formal presentations on a wide range of issues, including, but not limited to:

* Presentations about projects we are working on
* Basic research design
* Graduate School Panel discussion
* How to create a curriculum vita

Following each presentation, an **interactive** discussion will take place where you may ask questions or make comments. These sessions often result in improvements to CABS as well as offer a way to facilitate a better understanding of CABS and the issues discussed.

**Tuesday night meetings *are* *mandatory***; they are a key educational component to CABS and by not attending, you are depriving yourself of a valuable educational experience. In addition, your first opportunity to sign up for data collection will be at the Tuesday night meetings. You will also be able to turn in your weekly hourly log sheet for the previous week.

All students are expected to abide by the rules outlined in the “University Honor Code.” All persons working in CABS are expected to perform their assigned tasks to the best of their ability. CABS is a research center and will not “hold your hand” through our research projects. You are expected to understand the protocol and complete all data sheets in a timely fashion.

The primary mission of CABS is to conduct research. Therefore, the accurate and reliable collection of data is our highest priority. *Protocols related to the collection and handling of data are to be followed at all times, without exception.* Without permission of the project supervisor, raw data sheets shall not leave the Center once the data have been collected and the data sheets have been filed in the Center. In addition, persons working in the Center are expected to return the data sheets and complete the appropriate data logs **within 24 hours** from the time the data are collected.

In order to ensure accurate data collection procedures, the project leader of the respective project will review your data sheet when you hand it in and go over any mistakes or problems you may have had. Common or grievous mistakes will be discussed at the Tuesday night meeting to ensure proper data collection techniques.

Persons scheduled to collect data are responsible for their specific data collection session. If someone cannot collect data during their scheduled times they (not the Center) are responsible for finding a substitute, and notifying the project supervisor or the Center Coordinator of the change (phone and email lists will be provided). **Missed data collection sessions will result in the *deduction* of the equivalent hours that would have been earned. Some data collection hours will ONLY be available on nights/weekends.** Please circle your student ID Number on your application to confirm that you read this entire document.

**Strengths and Weaknesses of CABS**

**Strengths:** Many students in the past have felt that CABS is an excellent way to get hands on experience in applied psychological research. Often CABS is a valuable addition to a student’s Vita and looks great on application forms for graduate school. Depending on the level of your involvement in CABS, there will be several opportunities to be an author on a paper or poster presentation given at one of the many professional conferences CABS attends throughout the semester. In addition to being an author, you may be the presenter at these conferences as well. Being an author on a presentation at a professional conference is an excellent way to bolster one’s Vita and gain valuable presentation experience.

In addition to the more obvious advantages mentioned above, being involved in CABS allows you to gain invaluable knowledge and expertise about theories and procedures used in applied psychological research that have broad applications across many fields and projects. Often students use the experiences gained in CABS to develop and implement their own project ideas in other fields and academic arenas.

**Weaknesses:** It is easy to get lost in the crowd in CABS. We are a large research center with many projects and many students (sometimes 40 or more). Students in the past have expressed concern over the lack of individual attention. Our primary goal is to produce and disseminate quality research. Because of this, there is little time for everyone to develop a personal relationship with all members of CABS.

That is not to say it is not possible to develop such a relationship, but YOU must make the effort to form these relationships. This is possible by: 1) Coming into CABS often to discuss/work on projects, 2) being intimately involved in one or more of the projects we are working on, and 3) being “research assertive” which involves going above and beyond what is asked of you (i.e., volunteering for data collection spots that need to be filled, even if you have all your hours, etc.). The Center Coordinator will always make time to address any concerns or issues you may have, so do not hesitate to speak with him or her.

Another consideration that students have brought to our attention in the past is that CABS may appear disorganized at times. Often this is a result of the dynamic nature of the projects and procedures we are involved in. Data collection opportunities may be cancelled because of reasons beyond our control. We ask you to bear with us as we “roll with the punches”. We do our best to provide you with the opportunities necessary to achieve the research experience, the vita items for graduate-school, the letters of recommendation, and the grade you want.

**Please note that Dr. Geller will no longer write letters of recommendation for Cabbies until they have been a research student in CABS for AT LEAST one semester.**

**CABS office hours:**

Monday - Friday 12:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Williams 202

540-231-8145

Please contact the center coordinator Loralee Hoffer ([loraleeh@vt.edu](mailto:loraleeh@vt.edu)) with any further questions.

**Spring 2023 Application**

**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**VT Email:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Please explain what you hope to gain from your experience with CABS:

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What are your plans after graduation from VT?

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What contributions will you make to CABS?

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Briefly explain why we should choose you over the other applicants.

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**Major: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**VT ID #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Class Standing:** Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

**GPA:** Overall \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ In-Major: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**What grades did you receive in:** Introductory Psychology**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Research Methods**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**How many total credit hours are you taking (not including CABS): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you plan to attend graduate school?** Yes 🞏 No 🞏 Maybe 🞏

* **If yes, what area: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Undecided: 🞏**

**Please list the faculty members, if any, in which you have previous research experience and the research done with them:**

**I agree to commit the necessary time and energy required of me to participate in CABS and to fulfill all the obligations and requirements listed below**:

* Provide CABS with my best quality work for all tasks including:
  + Data collection
  + Data entry/verification
  + Project advancement
  + And all other assigned tasks
* Attend the weekly meetings
* Complete my total hours 39 (for 1 credit hour) 78 (for 2 credit hours) or 117 (for 3 credit hours).
* Submitting a Curriculum Vita

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_DATE\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please email completed applications to ([loraleeh@vt.edu](mailto:loraleeh@vt.edu)). Deadline to Submit applications is **MONDAY, january 16TH BY 11:59.** We will review applications and notify before the first meeting.

SHould you be accepted, the first meeting will take place **Tuesday, January 24th**, in williams (room and time tbd). Information will be sent out via email.