

Animal Behavior College

Obedience Instructor Training Program

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

Animal Behavior College
9018 Balboa Blvd., Suite 591
Northridge, CA 91325
(800) 801-6239

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome and congratulations on your decision to embark on an exciting and rewarding career.

As a professional dog trainer with over twenty-five years experience, I have seen amazing and far reaching changes in the world of dog training. In a sense, dog training has and continues to evolve as human beings strive to attain greater levels of understanding and compassion.

At ABC, we love dogs! Small, large, furry, hairless, mixed breed, purebred, it doesn't matter. The fact that I get to help and play with dogs on a daily basis thrills me to no end. With careful study and diligent work, you may well be able to make the same claim a year or so from now.

The ABC Dog Obedience Instructor Training Program is available to those individuals who are serious about becoming certified professional dog trainers. This program is perfect for the focused student who dreams of turning a love of animals into a viable career.

At ABC, our goal is to offer a positive and effective training program that will produce highly motivated and qualified trainers. Our program includes hands on training coupled with a curriculum that teaches our students to understand what motivates a dog's behavior, thus going beyond the simple mechanics of training a dog.

We have endeavored to provide you with the tools that will allow you to become an effective communicator and teacher. We are excited to offer you admission into this program and are looking forward to following your progress.

As an ABC graduate, you will join the ranks of thousands of likeminded professionals who are proud to call themselves ABC Certified Dog Trainers.

Let me be the first of many in the ABC family to welcome you and to wish you all the best on your training journey.

Sincerely,

Steven P. Appelbaum
President/CEO, ABC, Inc.

Animal Behavior College

Training Philosophy

The Animal Behavior College (ABC) Obedience Instructor Training Program begins by providing the students with a complete understanding of all the quadrants in operant conditioning; positive reinforcement, negative punishment, positive punishment and negative reinforcement.

From there, the students will learn how to build a proper canine/human relationship. Each student will learn that creating a relationship built on positive interaction and consistency can often deter future unwanted behavior problems, facilitate faster learning and even solve some existing behavioral challenges.

Since ABC's bias involves using the least aversive approach possible in every case, we advocate the use of positive reinforcement and negative punishment training techniques. Each student will learn that when shaping any new behavior or cue, force is not necessary. Students will be taught that the presentation of, or the withholding of, highly valued rewards will produce the results they are looking for.

One of the reasons ABC chooses to embrace the use of positive reinforcement and negative punishment techniques is because these techniques are effective and more forgiving than techniques which involve physical aversives (i.e. positive punishment and negative reinforcement). This is especially important for new trainers just starting out.

By using a balance of meaningful rewards and following proven scientific training techniques, ABC Certified Dog Trainers will be able to provide safe, humane and effective dog training alternatives to the dog owning public. We have endeavored to go beyond the mechanics of obedience training and teach our students the importance of interspecies communication.

Ms. Debbie Kendrick
Vice President of Animal Behavior College, Inc.

ANIMAL BEHAVIOR COLLEGE
DOG OBEDIENCE INSTRUCTOR TRAINING PROGRAM CURRICULUM

Stage 1 – A BASIC STUDY OF CANINES

We begin the course by educating you about dogs. It is important as a Dog Obedience Instructor to have an understanding of dog breed characteristics, developmental periods, proper socialization, basic health routines, disease prevention and canine communication. This will serve as a foundation of knowledge about normal canine behavior and ideal canine husbandry you can refer to as you counsel your clients. Having a clear understanding of normal canine behavior can help you clarify to your clients the difference between normal canine behavior occurring at inconvenient or inappropriate times and abnormal canine behavior. Being able to educate your clients on ideal canine husbandry can even help them prevent potential behavioral and health problems.

Stage 2 – LEARNING THEORY

This stage provides you with a strong understanding of the scientific principles of how animals learn. You will learn that animal training is most successful if it follows the basic principles of behavioral theory. This stage is designed to teach you these principles along with many specific training strategies, including, classical conditioning, operant conditioning, unconditioned reinforcement, and conditioned reinforcement.

Stage 3 – A TRAINER’S TOOLBOX

This stage is designed to introduce the student to many types of dog training tools. These include; clickers, collars, leashes, housetraining aids, chewing deterrents, interactive toys, and safety equipment. Students will learn that although the key component to a successful training program is a mutually committed relationship between a dog and dog owner; training tools will often expedite the training process.

Stage 4 – TRAINING BASICS

This stage begins by reviewing the history of dog training and the differences between obedience training, behavior modification and problem solving. This stage is packed with information which is designed to help you identify specific genetic behaviors and characteristics in dogs. This knowledge will be an invaluable tool when you begin training dogs on your own.

Stage 5 - HOW TO TEACH BASIC OBEDIENCE CUES

In this stage you will be given step-by-step instruction on how to teach basic obedience cues. The obedience cues covered include sit, stay, down, come, heel, loose leash walking, leave it, and fetch. A myriad of different training techniques are included, however, the bias is toward positive motivation. This stage also includes solutions to the most common challenges that you will encounter while teaching these cues to dogs and dog owners.

Stage 6 - THE ART OF EFFECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

This stage is designed to teach the student how to effectively treat the most common behavioral problems in dogs, e.g. housebreaking, house manners, puppy nipping, chewing, digging, jumping, excessive barking, and begging. This stage further explains how to set up a treatment plan using positive reinforcement of alternate behaviors and management. As a professional dog trainer, your clients will ask you for solutions to a wide variety of behavior problems shown by their dogs. This stage will give you a library of solutions to offer along with the ability to convey these solutions in an effective and clear manner.

Stage 7 - SAFETY

This stage teaches the students how to recognize the precursors of dog aggression, how to avoid it and handle such aggression. It will also discuss owner aggression and indicators of frustration in the owner when working with their dog. An instructor knowledgeable on how to take proper precautions will be able to conduct safe and stress free lessons with their clients. This goes a long way in creating a positive learning environment for all involved.

Stage 8 - PUBLIC SPEAKING & TEACHING GROUP CLASSES

During the first portion of this stage you will be given information regarding public speaking and methods to use for conveying training lessons clearly and effectively to dog owners. During the second portion you will be given information on how to conduct group classes. It is important as a Dog Obedience Trainer to be able to effectively speak and motivate people. Since you are an instructor, the manner in which you speak and how you organize your instruction is crucial. This stage includes a variety of techniques used for communicating effectively to both individuals and groups, along with methods of improving basic people skills.

Stage 9 – BUSINESS BUILDING

This stage was written by Mr. Steven Appelbaum. Mr. Appelbaum is the President of Animal Behavior College, Inc. (ABC) and was the owner and builder of the nation's largest independent dog training company, Animal Behavior & Training Associates, Inc. (ABTA) for over ten years. Mr. Appelbaum will share his journey and business building secrets, from hanging flyers up in grocery stores to procuring an exclusive agreement with Petco Animal Supplies to provide dog trainers and dog training services in over 500 Petco stores, nationwide.

Stage 10 – SHELTER PRACTICUM & APPRENTICESHIP

As you enter this stage of the program, you will be asked to volunteer a minimum of 10 hours at a local animal shelter, humane society, or rescue organization of your choice. This will give you a chance to practice everything you have learned thus far and prepare you for the upcoming hands on training with your Mentor Trainer. You will be practicing your timing using basic clicker training techniques, as well as, starting to build an excellent relationship with the organization of your choice. This will give you a head start on building your business in your community. This portion of the program is exciting for students as they are able to practice what they have learned while helping homeless dogs become better candidates for adoption.

Stage 10 – SHELTER PRACTICUM & APPRENTICESHIP (continued)

The second portion of this stage is the Student Apprenticeship. During this portion, you will work with an ABC Mentor Trainer, observing and participating in the instruction of basic obedience cues, such as, sit, stay, come, down, heel, and loose leash walking. You will have a chance to work with individual dogs under the guidance and supervision of the Mentor Trainer. As a student, you will be applying the various training techniques just observed, as well as, the ones learned in the previous stages. The Mentor Trainer will evaluate you on your teaching performance providing suggestions, guidance, and constructive critique of your skills. Your hands on training will differ in structure and is based on the frequency of training sessions. The Student Apprenticeship varies from 7 to 21 weeks in length with 15 hours set as a minimum standard.

Stage 11 - GRADUATION

We will administer a cumulative final exam based on all the information taught in the previous stages. Once this exam is passed, you will receive a certificate certifying you as a graduate from the Animal Behavior College Obedience Instructor Training Program.

PROGRAM MANAGER

Your Program Manager will track your progress through the entire ABC program. This includes sending you all program materials, receiving and grading your exams, reviewing your hands-on training experience with an ABC Mentor Trainer, and checking to make sure all deadlines are met. The Program Manager also serves as a counselor for you to call upon for any type of assistance during the ABC program.

ANIMAL BEHAVIOR COLLEGE
TUITION

The tuition for the Animal Behavior College Obedience Instructor Training Program covers the following materials required for completion of this program. You will receive:

- *All needed written course material
- *ABC binder to hold course material
- *Problem solving CD's
- *Student uniform T-shirt (shipped later in the program)
- *Graduation certificate upon graduation
- *A Personal Program Manager available to you through a toll free number

Please note that lost materials must be replaced at the student's expense according to the price chart listed on your Enrollment Agreement. These items can be ordered through your Program Manager.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for graduation from the Animal Behavior College Obedience Instructor Training Program, the student must successfully complete all stages outlined in the program as well as the Final Exam. Stages 1 through 9 are completed by passing written exams with a percentage rate of 70% or better. Successful completion of Stage 10 is based upon performance evaluations received from ABC Mentor Trainers. The Final Exam covers all aspects of the program, and upon a 75% passing grade of the Final Exam, the student is considered to have graduated and will be awarded a Graduation Certificate from Animal Behavior College Dog Obedience Instructor Training Program.

HONOR STUDENTS

‘Honor Student’ status will be awarded to those students who achieve academic excellence, demonstrate an exceptional aptitude for training dogs and maintain a positive attitude throughout the program.

To achieve honor student status, a student must receive grades of 90% or better on all evaluations and examinations, including, the Final. A student must also successfully complete 10 hours of volunteer work and return all exams and paperwork when scheduled. Additionally, a student must conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times.

‘Honor Student’ status will be noted on your Graduation Certificate and will be looked upon favorably when seeking employment.

*Your Program Manager and/or Externship Coordinator have the authority to determine your eligibility regarding ‘Honor Student’ status.

STUDENT POLICIES

ABC prides itself on our professionalism. As an ABC student, you are representing our school. Please dress appropriately, behave in a professional manner, practice the basic standards of social conduct and courtesy, and follow the training guidelines set by ABC.

Below is a brief summary of many applicable policies that all students should adhere to.

1. ABC will dismiss any student found under the influence of or in possession of drugs or alcoholic substances while working.
2. No fighting is allowed either physical or verbal. Violation of this policy may result in immediate dismissal.
3. Any form of dog abuse will serve as grounds for dismissal
4. Students must follow the appropriate dress code when representing themselves as an ABC student.
 - Must look clean and neat
 - ABC Apprentice shirt must be worn
 - Must wear close-toed shoes
5. Any form of client abuse will serve as grounds for dismissal
6. Inappropriate, argumentative, disruptive, or profane behavior of any kind will not be tolerated toward any ABC staff (i.e. ABC Program Manager, ABC Assistant Program Manager, ABC Mentor Trainer, etc.). Violation of this policy may result in immediate dismissal from the Program.
7. The signed contractual agreement must be followed at all times, and any violation of this contract will serve as grounds for dismissal from the Program, and may even lead to necessary legal action.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Students who encounter any sort of problem, difficulty, or complaint regarding any aspect of the Animal Behavior College Obedience Instructor Training Program should contact the Program Manager immediately. The issues concerning the student should be in writing so that the matter can be handled in an efficient and well-documented manner. For minor questions and concerns, a simple phone call to the Program Manager will suffice.

In the event that grievances are not solved after following the above procedure, you may file an appeal by writing to:

Steven Appelbaum
CEO President ABTA/ABC.
9018 Balboa Blvd. #591
Northridge, CA 91325

All appeals received will be thoroughly reviewed and taken under consideration.