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PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This handbook is intended to help students understand the framework and functioning of the Applied Behavior Analysis program at Mississippi State University. This handbook provides students with a variety of resources that will be valuable during their time as a student in the program. Students will find documents related to course sequences, accreditation information, student expectations, and how student progress will be evaluated throughout the program.

If any student has any questions about the information presented in this handbook or has additional questions that are not addressed in this handbook, they should contact the ABA Program Coordinator, Dr. Hallie Smith.

Contact Information

Hallie Smith, PhD, BCBA-D, LP
Assistant Professor, Program Coordinator
Applied Behavior Analysis Program
Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, & Foundations
Email: hms238@msstate.edu
FULL TIME DEPARTMENTAL AND RELATED FACULTY AND STAFF

Director of Applied Behavior Analysis Programs
Smith, Hallie M., Ph.D. (Mississippi State University). Assistant Professor. Licensed Psychologist, Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral Designation (BCBA-D). Interests include the assessment and treatment of pediatric feeding disorders and severe problem behavior, understanding relationship between social validity and treatment integrity of behavioral interventions, and application of behavior analytic interventions to children with developmental disabilities and CHARGE syndrome.

Applied Behavior Analysis Core Faculty
Borgen, John, Psy.D. (NovaSoutheastern University). Assistant Professor. Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral Designation (BCBA-D). Interests include pediatric feeding disorders, severe behavior disorders, behavioral skills training, organizational behavior management, mindfulness in higher education, behavioral economics, and applications of virtual reality technology.

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS PROGRAMS

The applied behavior analysis (ABA) programs at Mississippi State University (MSU) are designed to provide education, training, and experience to students with the goal of preparing them for practice in real-world settings. Our faculty members are equipped with extensive clinical experiences in the field of behavior analysis and have exceptional teaching, supervision, and research skills. Faculty in the ABA programs share the goal of preparing students to become behavior analysts who provide high quality, evidence-based services to a wide range of ages, populations, and functioning levels in order to make socially significant changes in the lives of others. Students will be encouraged to work with each core faculty member to facilitate skill development in a number of areas. The faculty members also serve as important role models in the students’ development into professionals in the field of ABA.

Faculty members expect students to work diligently to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to be a successful behavior analyst. Thus, students are viewed as “works-in-progress” within a developmental approach to skill and knowledge acquisition. Degree and coursework options within the ABA programs include: Master of Science (MS) in Educational Psychology with a concentration in ABA, a graduate certificate in ABA, and an undergraduate minor in ABA.

The undergraduate minor in ABA is a Verified Course Sequence (VCS) program; completion of the program meets one of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board’s (BACB) requirements for credentialing as a Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA). The VCS follows the BACB’s 5th edition task list for BCaBA coursework requirements. Per the 5th edition task list, the BACB requires that students receive 225 classroom hours of graduate level instruction in the following content areas:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Classroom Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BACB Compliance Code and Disciplinary Systems; Professionalism</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical Underpinnings; Concepts &amp; Principles</td>
<td>45 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Assessment</td>
<td>45 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data Display and Interpretations; Experimental Design</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior-Change Procedures; Selecting and Implementing Interventions</td>
<td>60 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Supervision and Management</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>225 hours</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACCREDITATION AND VERIFIED COURSE SEQUENCE**

Within the field of applied behavior analysis (ABA), credentialed practitioners at all levels are required to meet a set of standards developed by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). Although the standards differ across credentialing options (e.g., BCBA, BCaBA, RBT), completing specific coursework is a requirement for all credentials. Currently, the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) serves as the accreditation and approval body for all education programs and coursework in ABA. Their mission is to contribute to the well-being of society by developing, enhancing, and supporting the growth and vitality of the science of behavior analysis through research, education, and practice. ABAI’s primary objective in education is it recruit, train, and professionally develop behavior analysts. As is common in other disciplines, professional associations often oversee training programs within their discipline, and ABAI manages that verification of course sequences as part of its objective to foster high-quality education in behavior analysis.

Verified Course Sequence (VCS) status is granted once ABAI has verified the sequence of courses as meeting particular instructor and coursework standards in a college or university program offering behavior analytic instruction. Completion of a VCS meets the coursework requirement for applications for the BACB’s Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) credential. **ABAI has designated Mississippi State University’s ABA program as a VCS, meaning that our courses cover all of the required content to meet requirements for credentialing as a BCaBA.**

Please note that this does not mean you will receive your BCaBA upon completion of this undergraduate minor program, as the BACB requires not only completion of coursework in behavior analysis, but also completion of supervised field work and passing of the credentialing exam (https://www.bacb.com/bcba/). This minor does not include any practicum courses or opportunities for students to accumulate their field work hours. However, you may contact any of the ABA faculty members to discuss options for obtaining these hours independently.

**Contact information of accrediting and approval bodies:**
Association for Applied Behavior Analysis International (ABAI)
550 W. Centre Avenue
Portage, MI 49024
269-492-9310; abainternational.org
MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE ABA MINOR PROGRAM

The mission of the ABA programs at MSU is to prepare students to provide high quality behavior analytic services to a diverse population of individuals by offering excellent training, supervision, and research experiences.

More specifically, the mission of the ABA undergraduate minor program at MSU is for students to begin to acquire the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to demonstrate competency in applied behavior analysis, as demonstrated by their mastery of criteria outlined by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) in the 5th edition task list (https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/170113-BCBA-BCaBA-task-list-5th-ed-.pdf). Further, the mission of this program is to provide mentorship and guidance to undergraduate students regarding the incorporation of behavior analysis into their long-term career goals.

The ABA programs at MSU adhere to the scientist-practitioner model, where both faculty and students are expected to be (a) consumers of empirically-based practice, (b) evaluators of their own empirically-based practice, and (c) informed consumers and producers of research that contributes to the field of behavior analysis. While there are no specific research requirements for students in the program at this time, engagement in research at any capacity is encouraged and fostered by faculty in the ABA program.
The undergraduate minor in ABA is a 15-hour program that consists of 5 courses. Courses will typically be offered in the spring and fall semesters only.

Although not required for completion of the minor, it is strongly recommended that students enroll in EPY 4103, Behavior Analysis for Behavior Technicians. This course completes the requirements needed for individuals to sit for the Registered Behavior Technician (RBT; https://www.bacb.com/rbt/) exam and will allow them to pursue employment in the field of behavior analysis at the undergraduate level. This also allows students exposure to applications of the concepts and principles they will be learning about in their coursework. Further, employment as a RBT allows students to earn field work hours necessary for credentialing as a BCaBA.

The courses offered in the minor are intended to be taken in a sequential order, as the later courses build on content covered in the earlier courses. For example, students should take EPY 4113 before taking EPY 4223, EPY 4443, and EPY 4493. The course offerings each semester follow these recommendations.

Undergraduate Minor in Applied Behavior Analysis (15 HOURS)
Beginning Fall 2020

Applied Behavior Analysis Concentration (15 hours)
EPY 4103 Behavior Analysis for Behavior Technicians*
EPY 4113 Principles of Behavior Analysis
EPY 4223 Applications of Behavior Analysis
EPY 4443 Basics of Single Subject Design Research
EPY 4493 Behavior Assessment
EPY 4603 Ethics and Supervision in Behavior Analysis

*Course not required for completion of minor but is strongly recommended
Undergraduate Minor in ABA - Typical Course Offering Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BACB Compliance Code and Disciplinary Systems;</td>
<td>EPY 4603: Ethics and Supervision in Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical Underpinnings; Concepts &amp; Principles</td>
<td>EPY 4113: Principles of ABA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data Display and Interpretation;</td>
<td>EPY 4443: Basics of Single Subject Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Design</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Assessment</td>
<td>EPY 4493: Behavior Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior-Change Procedures; Selecting and</td>
<td>EPY 4113: Principles of ABA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Interventions</td>
<td>EPY 4223: Applications of ABA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Supervision and Management</td>
<td>EPY 4603: Ethics and Supervision in Behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Undergraduate Minor in ABA - Typical Course Offering Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EPY 4113: Principles of ABA</td>
<td>EPY 4223: Applications of ABA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPY 4603: Ethics and Supervision in Behavior</td>
<td>EPY 4443: Basics of Single Subject Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPY 4103: Behavior Analysis for Behavior</td>
<td>EPY 4493: Behavior Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DECLARING A MINOR IN ABA**

If you are interested in the ABA minor, please notify your advisor and complete the “ABA Minor Declaration” form (located at the end of this document). As a VCS program, the VCS coordinator is required to maintain a record of students enrolled in the minor program. Completion of this form serves as that documentation. The form should be emailed to Dr. Hallie Smith (hms238@msstate.edu), the VCS Coordinator.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is applied behavior analysis?
Applied behavior analysis (ABA) is the science of applying the principles of learning to change socially significant behavior. This basically means that we use principles of learning to change behavior that matters. We can use ABA to increase academic skills, communication skills, and functional life skills; we can also use ABA to decrease inappropriate or problematic behaviors that may be negatively impacting a person.

Do I need to have experience in behavior analysis to take courses in this minor?
No previous experience is necessary.

How many courses will I be expected to take each semester?
You can take courses as you are able each semester, we have standard course offerings in the fall and the spring, meaning that not every course is offered every semester, so make sure to look and plan ahead if you are interested in completing all courses required for the minor.

Can I take some of these courses even if I don’t have time in my schedule to take all of them and complete the minor?
Absolutely!

Can I sit for the BCaBA exam after completing this program?
After completing the coursework and the minor, you will have completed all the required coursework to make you eligible to take the exam (https://www.abainternational.org/vcs.aspx). However, in order to sit for the BCaBA exam, you will also need to have accrued all the required experience and supervision hours.