
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND CONTENT

The Master of Science (M.S.) in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is designed to prepare graduates to address socially important problems that are primarily the result of human behavior. In this respect, the ABA master's does not represent a field of study (e.g., education, psychology, medicine or business), rather a discipline that can be applied in any number of fields. Many of the problems we as a people face each day are the result of human behavior – what better solution than the science of human behavior to solve these problems? Students who successfully complete the program will possess the skills and abilities of an emerging expert in ABA. The degree requirements are derived in part from the Behavior Analysis Certification Board. Students who successfully complete this program will be eligible to sit for the board examination. Additionally, this degree program will explore areas of behavior analysis that go beyond the board requirements.

The ABA master's program is 38-credits and will take at least two years to complete. As part of the core requirements, students will complete an intensive practicum, research thesis, as well as non-credit requirements. The course sequence is predicated on the belief that an in-depth understanding of applied behavioral technology, experimental analysis, methodology and behavioral philosophy are requisite skills of a competent behavior analyst.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

CREDIT

EDSP 502	Single-Case Methodology
EDSP 536	Ethics and Legal Practices
EDSP 640	Principles of Behavior Analysis I
EDSP 650	Functional Behavior Assessment and Intervention Development
EDSP 672	Intensive Practicum Experience
MABA 510	Science and Behaviorism
MABA 520	Special Topics in Applied Behavior Analysis,
MABA 550	Principles of Behavior Analysis II,
MABA 560	Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis and Complex Behavior
MABA 655	Applied Behavior Analysis Practice and Extensions
MABA 690	Special Topics Independent Study, 1 credit
MABA 699	Applied Behavior Analysis Research Thesis

NON-CREDIT

Successful completion of comprehensive general examination.

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS COURSE DESCRIPTION

EDSP 502

Single-Case Methodology 3 credits

"A scientist may not be sure of the answer, but he's often sure he can find one" (Skinner, 1948). To become a savvy researcher or consumer of scientific information, one must understand and critically analyze research methodology. This course will examine the multiple facets of behavioral research and single-case design. Students will learn to conduct single-case design research and critically evaluate published behavioral research. Special emphasis will be placed on the analysis, strategies, tactics, and application of single-case experimental research methodologies (within, between, and combined series designs) related to research-based educational and clinical practices. Finally, the ethical implications of the aforementioned areas will be discussed throughout the course.

EDSP 536

Ethics and Legal Practices 3 credits

The ultimate goal of the behavior analyst or teacher is to change socially important behavior to some meaningful degree. As the procedures available to achieve this goal are seemingly limitless, one must use a set of values or ethics to determine which practices are acceptable and which are not. Furthermore, behavior analysts and teachers are often presented with situations that require decisions to be made based on social values or ethical principles. This course is designed to expose candidates to the legal and ethical issues that influence practice. Each week, a different legal or ethical issue will be discussed in this seminar-based course. Candidates who successfully complete this course will gain experience with the laws and ethics that govern practice.

EDSP 640

Principles of Behavior Analysis I 3 credits

This course provides an introduction to the basic principles of behavior, according to both operant and respondent conditioning paradigms. The learner will be provided with an examination of the guiding principles of Applied Behavior Analysis, as described by Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968), and developed through a body of research spanning half a century. Specifically, the learner will identify the basic dimensions of human behavior, the environmental factors involved in operant conditioning, and the tools and techniques developed to measure, record, and analyze resulting data. An underlying context for this course's content will be the application of discussed concepts to treatment for individuals with developmental disabilities, including autism. Additionally, the learner will identify developments which are historically significant to the establishment of a scientific and empirical approach to human behavior.

EDSP 650**Functional Behavior Assessment and Intervention Development
3 credits**

This course will give students a comprehensive overview of functional behavior assessment and intervention development. Behavior analysts are often tasked with developing interventions designed to change challenging behavior. Interventions based on a thorough assessment of behavior often yield the best outcomes. To this end, students will be exposed to a variety of non-experimental and experimental functional behavior assessment methodologies. Students will be taught how to select, develop, and implement functional behavior assessments. Students will also learn how to develop interventions based on the results and findings of a functional behavior assessment.

EDSP 672**Intensive Practicum Experience
9 credits**

The Intensive Practicum is designed to further establish, and ultimately solidify a link between research-theory and application-practice within the field of applied behavior analysis. More specifically, this Practicum requires graduate students the opportunity to (a) determine individual student learning differences through curriculum prioritization and assessment, (b) plan, integrate, and implement individual, small group, and collaborative assessment-driven instruction, (c) develop class-wide and individual management protocols designed to explore the functionality of behavior within the context of the school environment, (d) develop problem solving strategies to enhance the educational experience, and (e) establish leadership, dialog, and critical analysis in the field of behavior analysis.

MABA 510**Science and Behaviorism
3 credits**

"Applied behavior analysis can be fully understood only in the context of the philosophy and basic research traditions and findings from which it evolved and remains connected today" (Cooper, Heron, and Heward, 2007). This seminar course will provide students with the theoretical, conceptual, and scientific foundation of Applied behavior analysis (ABA). Students will contact seminal works by Skinner

as well as other influential behaviorists. These works will be discussed in context with current behavior analytic practice, technologies, and methodologies.

MABA 520**Special Topics in Applied Behavior Analysis
3 credits**

As a science, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is an ever changing, ever evolving discipline. This seminar course will provide students with an overview of various special topics within ABA (e.g., behavioral economics). These topics will cover recent findings of significance, translational research, technological advancements, and methodology advancements. Each week, students will contact readings related to a topic, these topics will be discussed in class, as will the implication for applied practice.

MABA 550**Principles of Behavior Analysis II
3 credits**

The Experimental Analysis of Behavior (EAB) provides the technological foundation for Applied Behavior Analysis. This course is predicated on the belief that a thorough understanding of EAB technologies, methods, and findings will benefit the applied practitioner. Students will contact historically relevant research as well as recent research within EAB; the implications of these findings will be discussed in terms of applied practice.

MABA 560**Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis and Complex Behavior
3 credits**

Radical behaviorism attempts to understand all human behavior, including private events, in terms of ontogeny and phylogeny (Cooper, Heron, and Heward, 2007). This course will examine complex behaviors, including Skinner's analysis of verbal behavior. Oftentimes, developing interventions for complex behaviors requires special consideration. Students will learn to analyze and describe complex behavior in behavioral terms. Finally, students will learn to develop behavioral programs to change complex behavior, when applicable.

MABA 655**Applied Behavior Analysis Practice and Extensions
2 credits**

As a discipline, behavior analysis is used to address a wide range of socially important problems. This seminar course will survey different areas of application and recent advancements within Applied Behavior Analysis. Students will apply skills developed in other courses to create hypothetical interventions to address a variety of novel problems.

MABA 690**Special Topics Independent Study
1 credit**

This course is designed to give students the opportunity to further explore a specific area of interest with Applied Behavior Analysis. Students will work with an advisor to select a topic, gather research, and conduct a critical analysis. The product of this course will be in-depth literature review, which will service as the foundation for the Applied Behavior Analysis Research Thesis (MABA 699).

MABA 699**Applied Behavior Analysis Research Thesis
2 credits**

The thesis represents the culmination of a student's scholarly work. A successful thesis includes application, synthesis, and critical evaluation. This final project should establish a scholarly position that advances the discipline of Applied Behavior Analysis. Students will work with a faculty advisor when completing this degree requirement.