



**NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM**

**Sponsoring Institution(s):** Southeast Missouri State University

**Program Title:** Masters of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis

**Degree/Certificate:** Masters of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis

**Options:**

**Delivery Site(s):** Online

**CIP Classification:** 42.2814

**Title:** Applied Behavior Analysis.

**Definition:** A program that focuses on the application of principles of learning and behavior to enhance the development, abilities, and choices of children and adults; and that prepares individuals to address the behavioral needs of individuals, especially those with developmental disabilities and autism. Includes instruction in behavior analysis and learning, behavioral and functional assessment, developmental psychology, applied behavioral analysis in developmental disabilities and autism, applied behavioral analysis in mental health and aging, research methods, evaluation of interventions, and professional and ethical issues.

\*CIP code can be cross-referenced with programs offered in your region on MDHE's program inventory [higher.mo.gov/ProgramInventory/search.jsp](http://higher.mo.gov/ProgramInventory/search.jsp)

**Implementation Date:** Fall 2015

**Cooperative Partners:**

\*If this is a collaborative program, form CL must be included with this proposal

**AUTHORIZATION:**

Dr. William R. Eddleman, Provost	<i>William R. Eddleman</i>	<u>5-18-15</u>
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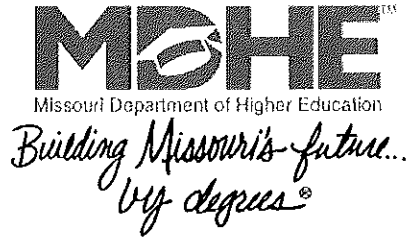
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## STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Year	1	2	3	4	5
Full Time	0	0	0	0	0
Part Time	10	15	15	15	15
Total*	10	25 (Y1 + Y2)	30 (Y2 + Y3)	30 (Y3 + Y4)	30 (Y4 + Y5)

\* The program is designed to complete in a 2-year (6-semester) time frame with all students enrolled from 6-7 credits per semester. With current resources, new students will only be able to enroll in the Fall semesters. The “core” sequence of courses (16 credit hours) will be open for undergraduate students which is likely to increase the number of students enrolled in each of the 500 level courses that make up a portion of the courses in the ABA Master’s Program.

**Please provide a rationale regarding how student enrollment projections were calculated:**

The Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Master’s Program is designed for students who will be employed at least part-time throughout during their enrollment. In the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 semesters, a total of 23 students enrolled in the introductory ABA course (Currently CF 531, soon to be AB 531). Of these students, 4 have already moved forward to the second ABA course (Currently CF 532, soon to be AB 532), and 7 students are planning on completing the ABA Master’s Degree. Additionally, more than 15 students have contacted Dr. Severtson, expressing interest in earning a Master’s Degree in ABA, and of those 15, 6 have either begun the admissions process or have been admitted to the Graduate College, and 4 additional prospective students have indicated that they are planning applying before the end of the Spring 2015 semester. At this time, no strategic marketing for the ABA Master’s program has been completed, yet prospective students are discovering the courses through word of mouth or have contacted the University regarding their own interest without knowledge of the pending ABA Master’s program.

The Behavior Analyst Certification Board reports the pass rates for the BCBA exam for each university with a BACB approved course sequence. This report provides information about the location of the program, the number of first-time candidates who sat for the exam, and the pass rate for that year. This information also provides some indication of the number of students who have completed each program. In the most recent report, data were reported for the following universities which had both distance and campus ABA programs: Ball State University, Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Florida Institute of Technology, Southern Illinois State University (Carbondale), and the University of North Texas. The chart below demonstrates that 3 of the 4 of these universities had more students complete their distance BACB-approved course sequence than their on-campus programs.

University	Number of First-Time Candidates in 2013 (BACB, 2013)	
	Campus	Distance
Chicago School of Professional Psychology	20	34
Florida Institute of Technology	29	566
Southern Illinois University – Carbondale	29	25
University of North Texas	12	172

Many online ABA programs primarily provide the coursework required to sit for the BACB National Certification Exam; however, a much smaller number of online programs provide supervision for the full amount of required supervised fieldwork hours. The online ABA Master's Program provided through Southeast Missouri State University is likely to be competitive with other online ABA programs because it will (a) be high-quality because in time, all of the courses will be meet internal Quality Matters review standards, (b) be low-cost for many students, particularly Missouri students, and (c) provide supervision for the full amount of required fieldwork hours, making all students who complete the program eligible to sit for the national certification exam.

**Provide a rationale for proposing this program, including evidence of market demand and societal need supported by research:**

According to the 2015 Insurance for Autism Treatment and Applied Behavior Analysis issued by the Missouri Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions & Professional Registration (DIFP), the number of Licensed Behavior Analysts (LBAs) and Assistant Behavior Analysts (LABAs) grew from 137 to 288 in 2015, which is an increase of 110%. The number of individuals diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder who are receiving ABA services covered by their insurance plans is 3,825, which is up from 2,508 in 2012, an increase of 53% in 3 years (DIFP, 2015). This does not include the number of children diagnosed with an ASD or another Developmental Disability who are receiving ABA services that are covered by other funding sources (e.g., Medicaid Waivers). Additionally, in July 2014, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that it now advises state agencies to cover medically necessary treatments for children and young adults with ASD, which includes ABA treatments. Although coverage will vary from state to state, this announcement is likely an indication of expanding funding options for individuals with ASD nationwide. With 1 in 68 children having a diagnosis of ASD and 1 in 6 having a developmental disability (CDC,2015), the need for ABA services from highly trained clinicians is likely to rise.

The Behavior Analyst Certification Board requires the training and experience for students to become eligible to sit for the BCBA Examination (BACB, 2012):

- **270 classroom hours of graduate-level instruction in the following areas (BACB, 2012):**
  - Ethical and Professional Conduct: 45 hours
  - Concepts and Principles of Behavior Analysis: 45 hours
  - Research Methods in Behavior Analysis
    - Measurement: 25 hours
    - Experimental Design: 20 hours
  - Applied Behavior Analysis
    - Fundamental Elements of Behavior Change & Specific Behavior Change Procedures: 45 hours
    - Identification of the Problem & Assessment: 30 hours
    - Intervention & Behavior Change Considerations : 10 hours
    - Behavior Change Systems: 10 hours

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- Implementation, Management and Supervision: 10 hours
  - Discretionary: 30 hours
- **Supervised Fieldwork Hours in at least one of these categories (BACB, 2014)**
  - Supervised Independent Fieldwork: 1500 hours
  - University Practicum: 1000 hours
  - University Intensive Practicum: 750 hours
- **Master's Degree from an accredited university in one of the following areas:**
  - Behavior analysis
  - Education
  - Psychology
  - OR conferred in a degree program in which the candidate completed a BACB approved course sequence

A student completing a ABA Master's Degree Program at Southeast Missouri State University will meet all of these requirements.



**PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

A. Total credits required for graduation: 42

B. Residency requirements, if any: None

C. General education: Total credits: None

Courses (specific courses OR distribution area and credits):

Course Number	Credits	Course Title

D. Major requirements: Total credits: 39

Course Number	Credits	Course Title
AB 531	3	Basic Principles in Applied Behavior Analysis
AB 532	3	Methods for Studying the Behavior of Individuals
AB 533	3	ABA I: Skill Acquisition and Assessment
AB 534	3	ABA II: Function Based Assessment and Treatment of Challenging
AB 535	3	Special Topics in Applied Behavior Analysis
AB 601	3	Conceptual Topics in Behavior Analysis
AB 603	1	Intro Ethics and Professional Conduct in Applied Behavior Analysis
AB 604	1	Advanced Professional and Ethical Conduct of Behavior Analysts-I
AB 605	6	Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – I
AB 606	1	Advanced Professional and Ethical Conduct of Behavior Analysts – II
AB 607	6	Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – II
AB 608	6	Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – III
GR 698	0	Master's Final Comprehensive Examination

E. Free elective credits: (Sum of C, D, and E should equal A.): 3 credits

Students may select 1 of any of these courses to meet the requirement of 3 Credit Hours of Elective

- CE 614: Family and School Collaboration
- CF506 Theories and Issues in Child Development
- CF512 Family and Community Resources
- CF520 Family Assessment
- CF630 Advanced Family Systems
- DS618 Environmental Design in Human Services
- EX 507 Family and The Exceptional Child
- EX 555 Introductions to Autism
- EX 601 Education Assessment Technology
- EX 693 Special Education and the Law
- HE601 Sustainable Environments in Human Services
- PY 525 Maturing and Aging
- PY 555 Health Psychology

F. Requirements for thesis, internship or other capstone experience:

- AB 532 Methods for Studying the Behavior of Individuals
- AB 605 Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – I
- AB 607 Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – II
- AB 608 Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – III
- GR 698 Master’s Final Comprehensive Examination

G. Any unique features such as interdepartmental cooperation:

Students are required to take 1 elective from another area of study. Those options are listed in section E above.



## PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

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Institution Name      Southwest Missouri State University  
Program Name          Applied Behavior Analysis Master's Program  
Date                      March 8, 2015

(Although all of the following guidelines may not be applicable to the proposed program, please carefully consider the elements in each area and respond as completely as possible in the format below. Quantification of performance goals should be included wherever possible.)

### 1. Student Preparation

- Any special admissions procedures or student qualifications required for this program which exceed regular university admissions, standards, e.g., ACT score, completion of core curriculum, portfolio, personal interview, etc. Please note if no special preparation will be required.  
Cumulative Undergraduate GPA of 2.75
- Characteristics of a specific population to be served, if applicable.  
The courses are open to students who have completed a bachelor's degree in any major; however, most students will likely have majored in education or psychology.

### 2. Faculty Characteristics

- Any special requirements (degree status, training, etc.) for assignment of teaching for this degree/certificate.  
Coordinators of Approved Course Sequences must meet these BACB Requirements as of January 1, 2017:
  - Be employed full-time by the University
  - Hold a doctoral degree
  - Hold BCBA/BCBA-D certification

Instructors of any of the ABA courses meet the following BACB requirements:

1. Is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) or a Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral (BCBA-D)
2. Has a Doctorate and meets eligibility requirements for the Coursework Option (self-assessment).  
The applicant must complete 270 classroom hours of graduate level instruction in the BCBA content areas
3. Has a Doctorate and meets the eligibility requirements for the College Teaching Option (self-assessment). The applicant has completed a one-year, full-time faculty appointment at a college or university (as described in Section A above) during which the applicant: 1) taught classes on basic principles of behavior, single-subject research methods, applications of basic principles of behavior in

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applied settings, and ethical issues; and 2) conducted and published research in behavior analysis.

4. Is currently enrolled in a behavior-analytic Doctoral program at the applying university or a university with an BACB approved BCBA Course Sequence, and meets all program requirements except for the dissertation (Doctoral program status must be verified by a letter from the individual's major advisor or department chair).

- Estimated percentage of credit hours that will be assigned to full time faculty. Please use the term "full time faculty" (and not FTE) in your descriptions here.  
85% of credit hours will be assigned to full time faculty members
- Expectations for professional activities, special student contact, teaching/learning innovation.  
Faculty in this program are expected to do continued professional development activities relating to ASD, Developmental Disabilities, enhancing online instruction, and fieldwork supervision. Faculty will likely work collaboratively with the University Autism Center.

### **3. Enrollment Projections**

- Student FTE majoring in program by the end of five years.  
30 Part time students, taking 6-7 credit hours per semester, are expected to be majoring in the program by year 5. This includes students who began the program in year 4 (n=15), who complete the program at the end of year 5 and students who will begin the program in year 5 (n=15). This is the equivalent of 15 FTE students.
- Percent of full time and part time enrollment by the end of five years.  
0% Full time, 100% part-time in this Master's Program.

### **4. Student and Program Outcomes**

- Number of graduates per annum at three and five years after implementation.  
Year 3: 15 students will graduate  
Year 5: 15 students will graduate
- Special skills specific to the program.  
Students in this program will develop assessment and intervention skills in applied behavior analysis that will allow them to work with individuals with ASD and other developmental disabilities of all ages across a variety of settings. Students will also be prepared to provide training and support to parents, caregivers, staff, and educators.
- Proportion of students who will achieve licensing, certification, or registration.  
It is estimated that 80% of graduates will achieve national certification through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board soon after graduation. Of these students, those who stay in Missouri are also likely to achieve state licensing.

All of the students who complete the Masters of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis will be eligible to sit for the Behavior Analyst Certification Board Exam. Based on the pass-rates reported by the BACB for online ABA programs, it is expected that at least 50% of students who sit for the exam will pass the exam on their first attempt. No data are available for pass rates of

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second and third exam attempts, but it is estimated that another 30% of graduates will achieve national certification after taking the exam up to three times, bringing the total to 80%. In the state of Missouri, the licensing requirements are similar to requirements of the BCBA credential; therefore, individuals who are Board Certified Behavior Analysts typically meet the licensing requirements of the state of Missouri. Other states have different licensing regulations.

- Performance on national and/or local assessments, e.g., percent of students scoring above the 50th percentile on normed tests; percent of students achieving minimal cut-scores on criterion-referenced tests. Include expected results on assessments of general education and on exit assessments in a particular discipline as well as the name of any nationally recognized assessments used.

The nationally recognized assessment is the Behavior Analyst Certification Board exam. It is estimated that 80% of graduates from the program will pass the exam.

- Placement rates in related fields, in other fields, unemployed.  
Although the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2014) does not report specific statistics on Board Certified Behavior Analysts, the projected job growth for individuals in similar fields (e.g., Psychology) is 12% from 2012 to 2022.
- Transfer rates, continuous study.  
One or more courses of equivalent content may be accepted for transfer credit from an institution that has a BACB-Approved Course Sequence. The student must provide his/her advisor with a copy of the course syllabus and BACB content grid for that institution in order for the course(s) to be considered for transfer.

## 5. Program Accreditation

- Institutional plans for accreditation, if applicable, including accrediting agency and timeline. **If there are no plans to seek specialized accreditation, please provide a rationale.**

The ABA Master's Program includes a course sequence that has been designed to meet the requirements of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) for the BCBA and BCaBA credentials. Additionally, the practicum courses offered in the program were designed to meet the BACB's requirements for University Intensive Practicum. Dr. Severtson has already been appointed the BACB's Approved Sequence Coordinator for Southeast Missouri State University. The new ABA courses will be submitted for review by the BACB by the end of March 2015.

## 6. Alumni and Employer Survey

- Expected satisfaction rates for alumni, *including timing and method of surveys*.  
An alumni survey will be created and disseminated by the alumni office on an annual basis to survey the satisfaction of alumni. An 80% satisfaction rating is anticipated.
- Expected satisfaction rates for employers, including timing and method of surveys.  
The Department of Early, Elementary, and Special Education will use information gathered by the alumni office to identify the employers of recent alumni (up to 3 years after graduation). A survey will be created and distributed to those employers to determine their satisfaction with the employees that they have hired. An 80% satisfaction rating is anticipated.

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## 7. Institutional Characteristics

- Characteristics demonstrating why your institution is particularly well-equipped to support the program.  
Southeast Missouri State University has a history of providing Applied Behavior Analysis courses, and in fact was a BACB-Approved Provider for courses under the BACB Third Edition Task List. In 2013, a university ABA Task Force determined that there was enough student interest and community need to support the development of an ABA Master's Degree program.

### References

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