College of Education

Master of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis

Program Description:

The Masters of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis at Southeast Missouri State University is an online graduate degree that prepares students to become practitioners of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) who work with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other Neurodevelopmental Disabilities. This 42-credit graduate program includes 24 credit hours of course work and 18 credit hours of Practicum Experience (minimum of 750 clock hours). Our courses have been designed to meet the Fourth Edition Task List issued by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®). The program can be completed in 2 years, with students taking 6-7 credit hours each semester for 6 semesters (including summer). Most of the content courses are completed in the first year, which allows students to complete their fieldwork in their second year.

Why choose Southeast?


The online format allows students the flexibility to complete a rigorous course of study while working around their other obligations. This program offers real-time distance supervision in the format of an Intensive University Practicum. Students work with their Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) supervisor to select a University-Approved practicum site during the semester before their first practicum course, and then during their practicum, they meet with their BCBA supervisor 2-3 times per week for real-time client observations, 1:1 feedback sessions, and group supervision meetings. Students must be prepared to take the lead on identifying potential practicum sites if they live outside of Cape Girardeau, MO. Throughout their time in the program, students have regular contact with their advisors by phone, email, and video conferencing to ensure that they feel supported during the program. Southeast also provides students with access to online study modules and other tools to help prepare them to pass the BCBA Exam. Essentially, students can get everything that they need through Southeast Online to prepare them for their future careers as behavior analysts!
Curriculum:
We currently have a **cohort model**, so students will take classes with the same group of students throughout both years, helping to build a life-long behavior analytic community. Students may apply for admission for Summer or Fall; however, only electives are available during the first summer semester. ABA classes always begin in the fall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Semester Offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AB531</td>
<td>Basic Principles in Applied Behavior Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fall of Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB532</td>
<td>Methods for Studying the Behavior of Individuals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fall of Year 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>AB603</td>
<td>Intro to Ethics and Professional Conduct in Applied Behavior Analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fall of Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB533</td>
<td>ABA I: Skill Acquisition and Assessment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spring of Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB534</td>
<td>ABA II: Functional Assessment and Behavior Reduction</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spring of Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB535</td>
<td>Special Topics in Applied Behavior Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Summer of Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB601</td>
<td>Conceptual Topics in Behavior Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Summer of Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB604</td>
<td>Advanced Professional and Ethical Conduct of Behavior Analysts – I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fall of Year 2</td>
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<td>AB605</td>
<td>Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – I</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fall of Year 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>AB606</td>
<td>Advanced Professional and Ethical Conduct of Behavior Analysts – II</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>AB607</td>
<td>Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – II</td>
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<tr>
<td>AB608</td>
<td>Intensive Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis – III</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Summer of Year 2</td>
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<td>Approved Graduate Elective*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Any time*</td>
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<tr>
<td>GR698</td>
<td>Master’s Capstone Project</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Built in to practicum courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Electives for the MA in Applied Behavior Analysis Program**
Students may select 1 of any of these courses to meet the requirement of 3 Credit Hours of Elective. Many students choose to take their elective in the Summer BEFORE they begin their ABA courses.

- 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    Educational Assessment
- EX 693    Special Education and the Law
- HE601    Sustainable Environments in Human Services
- PY 525    Maturing and Aging
College of Education

Master of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis

PY 555 Health Psychology

If you are interested in taking a 500 or 600 level course that is not on this list, please contact Dr. Severtson for advising first. For a previous course to count as an elective, you must have taken the course as a graduate student. If you have taken a 500 level course as an undergraduate student, it will not count towards your degree.

Admission Requirements and the Application Process:

**Master’s Program:** Students can only apply for Summer or Fall admission to the program. Students who are admitted in the summer will take an elective course. Students admitted for Fall will be required to take the elective in a different semester. All students in a cohort will begin taking ABA courses together in the Fall, and they will take all of the same courses together. The deadline for applications is **February 1.** To be considered for the program, you must have:

- 3.0 Cumulative GPA
- Completion of a Baccalaureate Degree from a regionally accredited college or university

You must submit the following materials to the Office of Admissions along with a $30 non-refundable graduate application fee:

- Complete the application for Graduate Admissions
- Proof of citizenship
- Official college transcripts
- 2 letters of recommendation
- Personal Statement providing information on (a) why you are interested in Applied Behavior Analysis, (b) past experience working with individuals special needs and/or experience implementing ABA procedures, (c) location(s) in your area that you are considering for a practicum site, and (d) why you think you will be successful in an online program

All applications will be reviewed following the February 1 deadline, and only complete application packets will be considered.

**Domestic Student Applications:**
Apply online or by mail by completing the appropriate forms found here: [http://www.semo.edu/gradschool/apply.html](http://www.semo.edu/gradschool/apply.html).

**International Students:**
Contact the ABA Program Coordinator, Dr. Jamie Severtson, BCBA-D, LBA (jsevertson@semo.edu or 573-651-2122) for more information about applying to the Master’s of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis program. International students completing online degree programs do not qualify for an I-20 to secure a US Visa. To apply, international students must download our combined application and checklist here: [http://www.semo.edu/pdf/IES_IntlApplication.pdf](http://www.semo.edu/pdf/IES_IntlApplication.pdf). Applicants must mail in the application with
all required documents directly to the Office of International Education Services at Southeast Missouri State University. Online submissions are not available at this time.

International Admissions
Office of International Education and Services
Southeast Missouri State University
One University Plaza, MS2000
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Are your courses approved by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) ®?
   Yes, for both BCBA and BCaBA course sequences. For more information about BACB approved university training programs, go to: http://info.bacb.com/o.php?page=100358

2. What technology is required?
   - Reliable internet connection and DAILY access to internet (including at your practicum site)
   - Computer or laptop – recommendations provided http://www.semo.edu/it/helpdesk/comprecommendations.html
   - Microsoft Office Software
   - Webcam
   - Headphones/earbuds
   - Microphone
   - iPad (for practicum supervision only)
   - Wireless earbuds/mic for iPad (for practicum supervision only)
   - Other technology may be required for certain courses

3. How much will this program cost?

   **Tuition and Fees**
   Beginning Fall 2016, Southeast Missouri State University has a single per-credit fee of $325 regardless of residency, making online programs more affordable for out-of-state students! All students must also register for GR698 when they complete their master’s project, which has a $100 fee. The approximate cost for two years in the program is $13,750 (other fees may apply and rates are subject to change). For more information about tuition and fees go to: http://www.semo.edu/sfs/fee-schedule.html

   **Cost of Books:**
   The cost of textbooks vary from course to course. For all 500 level courses, one text book per course can be rented. If a course requires 2 textbooks, then one can be rented and the
other purchased. Here is the information about textbook rentals:
http://www.semo.edu/textbookrental/rent/index.html. The rental fee for a graduate
textbook in a 500 level course is $25.94 per course. Textbooks cannot be rented for 600+
courses, so those books must be purchased through the bookstore or online. Rental
textbooks can be shipped to online students; however students will incur the cost of
shipping to receive and return the books. Information about shipping fees can be found at
http://www.semo.edu/textbookrental/rent/shipping.html

**Required Technology:**
Costs for the required technology vary. Students are required to use Microsoft Office
Software (e.g., Word, PowerPoint, Excel). Microsoft Office is now available FOR FREE to
Southeast students, staff, & faculty! http://www.semo.edu/it/pdf/Office365PC.pdf
Additionally, students are required to video record themselves giving presentations and
engage in online discussion groups, so a webcam, headphones/earbuds, and a microphone
are required. All distance students are required to have an iPad during their practicum
semesters. iPads can be rented from the university or purchased individually. A protective
case and stand or swivel are also recommended to protect your equipment and to ensure
that your supervision is not interrupted. During the practicum, students will likely need
wireless earbuds and mic for the purposes of supervision. Students will need reliable
internet access for this course, including in their practicum sites. If your practicum site does
not have internet access then students are responsible for fees associated with using
Facetime for supervision. All students enrolled in a practicum must purchase Professional
Liability Insurance, and provide proof of the insurance prior to enrollment in the course.
Failure to do so will result in being dropped from the course. Student members of the
Association of Professional Behavior Analysts (APBA) enjoy the benefits of low-cost
Professional Liability Insurance. The APBA membership rate is $33 per year, and the
Professional Liability Insurance by CPH and Associates costs about $15 per year for
students. For more information, you can visit www.apbahome.net. Some practicum sites
are now requiring that students become Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) in order to
qualify. If this is the case at your practicum site, students are responsible for the expense of
becoming RBT certified.

4. Can I transfer in ABA courses from other universities?
Transfer credit is considered on a case-by-case basis only after students are accepted into the
program. Courses that are taken at the undergraduate level will not be considered. It is rare that a
course from another university can be “swapped” out for one of our courses. Even though every
BACB-approved course sequence must cover the same content areas, each university determines
how the content will be distributed across courses. Even if a course is accepted as a transfer, it is up
to the student to provide information to the BACB® about the course at the time they apply to sit
for the exam. The safest way to ensure that you are eligible to sit for the exam is to take the all of
the courses offered in this ABA program in the sequence noted above. Some of the students who
have taken courses at other institutions and have taken similar courses in this program were
surprised by the differences in the courses, even though some of the content was similar. The
courses in this program are designed to build on one another, so if you do not take one course, you may find that your performance in a subsequent course suffers.

5. Is financial aid available for this program of study?
For domestic students, the simple answer is “yes”, but you should contact the financial aid office regarding your specific circumstances. The contact information for Student Financial Services can be found at: http://www.semo.edu/sfs/

6. What is the cost of sitting for the BCBA© or BCaBA© exams for certification after I complete my degree?
The cost of the exam is $125.00. For information about the Exam Fee, go to http://bacb.com/exam-dates/. For other information about the exam, go to: http://bacb.com/examination-information/.

7. Will this degree allow for me to continue on to receive a Ph.D. in the future?
Most doctoral programs will expect you to have conducted original research for your thesis in order for you to be considered for admittance. This program does not require a research-based thesis; however, if this your desire, you should speak with your advisor about conducting a research project for your GR698 requirement. If you do not live near Cape Girardeau, MO, conducting research may not be possible unless you have other supports in place.

8. By completing this degree and becoming certified, what jobs are likely available for me and what kind of salary should I expect?

Burning Glass Report 2014
The October 2015 BACB© Newsletter, provided a link to a report called the US Behavior Analyst Workforce: Understanding the National Demand for Behavior Analysts produced by Burning Glass Technologies on behalf of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board. This report summarizes:
- The increase in demand for credentialed behavior analysts from 1,414 job postings in 2012 to 3,083 job postings in 2014 with the demand increasing in nearly every state
- 85% of job postings fall into Health Care, Education Services, or Social Assistance Industries, and these are defined in the report.
To read this report, go to: http://bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/151009-burning-glass-report.pdf

Association for Professional Behavior Analysts
In June 2015, the Association for Professional Behavior Analysts (APBA) published a report based on a survey to both members and nonmembers. The report provides information about:
- Various credentials held by respondents (80% were BCBA)
- Employment Status (80% of BCBA respondents were employed full time)
- Type of work by credential (just over 50% of BCBA provide direct ABA services, 35% of BCBA conduct administrative work directly related to ABA services)
- Areas of work (The majority of respondents work with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders or other Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities and/or in Education. Other
individuals were employed in myriad positions such as parent training, behavioral pediatrics, child welfare, and brain injury rehabilitation to name a few)
- Annual Income for Full Time BCBAs, BCaBAs, and BCBA-Ds (~25% of BCBAs are earning $45,000-$65,000 and 30.8% are earning more than $75,000).

If you would like this report to be emailed to you, you can contact Dr. Severtson at jsevertson@semo.edu

9. What are the fieldwork requirements like for this program? If I’m currently working in a clinical or educational setting, can I do my fieldwork where I work?

Students are required to take 3 semesters (Fall, Spring, Summer) of a 6-credit hour Intensive University Practicum. The goal is for students to cumulate at least 750 fieldwork hours over the course of those three semesters. Each practicum site must be approved by BOTH Southeast Missouri State University and the Behavior Analyst Certification Board. Students must work with their advisor early on to identify one or more appropriate fieldwork sites. Whether your current place of employment will qualify as a site depends upon several variables including but not limited to:

(a) willingness to allow faculty to remotely observe students working with clients (via FaceTime),
(b) opportunity for students to do both direct (e.g., discrete trial training, implementing behavior plans) and indirect ABA activities (e.g., writing behavior intervention plans, collecting and graphing data, staff training),
(c) flexibility in your schedule to allow for WEEKLY 1:1 meeting with faculty supervisor and group supervision meetings.

Students must accrue at least 18 hours per week and receive at least 2-3 hours of supervision across 2 contacts with a faculty advisor per week. Each student must be observed working with a client every week. Faculty will observe the student in real-time, even if observing remotely, which is why students are required to have iPads during the practicum courses. If real-time observations are not possible, then another practicum site must be considered. Although the BACB® permits video observations, the preference and standard for this program is for real-time observation followed by 1:1 feedback. Group supervision will be conducted in groups of no more than 10 students using video conferencing technology. **YOU MUST HAVE A FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE DURING YOUR PRACTICUM YEAR!**

Prerequisite Training & Paperwork:
- Students must complete the BACB® 90-minute Supervision and Experience Training Module and submit proof of completion before enrolling in the course.
- Additionally, each student must arrange to meet with the instructor/BCBA supervisor prior to enrollment to review and sign the Practicum Supervision Contract. Both the training module and the contract are required by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board in order for practicum hours to count towards the BACB certification requirements.
- Remote students must obtain approval of a practicum site one full semester before enrolling in the practicum.
Students must provide documentation of Professional Liability Insurance prior to the start of the semester.

Even if your practicum site employs Board Certified Behavior Analysts, students will receive their required supervision from Faculty or Staff employed by Southeast Missouri State University to ensure that each student receives a quality and consistent supervision experience. Experience standards are set by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board®, and you can find more information about those here: http://bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/150824-experience-standards-english.pdf

10. How much time should I expect to spend on my courses?
For content courses, expect to spend 3 hours per 1 credit hour during a regular 16-week semester. If you are enrolled in 6 credits during a normal semester, you will likely put in about 18 hours per week between reading, assignments, lecture videos, and studying. For more information, watch this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK-F_i6yDQI. Only serious students willing to invest time and energy into the program should apply.

11. I live in Southeast Missouri. What practicum sites are available?
The Southeast Missouri State University Autism Center is a fantastic practicum site for students. Not every local ABA student is guaranteed a spot at this practicum site, but this is one option to consider. We are in the process of working local schools and other agencies to set up practicum sites with various populations and age groups.

12. Will I be able to work full time while I’m in this program?
Some students are able to work full time during their first year, but many of them have struggled to keep up with their courses. Because of the nature of the program, if you drop or fail a class, it is unlikely that you will be allowed to move forward until you retake that course, which will not be available until the following year. In the second year of the program, working full time may be quite challenging because you will have typically have 3 weekly appointments with your faculty supervisor: one to be observed working with a client, one to receive 1:1 feedback, and one for group supervision. These meetings are not optional, and if you cannot make your schedule work, then you will not be able to pass the practicum. For these reason, full time employment is not recommended.

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*BACB® Experience Standards*
*©BACB® Course Requirements for the BACB Credential*
*©BACB® Fourth Edition Task List*
*iStudents are required to take 1, 3-credit elective graduate course, which can be taken during any semester OR the or Summer before students begin their ABA coursework.
*Students enrolled in AB 605 and AB 607, the first two intensive practicum courses, will be required to concurrently enroll in AB 604 and AB 606, which are both 1-credit ethics courses.