

Department of Psychology

Master's Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

I. Mission Statement

The mission of the ABA Master of Arts in Psychology is to provide comprehensive education and training in Applied Behavior Analysis, as well as an appreciation for research, theory, and practice in Behavior Analysis, and Psychology more broadly.

II. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

The Goals and Student Learning Outcomes for the Applied Behavior Analysis Master's degree program are related to the overall goals of the Psychology department but also have goals and outcomes specific to the field of study.

**GOALS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS IN APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS**

Goal 1: Theory and Content in Psychology. Students can demonstrate conceptual mastery of an area of emphasis in depth.

Student learning outcomes:

1. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of theory and research in the following areas related to the field of Applied Behavior Analysis: philosophical underpinnings, concepts and principles, measurement, data display, and interpretation.

Goal 2: Methodology and Technology. Students can understand and be able to use major research methods and applied technologies in Applied Behavior Analysis., including design, data analysis, and evaluation.

Student learning outcomes:

1. Students can apply various research methodologies in research, including but not limited to, single-subject methodologies and designs.
2. Students can collect and analyze data accurately and reliably for research and applied purposes.
3. Students can explain Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB®) and APA guidelines for the ethical treatment of human research participants, clients in treatment, staff in

training, and other relevant populations, and can identify violations of these ethical codes.

Goal 3: Critical Thinking, Logic, and Problem Solving. Students can demonstrate the skills and attitudes of critical thinking and sound decision-making in course work, application, and independent work.

Student learning outcomes:

1. Students can evaluate the logic and data of research, compare perspectives, theories, assumptions, and facts, and develop hypotheses based on the research literature.
2. Students can evaluate research findings and their application to socially relevant behavior change.

Goal 4: Communication Skills. Students can write clearly and effectively and can display effective oral communication skills.

Student learning outcomes:

1. Students can produce well-organized papers and essays without grammatical errors, utilizing APA format.
2. Students can compose and deliver oral presentations on a variety of topics in Applied Behavior Analysis to various audiences in a group setting.

Goal 5: Diversity and Awareness. Students can demonstrate appreciation of diverse perspectives.

Student learning outcomes:

1. Students can show an understanding of, respect for, and responsiveness to cultural and individual differences by describing the perspectives of those of other ages, abilities, gender, or ethnicities.
2. Students can listen to and discuss perspectives on psychology with others regardless of similarity or diversity of personality characteristics or professional experience and orientation.

III. Curriculum Map (Matrix of Courses X Student Learning Outcomes)

PSYCH221	Advanced Learning and Human Behavior
PSYCH223	Verbal Behavior
PSYCH231	Ethics and Philosophy in Behavior Analysis
PSYCH244A	Measurement, Research Methods, and Statistics
PSYCH245	Research Methods in Behavior Analysis
PSYCH268	Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis
PSYCH271	Community Interventions and Support
PSYCH288	Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis
PSYCH289	Functional Assessment and Intervention
PSYCH299	Thesis

Students also complete two elective classes that are approved by their advisor and the program coordinator as relevant to their specific area of study.

The table that follows was created based on a review of syllabi and faculty reports of how their courses, as the courses currently exist, map on to the objectives: I = Introduced; R = Reinforced; A = Advanced

	1.1	2.1	2.2	2.3	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	5.1	5.2
PSY 221	A				A	A	A	A		
PSY 223	A				A	A	A	A		
PSY 231	I			I		I	I	I	I	I
PSY 244A		I	I		I	I	I			
PSY 245	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
PSY 268	R		R	R		R		R	A	A
PSY 271	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	
PSY 288	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
PSY 289	R	A	R		A	A				R
PSY 299	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		

IV. Assessment Methods

Direct Measures:

1. **Embedded Questions (Psych 244A):** Embedded questions in the final course exam are used to assess knowledge of data analysis, data interpretation, and presentation of data in an APA table. **Although no specific standards are set, it is generally expected that students will obtain at least 75% correct.**
2. **Graduate Writing Assessment (Psych 244A):** All graduate students in the department are given the same article to read, and during class time, they must write an 850-word critique. Critiques are anonymously evaluated by at least two members of the Psychology Department Graduate Committee with respect to content, writing mechanics, and clarity and coherence. **Students are expected to score at least 24 out of a possible 30.**
3. **Thesis Rubric:** All theses are evaluated by the committee members. The rubric asks raters to rank the various components (i.e., Introduction, Literature Review, Method, etc.) on a 4-point scale (1 = Inadequate; 2 = Adequate; 3 = Good; 4 = Excellent). **The standard is all theses will be rated with a mean of 3.0 or better.**
4. **Board Certification Mock Exam:** Every year a mock BCBA® exam will be administered to students at the end of their last semester of classes. This exam is provided by Behavior Development Solutions, the most commonly used preparation software for the BCBA exam and research has shown that success on this exam predicts success on the BCBA exam. The exam consists of 150 randomly selected multiple-choice questions, provided via an online system, to be taken in class. **The goal is that students will achieve at least 90% on the exam.**

Indirect Measure(s):

1. **BCBA Supervisor Review:** Supervising Behavior Analysts review our students on an ongoing basis each semester of practicum. This review covers a number of professional and clinical skills across 30 items. **During the final semester of practicum, it is expected that students will achieve a review 95% or better.**
2. **Exit survey:** This is administered to graduating students each spring to assess their experience and evaluation of the graduate program immediately upon completion. The information obtained is used for future curricular planning. **The goal is that they “agree” to “strongly agree” with the statement presented regarding their graduate school experience.**
3. **Alumni Evaluation Survey:** This is administered every three years to assess the strengths and needs of the program, specifically the views of alumni on how the program prepared them for their current profession. The information obtained is used for future curricular planning. **The goal is “good” to “excellent” preparation.**

4. **Employer Evaluation Survey:** This is administered every three years to assess the strengths and needs of the program, specifically the views of employers on how the program prepared their employees for their current position. The information obtained is used for future curricular planning. **The goal is “good” to “excellent” preparation.**
5. **Doctoral Advisor Evaluation Survey:** This is administered every three years to assess the strengths and needs of the program, specifically the views of doctoral advisors on how the program students for doctoral students in the area of Behavior Analysis or related field. The information obtained is used for future curricular planning. **The goal is “good” to “excellent” preparation.**

V. Student Learning Outcomes X Assessment Methods Matrix
 Below is a table of Student Learning Outcomes X Assessment Method Matrix

	1.1	2.1	2.2	2.3	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	5.1	5.2
A. Direct Measures										
1.		X					X			
2.					X		X			
3.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
4.	X	X		X		X			X	X
B. Indirect Measures										
1.	X		X	X		X			X	X
2.	X	X	X	X			X		X	X
3.	X			X			X		X	X
4.	X			X				X	X	X
5.	X	X			X	X	X		X	X

VI. Timeline for Implementation of Assessment Methods and Summary Evaluations					
	'18- '19	'19- '20	'20- '21	'21- '22	'22- '23
Direct Measures					
1. Embedded Questions (Psych 244A)	X	X	X	X	X
2. Graduate Writing Assessment (Psych 244A)	X	X	X	X	X
3. Thesis Rubric	X	X	X	X	X
4. Board Certification Mock Exam	X	X	X	X	X
Indirect Measures					
1. BCBA Supervisor Review	X	X	X	X	X
2. Exit survey	X	X	X	X	X
3. Alumni Evaluation Survey			X		
4. Employer Evaluation Survey			X		
5. Doctoral Advisor Evaluation Survey			X		

VII. Process for Closing the Loop

Each Fall semester, the Graduate Coordinator will compile all assessment data available from the previous year (as indicated in the table above). These will be compiled into a document “ABA Program Student Outcomes and Assessment Report” and provided to the department chair and all ABA faculty. ABA faculty will review this report in a meeting where they will discuss the findings and suggest changes to the program/curriculum as needed. Any proposed changes will be presented to all faculty in the next monthly faculty meeting for approval, where other faculty may also suggest changes. Once in every 5-year cycle, all outcome measures will be presented to the entire department faculty for review and suggestions. Changes will be implemented as appropriate.

