

# APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

## Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Masters Degree Overview

Students seeking training to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) may enroll in the Master of Science degree in Applied Behavior Analysis. The program prepares students with training in the science of learning and behavior and the skills necessary to work as Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA). Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a scientific approach to the study of behavior. Behavior analysts work directly with individuals to improve their social, educational, health, adaptive skills, and behavioral outcomes through the development of programming based upon the principles of ABA. Behavior analysts are trained to describe behavior, explain, predict, and analyze the occurrence and non-occurrence of behavior in the context of the environment, and change behavior through the development of programming based on ABA strategies and tactics.

Through coursework firmly grounded in theory, with an emphasis on the application of theory to socially significant and effective practice, the M.S. in ABA program provides students with an excellent foundation to meet the proficiencies mandated by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (<https://www.bacb.com/>) (BACB). Students will be prepared to complete the required supervised field work and sit for the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) examination. Pass-Rate Data (<https://www.bacb.com/verified-course-sequences/>) are available at the BACB website. Pass-rate data are not published for sequences with fewer than six first-time candidates in a single year or for sequences within their first four years of operation.

BCBAs provide services within mental health, educational, and human services environments that may include collecting and analyzing data, writing and evaluating behavior intervention plans, training others to implement components of treatment plans, and overseeing the implementation of treatment plans. BCBAs are qualified to provide services to individuals with a variety of needs such as academic performance deficits, adaptive skill deficits (e.g., communication, self-care, and other functional skills), and problem behavior (e.g., aggression, self-injurious behavior), and social interactions. BCBAs also provide supervision to Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBA) and Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT).

## Admission Requirements

Students must submit the following items with their application.

The GRE is not required for admission to this program. The Office of International Affairs lists additional admission requirements for international students (<https://umdearborn.edu/admissions-aid/graduate-admissions/how-apply/>).

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution
- Official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended
- 3.0 GPA or higher on submitted transcripts
- Two professional letters of recommendation
- Personal statement

The university's academic policies for graduate students (<https://catalog.umd.umich.edu/academic-policies-graduate/>) apply.

## Program Requirements

The Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis is a 36 credit hour degree program. A minimum cumulative GPA of *B* (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) must be maintained to continue enrollment in the program. The program requires successful completion of the following courses:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
EDC 506	Applied Behavior Analysis I: Principles of Behavior	3
EDC 507	Applied Behavior Analysis II: Behavior Change Procedures	3
EDFP 507	Applied Behavior Analysis II: Practicum	1
EDC 516	Research Methods in Applied Behavior Analysis	3
EDFP 516	Research Methods in ABA Practicum	1
EDC 580	Behavioral Assessment	3
EDFP 580	Behavioral Assessment Practicum	1
EDC 622	Science and Human Behavior	3
EDC 621	Experimental Analysis of Behavior	3
EDC 623	Ethics in Applied Behavior Analysis	3
EDC 625	Contemporary Issues for ABA Practitioners	3
EDC 634	Behavioral Principles for Supervision, Training, & Performance Management	3
EDK 697	ABA Applied Project I: Proposal Development & IRB Approval	1
EDK 698	ABA Applied Project II: Data Collection	1
EDK 699	ABA Applied Project III: Written Product & Oral Presentation	1
Elective Coursework - Select one course from the following:		3
EDC 508	Intro to Dvlpmntl Disabilities	
EDC 514	Early Child Ed Special Needs	
or EDC 561	Educating the Exceptional Chld	
EDC 539	Child Maltreatment and Trauma	
EDT 530	Assistive Technology	
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>36</b>

Program Notes:

1. Students must complete program requirements with a minimum 3.0 gpa.
2. Completion of this degree leads to, but does not equate to certification through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB).
  - a. In order to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) a student must complete the required courses of this certificate, obtain supervision in an ABA setting, and successfully pass the BCBA exam.
    - i. ONSET OF EXPERIENCE: Supervisees may not start accumulating experience hours until they have done all of the following:
      - Started qualifying coursework (may begin accruing hours after attending first class meeting of a course with the Verified Course Sequence)
      - Passed the Experience Standards Training Module
      - Secured a qualified supervisor
    - ii. DURATION OF EXPERIENCE: The start and end dates of the experience may not be more than five years apart.
    - iii. ACCRUAL OF EXPERIENCE: For all categories, no fewer than 10 hours but no more than 30 hours, including supervision hours, may be accrued

per week. Supervisees may accrue experience in only one category per supervisory period.

3. In order to be eligible to take the BCBA exam and complete practicum hours, a student must complete all the required courses with a C or better.

4. More information regarding Behavior Analyst Certification can be found at <https://www.bacb.com/>

## Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis Accelerated Program Option (4+1 program)

### Overview

The Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis Accelerated Program, or 4+1 program, is designed for undergraduate students who have the interest, and demonstrated ability, to pursue the M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis. The program is designed to allow students who complete a B.A./B.S. at the University of Michigan-Dearborn to fulfill the requirements of the M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis with one additional year of graduate study. This will be achieved by combining a portion of undergraduate and graduate coursework as described below.

### Eligibility and Admission

Applying to the 4+1/Accelerated option is a two-stage process coordinated with both your undergraduate and graduate advising teams. For detailed instructions and application links, please visit the central 4+1 programs webpage (<https://umdearborn.edu/academics/program/41-programs/>).

### Double Counting Credits

- The 4+1 Masters program allows current UM-Dearborn undergraduate students to complete both their B.A./B.S. and M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis degrees in an accelerated format. 4+1 students can double-count up to 15 credits of 500-level or above courses. The courses eligible to be double-counted include:
  - EDC 506
  - EDC 621
  - EDC 622
  - EDC 625
  - One of the following electives: EDC 508, EDC 514, EDC 561, EDC 539, or EDT 530
- At least one additional year of graduate work (at least 21 credits) would be needed to complete the Master's program.
- The double-counted classes appear on both the undergraduate and graduate transcripts. Students are graded based on the graduate grading scheme for all graduate courses elected.
- Students must attain a grade of B or better in each 500 level class double-counted or transferred to the graduate program. Failure to do so may result in removal from the 4+1 program. Students may be given the opportunity to retake courses once they complete their undergraduate degree

### Feasibility of this Program

To complete the 4+1 program in five years students will have to complete any remaining required courses in the M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis plan of study. The following table shows a sample course schedule for the last three years of the accelerated program. In this schedule it is assumed that students take 15 credits of graduate coursework as undergraduates, which leaves them with 21 credits to complete as

graduate students. Students taking less than the full 15 credits as undergraduates may require more than one year to complete the Master's program. The courses shown in the table are only the graduate level courses that would be required to complete the M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis. It is assumed students would fill in other requirements for their undergraduate degree as needed during years 3 & 4.

### Sample Course Schedule (MS in ABA)

Successful completion of the following courses is required before students take the Board Certified Behavior Analyst examination. Applicants will also need to meet additional requirements before they can be deemed eligible to take the examination. This sample course schedule assumes the student enters the program directly as a graduate student. Students who enter the program through the 4+1 route would not need three years to complete the MS program as they would already have completed up to 15 credits as an undergrad.

Code	Title	Credit Hours
EDC 506	Applied Behavior Analysis I: Principles of Behavior (Year 1 Fall)	3
EDC 623	Ethics in Applied Behavior Analysis (Year 1 Fall)	3
EDC 507	Applied Behavior Analysis II: Behavior Change Procedures (Year 1 Winter)	3
EDFP 507	Applied Behavior Analysis II: Practicum (Year 1 Winter)	1
EDC 516	Research Methods in Applied Behavior Analysis (Year 1 Summer)	3
EDFP 516	Research Methods in ABA Practicum (Year 1 Summer)	1
EDC 580	Behavioral Assessment (Year 2 Fall)	3
EDFP 580	Behavioral Assessment Practicum (Year 2 Fall)	1
EDC 634	Behavioral Principles for Supervision, Training, & Performance Management (Year 2 Winter)	3
EDC 621	Experimental Analysis of Behavior (Year 2 Winter)	3
EDK 697	ABA Applied Project I: Proposal Development & IRB Approval (Year 2 Summer)	1
EDC 539	Child Maltreatment and Trauma (Year 2 Summer. Possible Elective)	3
EDC 625	Contemporary Issues for ABA Practitioners (Year 3 Fall)	3
EDK 698	ABA Applied Project II: Data Collection (Year 3 Fall)	3
EDC 622	Science and Human Behavior (Year 3 Winter)	3
EDK 699	ABA Applied Project III: Written Product & Oral Presentation (Year 3 Winter)	1

### Program Notes:

- Students only need to complete 1 course (3 credits) of electives. The course list above shows all possible elective options even though only 1 of these courses would need to be taken.
- The undergraduate degree for 4+1 students is conferred upon completion of the undergraduate degree requirements, rather than after completion of the graduate degree.

## Learning Goals

1. Explain and describe the theory of behaviorism and its philosophical foundations;
2. Describe and provide examples of the critical concepts and principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA);
3. Describe and apply research methodology and measurement strategies used in the implementation and management of ABA;
4. Describe and apply the principles of ABA in relation to individuals within a range of clinical, educational, pre-vocational/vocational, home, and community settings;
5. Describe and apply behavioral assessment procedures, including identification of target behaviors, developing operational definitions, conducting functional behavior assessment/functional analysis, and interpretation of assessment data;
6. Accurately measure, graphically display, visually analyze, and interpret behavioral data, including functional analysis data;
7. Describe ethical issues related to ABA service delivery;
8. Describe and apply principles of experimental design, including single-subject research methodology;
9. Develop behavior change procedures based upon the results of a behavioral assessment that are socially significant, client-informed, and culturally responsive;
10. Identify and describe effective supervisory and performance management practices utilizing behavior analytic principles;
11. . Define and identify the basic principles of learning;
12. Describe applied interventions in terms of the basic concepts and principles of behavior analysis;
13. Describe and explain contemporary issues in the field of ABA and the applications of the science of behavior to matters of social significance.