

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS - 48 credits

What is Applied Behavior Analysis?

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) involves the application of basic behavioral principles and procedures to problems of social importance. Behavior analysts are concerned with describing, explaining, predicting, and changing behavior through the use of empirically supported practices. These practices often involve the direct observation, measurement, and functional analysis of the relations between environmental variables and behavior.

What can I do with a Masters Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis?

Behavior analysts work in a number of different settings such as schools, including regular and special education classrooms, business and industry, zoos, healthcare and other applied community-based settings. Throughout these diverse settings, behavior analysts consult with a wide variety of medical professionals, therapists, educators, and families as well as provide direct services to children and adults diagnosed with mental illness, traumatic brain injury, developmental disabilities and autism.

Applied Behavior Analysis at Westfield State University

In order to meet the growing demand for behavior analysts nationwide, Westfield State University offers a Masters of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). The program at Westfield State University is designed to prepare individuals for a career in ABA or to develop prerequisite competencies while pursuing future doctoral-level graduate education. Upon completion of the program, all graduates will be eligible to take the national board certification examination for behavior analysis. (For more information, please visit the Behavior Analyst Certification Board.)

Program Description

The program at Westfield State University consists of 48-credit hours and is designed to be completed in 2-years – although an extended, part-time option is available. The core courses in Applied Behavior Analysis have been approved by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB) as meeting the coursework requirements for eligibility to take the Behavior Analysis certification exam. In addition, students are required to complete a practicum each semester while enrolled in the program. Students are provided with a practicum placement as well as supervision that meet the field experience requirements of the BACB. In order to complete the program, students are given the option to successfully complete either an experimental thesis or a comprehensive exam.

Westfield State University also offers a certificate program whereby individuals seeking to obtain certification in ABA can enroll in the core curriculum. Individuals pursuing this option are responsible for meeting additional supervisory experience requirements from the BACB.

Behavior Analysis Curriculum

Core Courses

- Principles of Applied Behavior Analysis
- Single-Subject Research Methodology and Design
- Autism and Developmental Disabilities
- Behavior Analysis Applications: Ethics, Assessment and Intervention Decisions
- Behavioral Interventions
- Practicum I: Applied Behavior Analysis
- Practicum II: Applied Behavior Analysis
- Practicum III: Applied Behavior Analysis
- Practicum IV: Applied Behavior Analysis

Elective Courses

Current and future courses:

- Behavioral Pharmacology
- Contrasting Counseling Theories: Comparing Behaviorism to Traditional Theories of Counseling

- Environmental Analysis of Behavior
- Theory and Philosophy of Behavior Analysis
- Verbal Behavior
- Functional Analysis
- Organizational Behavior Management
- Physiological Psychology
- Psychopathology: Diagnosis and treatment of Children and Adolescents
- Speech and Language Problems of the Special Needs Student
- Learning Disabilities and Instructional Strategies
- Classroom Management of Students with Special Behavioral/Emotional Needs
- Early Intervention for Young Children with Special Needs

Community Partnerships

Westfield State University partners with human service providers to facilitate practicum placements for all students enrolled in the Master's degree program. While working in these placements, students develop competencies in the following areas: Conducting functional behavioral assessments including functional analyses, developing, implementing and monitoring behavioral intervention programs, skill acquisition programs such as discrete trial training, behavioral consultation, and staff training. In addition to the already existing practicum sites, the program is continually identifying and establishing relationships with additional community organizations and school districts.

Current practicum locations:

- May Institute
 - The May Center for Adult Services
 - The May Center for Child Development
- Sullivan & Associates, Inc
- Carson Center for Human Development
- Local area school districts in Massachusetts and Connecticut

Application Procedures

Admission requirements for the Masters program in Applied Behavior Analysis are competitive with a limited number of students admitted for September of each year. Prospective students should access the application online at www.wsc.ma.edu and send it to the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE). All material should be received by DGCE by February 1st to be considered for September admission.

Full-Time Faculty

- Patrick Heick, Ph.D., BCBA-D *Coordinator of Graduate Programs in Psychology*
- Jorge Reyes, Ph.D., BCBA-D *Graduate Advisor for ABA program*
- Roger Tudor, Ph.D., BCBA-D
- Claudia Ciano-Boyce, Ed.D. *MA Licensed Psychologist*

Adjunct Faculty

- Alan Harchik, Ph.D., BCBA
- Shannon Kay, Ph.D., BCBA
- Gary Pace, Ph.D., BCBA
- Bethany Raiff, Ph.D.
- Gillian Fahmy, M.A., BCBA