

Summary of Graduate Curriculum Changes

Ouachita Baptist University

May 2022

The faculty **approved** these curriculum changes at a faculty meeting on May 3, 2022.

Applied Behavior Analysis

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Proposed Changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Add courses to the curriculum.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Add 2 didactic and 1 additional fieldwork (the latter not applicable to the certificate in ABA option), bringing the total number of courses to 15 for the M.S. in ABA and 8 for the certificate in ABA<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Experimental Analysis of Behaviorii. Special Topics in ABA (<i>Behavioral Economics, Behavioral Momentum, Behavioral Pediatrics, Behavioral Gerontology, Behavioral Treatment of Drug Addiction & Substance Abuse, Relational Frame Theory & Acceptance-Commitment Therapy, etc.</i>)b. Add Thesis or Capstone requirement as part of the last 2 fieldwork courses (not applicable to certificate option)2. Extend the length of the M.S. in ABA program from 4 semesters to 5 semesters.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. 5 semesters consisting of Fall, Spring, Summer, Fall, and Springb. Program to begin in Fall every year, with intensive in August and commencement/graduation in May3. Change fieldwork course credits to 1 credit each, except the last 2 fieldwork courses which will be 2 credits each.4. Revise course sequence, add new course numbers, modify course names; proposed curriculum will include the following courses:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Didactic (3 cr each): ABA 6113, ABA 6123, ABA 6213, ABA 6223, ABA 6313, ABA 6323, ABA 6413, ABA 6423, ABA 6512, ABA 6523b. Fieldwork (1-2 cr each): ABA 6131, ABA 6231, ABA 6331, ABA 6432, ABA 6532
Rationale	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The current program curriculum meets the <u>minimum</u> coursework and fieldwork experience requirements specified by the BACB (one of the two accrediting bodies) for the BCBA credentialing exam and subsequent certification under the 5th edition task list. With the exception of the 4 fieldwork courses, the M.S. in ABA program is identical to the certificate in ABA, which is essentially a coursework-only program.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. In December 2021, ABAI (our second accrediting body) announced a tiered model of education beginning in 2022 which will offer various tiers/levels of recognition and ABAI accreditation to qualified ABA programs. Such recognition/accreditation from ABAI indicates that a program provides quality training in the science and application of behavior analysis. One of the eligibility criteria for obtaining this recognition involves the completion of a thesis or thesis-equivalent (e.g., capstone) as a degree requirement (in addition to offering behavior analytic courses beyond just the minimum coursework requirements). It is our intention to pursue and obtain recognition

at the highest possible tier as this recognition and status would provide Ouachita's M.S. in ABA an additional competitive advantage over other ABA programs.

- i. Comparison data from the top 30 ABA programs in the country indicate that 70% require completion of a thesis or capstone project as a degree requirement
 - ii. Adding a thesis or capstone requirement also provides a pathway for students who wish to pursue a Ph.D. in ABA at a later time.
 - b. Under the current curriculum, courses in content areas that are crucial to the science of ABA and the scientific analysis of behavior are not offered. Those content areas include but are not limited to the experimental analysis of behavior, the conceptual analysis of behavior, special topics and/or new advances in ABA. Without the addition of such courses, the current curriculum would be most appropriate for a Master of Arts in professional behavior analysis, not a Master of Science in applied behavior analysis. Furthermore, the proposed changes to the curriculum will allow us to be consistent with the program's goal of training and producing quality and competent BCBA scientist-practitioners who will provide ABA therapy beyond autism and developmental disabilities.
 - c. In February and March 2022, the BACB announced that it will change the coursework and fieldwork experience requirements effective 1/1/2025 and 1/1/2026, respectively.
 - d. Increase academic rigor, provide quality training in the science and application of behavior analysis, meet and apply for eligibility criteria for ABAI's tiered model of education; prepares students who wish or plan to pursue a Ph.D. after obtaining their M.S.
2. The addition of 3 new courses will require an additional (5th) semester for the M.S. in ABA program, while keeping the certificate in ABA program at 4 semesters. This change would be consistent with most Master of Science / ABA programs.
 - a. Comparison data from the top 30 ABA programs in the country show that the median number of semesters for program completion is 5 (ranging from as short as 4 to as long as 8 semesters).
 - b. Starting the program in the Fall will allow students to finish in May and therefore be able to participate in the MAY commencement ceremony along with the rest of the university, as opposed to completing it mid-summer and waiting almost a year until the following May's commencement ceremony.
 - c. Feedback from some of the 1st cohort's students (as well as from some clinical partners) indicated that the 15 months did not allow enough time to cover all topics, thus needing more time to study after graduation before taking the BCBA credentialing exam; extending the program by 1 semester will allow more time to cover a broader range of topics
3. In order to maintain the 36-credit requirement and avoid having to increase tuition, all didactic courses will remain at 3 credit hours each, but each fieldwork course will be reduced to 1 credit (except for Fieldwork IV and V, which will be 2 credit hours, respectively).
4. Fieldwork IV and V will include completion of a thesis or capstone, hence the increase to 2 credit hours each
 - a. In Fieldwork IV, students will begin working on their research proposal and IRB application
 - b. In Fieldwork V, students will begin data collection and defend their thesis or present their capstone

- c. Consistent with the BACB's requirements for group supervision, each fieldwork course section will be capped at 10 students.

Catalog Entries

ABA 6113: Basic Concepts and Principles of ABA

This course introduces students to concepts and principles, as well as definitions and characteristics of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). The course also introduces the historical, philosophical, and methodological foundations of ABA as a discipline and a profession. The philosophical assumptions and dimensions of the science of ABA, including determinism, empiricism, parsimony, selectionism, pragmatism, and lawfulness of behavior will be discussed. *Co-requisite: ABA 6131 or permission of instructor.* **FALL TERM I.**

ABA 6123: Experimental Analysis of Behavior

This course introduces students to the basic branch of behavior analysis and covers seminal research and current issues in the experimental analysis of behavior, including shaping, conditioned reinforcement, complex schedules of reinforcement, verbal behavior, stimulus control, matching law, stimulus equivalence, and the three levels of selection by consequences. Issues related to radical behaviorism and the conceptual analysis of behavior will be reviewed, and implications of basic behavior analysis research for the theoretical basis of the field and its application to human behavior will be discussed. *Pre-requisite: ABA 6123. Co-requisite: ABA 6131 or permission of instructor.* **FALL TERM II.**

ABA 6131: Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork I

This course provides students supervised experiential learning and practical experience through weekly live online group supervision meetings. This course is the first of 5 in a fieldwork course sequence that allows students to accrue supervised fieldwork experience toward the BACB's requirements for BCBA certification. Includes activities such as data collection and behavioral measurement, behavioral assessment, behavior intervention plan development and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of program implementation by others, and related activities. *Co-requisites: ABA 6113 and ABA 6123 or permission of instructor.* **FALL TERMS I & II.**

ABA 6213: Research Methods and Measurement in ABA

This course introduces students to single case research methodology and behavior analytic experimental research designs. Tactics for measuring behavior and behavioral products, graphing and interpreting data, and evaluating behavior change procedures within the framework of single subject experimental designs that allow for conclusions about the impact of interventions and maintaining the accountability of the behavior analyst will also be discussed. *Co-requisite: ABA 6231 or permission of instructor.* **SPRING TERM I.**

ABA 6223: Behavior-Change Procedures I

This course introduces students to evidence-based and empirically derived behavior change tactics used to modify and improve behavior of social significance. Specifically, this course addresses behavior analytic strategies to establish, strengthen, and maintain target behaviors of social significance, both at the individual and at the societal level. Fundamental elements of behavior change are reviewed, with a focus on selecting evidence-based tactics that utilize basic principles of behavior (e.g., reinforcement) and are systematically applied to increase behavior. Basic behavioral concepts and principles are revisited with a focus on their application in applied research as well as professional practice. This course is the first of 2 behavior-change procedures courses. *Pre-requisite: ABA 6213. Co-requisite: ABA 6231 or permission of instructor.* **SPRING TERM II.**

ABA 6231: Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork II

This course provides students supervised experiential learning and practical experience through weekly live online group supervision meetings. This course is the second of 5 in a fieldwork course sequence that allows students to accrue supervised fieldwork experience toward the BACB®'s requirements for BCBA® certification. Includes activities such as data collection and behavioral measurement, behavioral assessment, behavior intervention plan development and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of program implementation by others, and related activities. *Co-requisites: ABA 6213 and ABA 6223 or permission of instructor.* **SPRING TERMS I & II.**

ABA 6313: Ethical and Professional Issues in ABA

This course introduces students to ethical and professional considerations relevant to the professional practice of Applied Behavior Analysis, specifically, the ethical, disciplinary, and responsible conduct and standards of the profession. Students will become familiar with the BACB®'s current ethical codes and their application to professional practice. *Co-requisite: ABA 6331 or permission of instructor.* **SUMMER TERM.**

ABA 6323: Supervision, Training, and Consultation in ABA

This course introduces students to behavior-analytic supervision, training, and consultation across settings and populations. Best practices for supervision and supervisor-supervisee relationships will be addressed, with a focus on competency- and performance-based training, including behavioral skills training. *Co-requisite: ABA 6331 or permission of instructor.* **SUMMER TERM.**

ABA 6331: Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork III

This course provides students supervised experiential learning and practical experience through weekly live online group supervision meetings. This course is the third of 5 in a fieldwork course sequence that allows students to accrue supervised fieldwork experience toward the BACB®'s requirements for BCBA® certification. Includes activities such as data collection and behavioral measurement, behavioral assessment, behavior intervention plan development and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of program implementation by others, and related activities. *Co-requisites: ABA 6313 and ABA 6323 or permission of instructor.* **SUMMER TERM.**

ABA 6413: Behavioral Assessment

This course introduces students to behavioral assessment. Fundamental elements of behavioral assessments are reviewed, with a focus on practical functional behavioral assessments, functional analyses, and assessment-derived functionally equivalent interventions to decrease behavior. *Co-requisite: ABA 6431 or permission of instructor.* **FALL TERM I.**

ABA 6423: Behavior-Change Procedures II

This course introduces students to evidence-based and empirically derived behavior change tactics used to modify and improve behavior of social significance. Specifically, this course addresses behavior analytic strategies to decrease target behaviors of social significance, both at the individual and at the societal level. Fundamental elements of behavior change are reviewed, with a focus on selecting evidence-based tactics that utilize basic principles of behavior (e.g., reinforcement) and are systematically applied to increase behavior. Basic behavioral concepts and principles are revisited with a focus on their application in applied research as well as professional practice. This course is the second of 2 behavior-change

procedures courses. *Pre-requisite: ABA 6413. Co-requisite: ABA 6432 or permission of instructor. FALL TERM II.*

ABA 6432: Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork IV: Capstone/Thesis I

This course provides students supervised experiential learning and practical experience through weekly live online group supervision meetings. This course is the fourth of 5 in a fieldwork course sequence that allows students to accrue supervised fieldwork experience toward the BACB®'s requirements for BCBA® certification, and the first of 2 capstone/thesis courses. Includes research topic identification, literature review and proposal (for thesis) and identification of the behavior targeted for improvement, literature review and project outline (for capstone), and IRB application. *Co-requisites: ABA 6413 and ABA 6423 or permission of instructor. FALL TERMS I & II.*

ABA 6512: Special Topics in ABA

This course introduces students to special topics in behavior analysis as well as sub-specialties and various applications of ABA across settings and populations. Topics include behavioral momentum, behavioral economics, relational frame theory and acceptance commitment training, behavioral pediatrics, behavioral gerontology, addiction/substance abuse and contingency management, etc. *Co-requisite: ABA 6532 or permission of instructor. SPRING TERM I.*

ABA 6523: Advanced Concepts and Principles of ABA

This course provides an advanced and in-depth recapitulation of the concepts and principles of behavior with a focus on a conceptual understanding of the principles. *Pre-requisite: ABA 6513. Co-requisite: ABA 6532 or permission of instructor. SPRING TERM II.*

ABA 6532: Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork V: Capstone/Thesis II

This course provides students supervised experiential learning and practical experience through weekly live online group supervision meetings. This course is the last of 5 in a fieldwork course sequence that allows students to accrue supervised fieldwork experience toward the BACB®'s requirements for BCBA® certification, and the second of 2 capstone/thesis courses. Includes data collection, final written product, and oral defense (for thesis) and oral presentation (for capstone). *Pre-requisite: ABA 6432. SPRING TERMS I & II.*