

# MASTER OF SCIENCE IN APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

## Program Director

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## Program Description

The Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis at Youngstown State University trains students in the theoretical and philosophical foundations of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA); research on basic and applied problems; and applied techniques in such areas as the treatment of institutionalized populations, work with the developmentally disabled, organizational behavior management, as well as a wide range of other applications. ABA is a scientific approach to behavior, and as such, strives to establish evidence-based practices for treatment and education. This approach is consistent with a scientist-practitioner model of graduate training. The purpose of the program will be to train students in behavior analysis through a balanced combination of in-class coursework and practical experience in community settings. As a result of this training, students will be qualified, and strongly encouraged, to become certified as Board Certified Behavior Analysts by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board ([www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com) (<http://www.bacb.com>)).

The required coursework is intended to produce well-rounded professionals capable of becoming board certified and communicating with other professionals in the field, as well as those outside of the field (e.g. nurses, medical doctors, social workers, psychiatrists). Coursework in the program consists of 24 required semester hours in behavior analysis courses and one elective, as well as 12 credits of practical experience and (6) credits of thesis, for a total of 42 credits. As this is a cohort-based program (beginning each fall), no student not part of the cohort will be admitted to classes.

## Admission Requirements

Students must have a bachelor's degree in psychology or a related field from an accredited college or university. Admission requires a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), as well as a satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). A combined (GRE-V + GRE-Q) score over 297 is strongly recommended for admission to the program. Applicants must also submit 1) curriculum vita/resume, 2) three letters of recommendation from individuals familiar with the applicant's academic and professional background, and 3) a letter of intent stating one's professional goals and how graduate education in behavior analysis will help fulfill said goals. An (optional) personal interview and/or additional information may be requested by the program's admission committee. Students with minor deficiencies may be accepted with provisional admission at the discretion of the program's admission committee. See the Graduate Bulletin under Provisional Admission.

All applicants must have taken PSYC 2617 (Research Methods and Statistics I) and PSYC 2618 (Research Methods and Statistics II), or equivalent before beginning the program.

## Degree Requirements

Students must complete a minimum of 42 semester hours: including eight content courses (24 s.h.), two years of practicum (12 s.h.), and six semester hours of thesis. The two years of practicum experience is critical for training qualified professionals who will succeed in the field and represent the program professionally. The first year will focus on functional analyses and behavioral assessments; the second year will require students to design and implement behavioral interventions. In addition to providing students with the supervised

experience required for board certification, these experiences will allow students to put their classroom instruction into real-world practice. Practicum sites will be sufficiently varied to provide students with a significant breadth of experience. For example, if one year involves working with children, then the following year will find students working with senior citizens, or in a business setting, prison, or rehabilitation center. It is imperative that students gain experience with more than one client population during their practicum assignments. In this way, graduates will have a broad experience base, a deeper understanding of the underlying technology, as well as being more readily employable in a wide range of settings.

The master's thesis requires the students to complete a research project. This will involve surveying the relevant literature, designing a study, collecting data, writing up the results, and discussing the implications of your findings.

Students will be strongly encouraged to present their findings at a research conference and develop a manuscript suitable for submission to the appropriate peer-reviewed scientific journal.

COURSE	TITLE	S.H.
PSYC 6960	Fundamentals of Applied Behavior Analysis	3
PSYC 6961	Foundations of Experimental Analysis of Behavior	3
PSYC 6962	Behavior Theory and Philosophy	3
PSYC 6963	Behavioral Interventions and Ethical Considerations	3
PSYC 6964	Observational Methods & Functional Assessment	3
PSYC 6965	Behavioral Systems Analysis	3
PSYC 6966	Research Methods in Applied Behavior Analysis	3
Elective		3
PSYC 6968	Practicum 1	6
PSYC 6969	Practicum 2	6
PSYC 7060	Thesis	6
Total Semester Hours		42

## Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate effective communication with professionals both in and outside of the field of Applied Behavior Analysis.
2. Master and apply behavioral techniques for assessment, functional analysis and behavior intervention.
3. Evaluate appropriate use of single-subject research designs.
4. Effectively conduct an original research project related to a specific behavior.