

PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE THE UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE CERTIFICATES IN APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors discontinue the Graduate and Undergraduate Certificates in Applied Behavior Analysis in the College of Education, effective fall 2024.

Background

The Graduate Certificate has not had any students enrolled in the program for several years since the Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) was approved and began enrolling students. The Graduate Certificate program no longer meets the requirements for students to qualify for the national board exam. The Undergraduate Certificate program will also not meet the national board exam requirements after the implementation of new standards on January 1, 2026. Students rarely selected the Undergraduate Certificate, with less than five students opting for this model in the last few years. In eliminating these certificate programs, the ABA program faculty will focus their time, effort, and resources on recruiting, retaining, and improving the MS in ABA, including updating the curriculum and applying for accreditation.

Program Description

The Graduate Certificate in ABA is a stand-alone Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) course sequence for those with a master's degree in psychology or education. Eighteen (18) credit hours of graduate-level coursework in crucial content areas is necessary to complete the stand-alone BCBA course sequence. This course sequence trained practitioners extensively in ABA, focusing on treating Autism. We received full approval from the Behavior Analytic Certification Board (BACB) for Task List 4 (currently expired). At that time, to earn a BCBA credential, a master's degree in psychology or education was required, a specific sequence of 5 classes (18 credits), and a field experience. Students who completed the courses were eligible for the BCBA examination if they had also completed their master's degree and field experience hours. This program has been replaced by the MS in ABA.

The Undergraduate Certificate in ABA is a stand-alone three-course elective sequence with an associated practicum experience and seminar that trains practitioners extensively in ABA, focusing on treating Autism. The course sequence is also approved as a verified course sequence by BACB. Students who complete the courses and practicum experience requirements are eligible for the Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA) examination, and upon passing, could earn the BCaBA credential.

Approvals

The proposal was approved by the ABA faculty in the Division of Theoretical and Behavioral Foundations, the College of Education Curriculum Committee, the Dean of the College of Education, the Graduate Council and Dean of the Graduate School for the Graduate Certificate, and the Provost.