PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Master of Science Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis (MS ABA)

2020-2021
(This handbook is effective for students beginning the program in Fall 2020)

A jointly administered program between the Psychology Department at the University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO) and the Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC)
MS ABA Program Committee
2020-2021

Mark Shriver, MMI, Program Director
Brenda Bassingthwaite, MMI
   Regina Carroll, MMI
Abigail Kennedy, MMI
Bethany Hansen, MMI
William Higgins, MMI
Lisa Kelly-Vance, UNO
   Sara Kupzyk, UNO
Kevin Luczynski, MMI
Elizabeth Preas, MMI
Nicole Rodriguez, MMI
Brigette Ryalls, UNO
Adam Weaver, UNO
Amanda Zanirillo, MMI
First Year Student Representative
Second+ Year Student Representative

University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO)
Department of Psychology
   6001 Dodge Street
Omaha, NE 68182-0274
Phone: 402-554-2592
Fax: 402-554-2556

Munroe Meyer Institute (MMI)
Psychology Department
985450 Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198
Phone: 402-559-6408
Fax: 402-559-6864
# Table of Contents

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 4  
  Program Mission ....................................................................................................... 4  
  Program Description ................................................................................................. 4

Training Competencies and Objectives ..................................................................... 5

Faculty .......................................................................................................................... 5

Admission Policies and Requirements ....................................................................... 6

Degree Requirements ................................................................................................. 7

Applied Experiences .................................................................................................. 10
  Ethical Conduct ........................................................................................................ 10  
  Background Check ................................................................................................... 10  
  Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis ................................................................ 14

Student Research ....................................................................................................... 15  
  Master’s Thesis Project Guide ................................................................................ 16  
  Research Support ...................................................................................................... 16

Graduate School Policies ............................................................................................ 17
  Plan of Study ............................................................................................................ 17  
  Academic Expectations and Quality of Work Standards ....................................... 17  
  Special Performance Quality Rule .......................................................................... 18  
  Academic Integrity .................................................................................................... 19  
  Transfer of Graduate Credit .................................................................................... 20  
  Transfer of Credits Taken Outside the University of Nebraska ......................... 21  
  Transfer of Credits Taken at the University of Nebraska ..................................... 21  
  Time Limit for Graduate Degrees .......................................................................... 21

Graduation Policies .................................................................................................... 21

Disability Services ...................................................................................................... 22

Plan of Study Checklist ............................................................................................. 23
Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis Program
University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) and Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI)

Introduction

The contents of this handbook are intended to help current and prospective students understand the structural and procedural operations of the UNO and MMI Applied Behavior Analysis training program. In addition to program information, this handbook reviews relevant departmental and graduate school policies for the program. While the MS ABA program is jointly administered between UNO and UNMC/MMI, all students admitted in 2020 are enrolled at UNO and this handbook reflects UNO and UNO Psychology policies and procedures.

Program Mission

The University of Nebraska Omaha and Munroe Meyer Institute Applied Behavior Analysis Program’s mission is to graduate students who have met high levels of academic excellence in clinical and research skills in applied behavior analysis and mental/behavioral health. The ABA Program trains students in a behavior analytic orientation to provide much needed services for children and adolescents, including those with behavioral and intellectual/developmental disabilities.

Program Description

The Applied Behavior Analysis Program prepares students to be behavioral health practitioners with advanced knowledge and skills related to the provision of behavioral therapy for children. Students who graduate from the program will be eligible to sit for the examination administered by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (www.BACB.com) for certification as Board Certified Behavior Analysts® (BCBA®). Students in the program complete 51-54 credit hours to earn a Master of Science Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis (MS ABA). The MS ABA Program typically takes two years of full time study to complete.

Coursework in the MS-ABA Program also addresses content areas required for licensure as a mental health practitioner in Nebraska. Upon completion of the program, students will have obtained necessary prerequisites for Provisional Licensure as a Mental Health Practitioner (PLMHP) pending approval of the student’s graduate transcript by the mental health board of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. With the PLMHP, the student will need an additional 3000 hours of supervised experience and will need to successfully pass a licensing exam to be a Licensed Mental Health Practitioner (LMHP) in the State of Nebraska. Practitioners holding the BCBA® and/or the LMHP typically work in clinical mental health settings, behavioral health community agencies, inpatient and outpatient clinics in hospitals, and schools.

The MS-ABA Program is a collaborative program administered jointly through the UNO Psychology Department and the MMI at UNMC. The program has faculty with experience and expertise in the area of applied behavior analysis. The coursework is a Verified Course Sequence (VCS) approved by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI). The coursework includes online and on-campus courses.
Training Competencies and Objectives

Based on the program’s mission, students are trained in eight core competency areas:

1. Ethical, Legal, and Professional Practice
2. Collaboration and Consultation
3. Cultural Competence
4. Theoretical Foundations
5. Research and Scientific Literacy
6. Application of Assessment and Behavior Change Procedures
7. Employability, Higher Education, and Professional Development skills
8. Certification and Licensure success

As part of these competencies, the following specific objectives are considered the minimal objectives that will be acquired as part of this training program. These objectives are derived directly from the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® 5th Edition Task List available at

https://www.bacb.com/bcba-bcaba-task-list/

MS ABA Program Faculty

Brenda Bassingthwaite, Ph.D., BCBA
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmfaculty/brendabassingthwaitephd.html

Regina A. Carroll, Ph.D., BCBA-D
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmfaculty/reginacarrollphd.html

Bethany Hansen, Ph.D., BCBA-D
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmfaculty/bethanyhansenphd.html

William Higgins, Ph.D., LMHP, BCBA-D
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmfaculty/williamhigginsphd.html

Abigail E. Kennedy, Ph.D., LIMHP, BCBA
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmfaculty/abigail-kennedy.html

Brett R. Kuhn, Ph.D., C.BSM
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmfaculty/brettkuhnphd.html

Sara Kupzyk, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Kevin Luczynski, Ph.D., BCBA-D
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmifaculty/kevinluczynskiphd.html

Elizabeth J. Preas, Ph.D., LMHP, BCBA
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmifaculty/elizabethpreasphd.html

Nicole Rodriguez, Ph.D., BCBA-D
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmifaculty/nicolerodriguezphd.html

Mark D. Shriver, Ph.D., BCBA-D
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmifaculty/markshriverphd.html

Amanda Zanigrillo, PsyD, BCBA-D
https://www.unmc.edu/mmi/departments/mmifaculty/amandazangrillopsyd.html

Faculty Advisement

Students are assigned a faculty advisor after admission to the program. The role of the faculty advisor is to provide mentoring and supervision for the student with regards to progression through the program, professional development, research, and practicum experiences. We strive to provide a faculty advisor-student match that will best facilitate the student’s learning experience. If either the faculty or the student determine that another faculty-student match would be better for the student, then a petition for advisor change would be made by the current faculty advisor and student and potential faculty advisor to the ABA program committee for review and approval. The ABA program director may be contacted to assist with this process. Note that it is expected that the current faculty advisor and student first attempt to work out any difficulties with the advisement relationship and that these attempts be documented prior to seeking a change in faculty advisors.

Admission Policies and Requirements

Application materials must be submitted by January 10 for consideration for admission to the MS-ABA Program. Admission is made only for fall semester. The website for online applications is

https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/prospective-students/application-process.php

All Graduate College and UNO Departmental admission requirements are prerequisite for admission to the MS ABA program. A minimum of 15 undergraduate semester hours or the equivalent of psychology courses including basic statistics and an upper level laboratory course emphasizing the experimental method, data collection, statistical analysis, and report writing are required. For example, classes offered at UNO that would fulfill this requirement include laboratory research in Cognitive Psychology (PSYC-4074), Sensation and Perception (PSYC-4214), Behavioral Neuroscience (PSYC-4234), Animal Behavior (PSYC- 4280), and Learning (PSYC- 4024).
The Departmental Application Form requires a statement of purpose and an indication of the program and, where appropriate, the area of concentration within the program to which the applicant is applying.

The following information is required for every individual applying to the ABA program:

- Graduate Record Examination (GRE)
- Undergraduate and Graduate (if applicable) grade point average (GPA)
- 3 Letters of Recommendation
- Statement of purpose
- Senior authored writing sample
- Vitae
- Transcripts
- Graduate College forms

**Degree Requirements**

All students take the same program of study. The course sequence reflects the requirements of the UNO Psychology department, the Association of Behavior Analysis International (ABAI), and the Nebraska Mental Health Board for the PLMHP. Coursework has been verified by ABAI, and the coursework has been approved for PLMHP by the Mental Health Board of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

**Required Coursework**

*PSYC 8000: The Profession of Psychology (no credit)*
*PSYC 9040/MMI 904: Proseminar: Learning (3 credits)*
*Breadth course in biological area (e.g., PSYC 9230 Behavioral Neuroscience or similar) (3 credits)*
*PSYC 9560: Proseminar: Developmental Psychology (3 credits)*
*MMI 813 Applications of Statistics in Psychology (3 credits)*
*or* *PSYC 9130 Applications of Advance Statistics in Psychology (3 credits)*
*PSYC 8520: Foundations of Assessment (3 credits)*
*PSYC 9050/MMI 905 Applied Behavior Analysis in Education (3 credits)*
*PSYC 9140/MMI 914 Assessment and Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders (3 credits)*
*PSYC 8550/MMI 855: Psychotherapeutic Interventions (3 credits)*
*PSYC 8576/MMI 857: Behavior Analysis and Intervention (3 credits)*
*PSYC 8700/MMI 870: Ethics and Law for Psychology and Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)*
*PSYC 9570/MMI 957 Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)*
*PSYC 9100/MMI 910 Small n Research Designs (3 credits)*
*PSYC 9470 Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis (12 credits, 750 hours- 1500 hours)*
*PSYC 9960/MMI 896 Research other than Thesis (3 credits)*
*or* *PSYC 8990/MMI 899: Thesis (6 credits)*

*These courses are available online. All online courses have a synchronous weekly meeting requirement. Students who are on campus will typically attend in person if possible. All students off campus will attend via a Video platform (e.g., Zoom)*
Courses also listed above as MMI courses are taught through UNMC. To register for these courses, students will need to complete an intercampus registration application at [https://intercampus.nebraska.edu/pre_inter_campus.aspx](https://intercampus.nebraska.edu/pre_inter_campus.aspx).

Once intercampus registration is approved, students will complete registration for the course at UNMC Graduate Studies Office [https://www.unmc.edu/gradstudies/current/index.html](https://www.unmc.edu/gradstudies/current/index.html).

**Total Credit Hours Required: 51**

**Comprehensive Exam (required):**

There are 2 parts to the Comprehensive Examination, a case presentation and an exam, and students must pass both parts.

First, students will select one case from their Practicum and make a formal presentation to a subgroup of faculty. The comprehensive exam presentation will be scheduled for March or April of the student’s second year in the program. The presentation is typically about 30 minutes. Faculty will evaluate the presentation content and give feedback to the student. A pass/fail grade will be assigned.

The Presentation Content should address:

- Presenting Problem/Reason for referral for the case being presented
- De-identified demographics of child/adolescent and family
- Review of relevant research literature for the presenting problem with direct link to assessment and treatment
- Describe the assessment conducted and data collected
- Provide conceptual model of the problem based on assessment, research and behavioral principles and direct link to treatment
- Describe treatment
- Describe progress monitoring (e.g., single subject graphs) and subsequent decision making
- If available, present treatment integrity data, inter-rater agreement data
- Describe what went as planned and what did not throughout the case and why
- Hopefully the audience will have questions or points for discussion, but plan to have at least 4 questions/points of discussion to generate discussion

The content will vary for each case presentation depending upon the unique features of the case so that some presentations may include all points and lots of data whereas others have less data. The evaluation of this presentation is less about the quantity of data collection and primarily about each student’s understanding of relevant research and conceptual presentation of relevant behavioral principles that guide decision making.
Second, students will be required to complete the modules from Behavior Development Solutions with at least a 90% passing grade. Students will be provided access to these modules starting in the Fall semester of their second year and will have until April 1st to complete all modules and exams. Note that there may be a student fee required for these modules and exam.

**Typical Program Course Sequence**

**First Year**

Fall

- PSYC 8000 Professions of Psychology (0 credits)
- PYSC 9040/MMI 904 Proseminar: Learning (3 credits)
- PSYC 9570/MMI 957 Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)
- PSYC 8520 Foundations of Assessment (3 credits)
- PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

Spring

- MMI 914/PSYC 9140 Assessment and Treatment of Autism (3 credits)
- PSYC 9100/MMI 910 Small n Research Methods (3 credits)
- PSYC 8576/MMI 857 Behavior Analysis and Intervention (3 credits)
- PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

Summer

Will continue with practicum PSYC 9470/MMI 947 but no scheduled classes

**Second Year**

Fall

- PSYC 8700/MMI 870 Ethics and Law for Psych and ABA (3 credits)
- PSYC 9560 Proseminar: Developmental Psychology (3 credits)
- Breadth course in biological area (e.g., PSYC 9230 Behavioral Neuroscience or similar) (3 credits)
- PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

Spring

- MMI 905/PSYC 9050 ABA in Education (3 credits)
- PSYC 8550/MMI 855 Psychotherapeutic Interventions (3 credits)
- MMI 813/ PSYC 9130 Applied Statistics (3 credits)
- PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)
Comprehensive Examination (required)

Research credits (3 credits for Research other than Thesis (PSYC 9960/MMI 896 or 6 credits for Thesis PSYC 8990/MMI 899) are typically taken during the summer after the first year and/or during the second year of the student’s program.

Applied Experiences

All students will be expected to be participating in supervised field experiences as part of practicum and coursework.

Ethical Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with professional ethical standards taught in the first semester and reviewed as relevant in each course. Students will be discussing sensitive material at the site and university supervision meetings. The rules of confidentiality apply to the content discussed in these meetings. All information that could potentially identify a student, teacher, or school must be removed from any reports and/or presentations. The university supervisor should be notified immediately if any confidentiality issues should arise.

Students are reminded that they represent the UNO MMI MS-ABA Program when attending classes and engaging in practicum experiences. As such, students should always present themselves in a professional and appropriate manner. This includes dressing, speaking, and writing professionally at all times. Students should ensure that if they maintain any personal websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.), their sites are private and unavailable to the general public. Recognizing that almost nothing is entirely private on the internet, students should refrain from posting anything that may present themselves or the program in a negative manner.

Background Checks and Procedures

All applied behavior analysis graduate students are required to complete a background check prior to any school-based experience or clinic-related practica (includes classroom observations, participation in assessment, school and clinic practica) associated with their graduate program. The background check is run through the Psychology Department at UNO. The purpose of this check is to evaluate the background of students with regard to their ability to complete program requirements and be eligible for state certification and/or licensure.

The background check will be conducted:
- by a vendor selected by the university
- prior to the student’s participation in any public or private, PK-12, school-based or clinic-based experience (this may include activities participated in during the summer prior to enrollment)
Students will be responsible for:

- completing the online process required to initiate the background check
- completing the check with enough time to process results before any school-based experience (at least one month)
- printing/completing/signing/submitting necessary forms
- paying the fee directly to the vendor

As part of the process, students will be asked to access the vendor’s website where they will provide information regarding current/previous addresses (for the past 20 years), current/previous minors who have resided with them, social security number, birth date, previous names/aliases, driver’s license number, telephone number, and email address. These data will be stored in a secured server maintained by the vendor.

The vendor contracted to conduct the UNO Psychology Department background checks is One Source—The Background Check Company. The university uses this vendor to conduct background checks on its employees and new hires. If you are an employee of UNO or UNMC, you may still need to complete a separate background check for Human Resources. The Psychology Department does not share its database with Human Resources; the checks are for two different purposes and Human Resources has its own policies and procedures.

One Source will be conducting a background check that is similar to those used by most K-12 school districts, many non-profit organizations, and health care facilities. The background check includes:

- Applicant Verification. A search of the Social Security Administration (SSA) Database to confirm that the SSN is valid, when the SSN was issued, and if registered as a SSN reported as deceased.
- County Criminal History (Statewide if Available). The criminal history will cover all names and locations from the last 7 years. The County Criminal Records report includes a search of felony, misdemeanor and all non-traffic infraction court records in applicants’ counties of residence. If statewide is available, all counties within the state will be investigated. The report will include jurisdiction, case number, disposition and date, charges, amended charges, and how the record was verified.
- Multi-Court Jurisdictional Database. The Nationwide Alert is a Multi-Court Jurisdictional Database that includes:
  - Proprietary Offender Data
  - Department of Corrections
  - Administrative Office of the Courts-dated back 7 years
  - Department of Public Safety
  - Traffic Court
- National Sex Offender Registry. This search includes Sex Offender Registration Information from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam.
- Federal Criminal Search. One Source searches the government’s Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) U.S. Party Case Index. This search is a national index for U.S. district and appellate court cases. One Source cross references these searches with a search of Federal Bureau of Prisons.
• Global Watch. This search involves accessing a variety of federal, state, and industry sanctions lists or Terrorist Watch Lists. These lists include:
  o OFAC Specially Designated nationals (SDN) & Blocked Persons
  o OFAC Sanctioned Countries, including major cities and ports
  o Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories
  o Department of State Trade Control (DTC) Debarred Parties
  o U.S. Bureau of Industry and Security Unverified Entities List, Denied Entities List, Denied Persons List
  o FBI Most Wanted Terrorists and Seeking Information, Top 10 Most Wanted
  o INTERPOL Most Wanted List
  o Bank of England, OSFI Canadian, United Nations Sanctions List
  o Politically Exposed Persons List
  o European Union Terrorism List
  o World Bank Ineligible Firms
• State Health and Human Services Adult and/or Child Abuse Registry. Searches the Department of Health and Human Services or designated state agency records for documented records/reports of abuse against children or adults.
• OIG. OIG-Office of Inspector General-Department of Health and Human Services, under a Congressional mandate, established a program to exclude individuals and entities affected by these various legal authorities, contained in sections 1128 and 1156 of the Social Security Act, and maintains a list of all currently excluded parties called the List of Excluded Individuals/Entities. This legislation is to prevent certain individuals and businesses from participating in federally-funded health care programs. Basis for exclusion include convictions for program-related fraud and patient abuse, licensing board actions and default on Health Education Assistance Loans.
• System for Award Management (SAM). The System for Award Management (SAM) combines federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one system. SAM includes Central Contractor Registry (CCR), Federal Agency Registration (Fedreg), Online Representations and Certifications Application and Excluded Parties List System (EPLS).

Once the database searches are completed, the vendor will forward each student’s background check report to the designated faculty member(s) in the Psychology Department (currently Sara Kupzyk). To ensure the safety and confidentiality of all students, the reports will be maintained in a secure manner by the Psychology Department.

The Psychology Department (and graduate programs within) will NOT share specific background check results with parties outside the University of Nebraska system. However, because the contents of the background check are public record, Psychology Department faculty may report (to a school district, for example) that a student “passed” the background check, along with a disclosure of what was checked. Students may request a copy of their background check.

Psychology faculty members will screen all background check reports. It is possible that during this process, the screening may reveal information that would make a student ineligible to complete school-based experiences or clinic practica, or obtain professional certification or licensure.

ABA Program graduate students who have an offense which may preclude them from participating
in school-based experiences, clinic practica, and/or receiving a professional certificate or license will be:
• contacted immediately by a Psychology or ABA faculty member
• asked to meet with staff members in the Psychology Department to discuss the background report
• allowed to review the report
• asked to provide documentation of the incident to keep on file with the Psychology Department

In most cases, sufficient documentation of court proceedings relevant to the issue will be required to allow a student to be eligible for school-based experiences and certification. If a student has a felony on his or her record, the student must work with the appropriate licensing agency to determine the appropriate course of action for filing an appeal to be eligible for certification/licensure. If an appeal is not possible, then the student will not be eligible for school-based experiences, practica, or certification and will be dismissed from the program.

At any time during their time in the program, students may be asked to complete an additional background check. Students should report ANY misdemeanor or felony charge that occurs while enrolled in any graduate program IMMEDIATELY to program faculty members, upon which time the steps described above will be followed.

**Procedures for Completing the Background Check**

To begin, please visit the website, http://www.onesourcebackground.com/.

Instructions
1. At the top of the page, click on the link that says “Tools” then select “Students.”

2. Click on the link for University of Nebraska-Omaha.

3. Click on the link that says “Psychology Department” then click on the red link for “Background Check │ Psychology Department.”

4. A new window will open for you to begin your check.

5. There are two parts to the background check, the Nebraska Abuse Registry search and the One Source search. You must complete both checks.

6. Please read all instructions for completing the online form for the One Source portion of the check. Follow the directions and complete the appropriate personal and payment information. NOTE: Do not enter any information in the “Department/Position” field.

7. When finished, click “Enter Order” at the bottom of the page.
8. You will then be instructed to read and e-sign a disclosure and authorization form. Please read this form and if you agree to the terms, click “I Agree” followed by “Enter Order.” Please note that selecting “I Agree” serves as your signature and you are agreeing to the release of information, payment terms, etc.

9. Once you submit your One Source background check, you will receive a supplemental email directly from DHHS.CFSCR@nebraska.gov to complete your Nebraska Adult and Child Abuse registry check. Please follow directions in this email to complete this check.

10. Once you have completed the online submission for both searches, you have completed the background check. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Sara Kupzyk at skupzyk@unomaha.edu, 402-554-2498, or One Source at 402-933-9999 or 1-800-608-3645.

**Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis**

**Course description:** This is a 750 (minimum) – 1500 hour practicum* designed to provide students with concentrated supervised fieldwork providing applied behavior analytic services to improve the well-being of children and their families. Students will participate in at least two different practicum experiences described below; typically a major and a minor rotation. Students will have a major rotation where they will obtain the majority of their hours. At some point over the course of the two years, they will work with their advisor and practicum instructor to participate in a minor rotation that provides a different experience delivering ABA services then their major rotation.

*Note that 1500 hours of concentrated supervised fieldwork or 2000 hours of supervised fieldwork are required to sit for the BCBA exam. If a student has not accrued 1500 by the end of their graduate program, they may choose to extend their graduation until the hours are accrued or they may graduate and accrue hours under an independent contract with a BCBA supervisor until they reach 1500 or 2000.

Most practicum experiences occur at the Munroe-Meyer Institute through the Psychology Department, the integrated Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (iCASD), Severe Behavior, or the Pediatric Feeding Department.

*Students will be working in a professional setting providing services to children and families and students and will be expected to be knowledgeable of and adhere to all relevant professional and ethical standards (i.e., BACB and APA).*

Students may also complete practicum experiences with another agency outside of MMI or with whom MMI does not have a contractual relationship with yet. The faculty advisor and/or practicum coordinator will visit and discuss with that agency the requirements for practicum placement and determine if the experience meets BACB standards for providing relevant experiences in applied behavior analysis. The student will be responsible for helping identify and establish a contract agreement with a BCBA supervisor at that agency consistent with BACB standards and approved by the faculty advisor and practicum coordinator.
Additional detail regarding Practicum can be found in the PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis syllabus each semester.

**Student Research**

The scientist-practitioner model, evidence-based practice, and applied behavior analysis emphasizes the importance of utilizing empirically-based practices. To this end, the MS-ABA Program trains students to be critical thinkers when reading and applying research.

All students will participate in research activities as part of their program experiences. Early in the first semester, students are required to take an on-line IRB course for CITI training ([http://www.unmc.edu/irb/](http://www.unmc.edu/irb/)) and provide a certificate of successful completion to your research advisor.

There are two options available to students in the MS-ABA Program to conduct independent research projects.

The first research participation option is Research Other than Thesis. This is an independent research project conducted under the supervision of a graduate faculty member. The student and faculty member agree upon a project and the faculty member will provide the grade for the student’s research project. The final product is required to be a formal presentation at a conference as first author or publication in a peer-reviewed journal as first or second author.

The second research participation option is the Thesis. The Thesis requires a committee of graduate faculty and involves a formal proposal meeting and defense meeting. There is a written product of the thesis project. Rather than the traditional chapter format, the completed thesis for the MA-ABA program should be a somewhat longer form of a peer-review journal submission ready manuscript.

For students interested in completing a research thesis: the following timeline is provided as guidance of necessary activities toward successful completion within the two years you are in the program. Keep in mind that UNO faculty are not available during the summer for thesis proposal or defense meetings. Also, it may take *at least* several weeks to schedule thesis proposals and defenses as faculty on your committee likely have full schedules, so plan early.

**Year 1**

**September**
- Complete CITI training
- Talk with your advisor and relevant faculty about research interests
- Review research interests of program faculty and other UNO/MMI faculty

**October**
- Identify research advisor and UNO co-chair
October-December
Meet with research advisor regularly to begin planning and developing thesis research project

January-February
Identify thesis committee members (must include at least one member from outside UNO Psychology, MMI Psychology, MMI Severe Behavior, MMI Pediatric Feeding, and MMI iCASD)
Develop thesis proposal presentation

March-April
Propose thesis to committee
Submit IRB once proposal is approved by committee

May-August
Conduct research study

Year 2

September-December
Conduct research study

January-March
Write up thesis document
Prepare thesis defense presentation
Schedule thesis defense with committee
Revise thesis as recommended by committee
Submit thesis to graduate studies office (see below)

The Master's Thesis Project Guide

https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/thesis-masters.php

***Always check website for most up-to-date guidance!***

Research Support

Office of Sponsored Programs and Research

Funds may be available for student research through the University Committee on Research and Creative Activity (UCRCA). The application deadline is the first day of the month October - March. For more details regarding the application process read the proposal guidelines and complete the application found on the UCRCA website
Funds may also be available through MMI for research conducted at MMI through the NU Foundation. Contact your MMI Research Advisor for additional information.

**Graduate School Policies**

[https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/index.php](https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/index.php)

***(Always check Graduate Studies website for most up-to-date guidance)***

**Plan of Study**

At the time of admission to a degree program, an individual plan of study will be sent to the student with their official letter of admission from the Dean for Graduate Studies. This individual plan of study will list all requirements for the completion of the degree program. These requirements may include deficiency courses and other provisions of admission, as well as specific courses to be completed to graduate and comprehensive examinations if applicable. Any deviations to this plan of study must be approved by the student's advisor, graduate program committee chair, and Dean for Graduate Studies by completing the Change in Plan of Study form ([https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/_files/change-plan-of-study-form.pdf](https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/_files/change-plan-of-study-form.pdf)). Upon approval, a copy will be sent to the student and department/school.

**Academic Expectations and Quality of Work Standards**

[https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/quality-standards.php](https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/quality-standards.php)

A "B" (3.0 on a scale of 4.0) average must be maintained in all graduate work taken as part of a degree program.

**Automatic Dismissal**

Graduate students are expected to do work of high caliber. Failure to do so will result in dismissal. In particular, the following will result in automatic dismissal from the degree or certificate program:

1. Receiving a grade of "C-" (1.67 on a 4.0 scale) or below in any course taken in the student's major field of study or in any course included in the plan of study or program of study;

2. Departments/Schools may have additional and more stringent criteria for evaluating a student's performance and progress and may demand a higher level of performance than that demanded by the Graduate College. A department/school or program unit may, under some circumstances, recommend dismissal of a student from a graduate program even though quality of work standards has been maintained. Grounds for dismissal could include, but are not limited to:
a. failure to be accepted by an appropriate thesis or dissertation adviser within stipulated time limitations;

b. failure to make timely progress toward the degree or certificate; and

c. failure to perform in course work, qualifying examination or research at an acceptable level in the respective department/school or program unit.

**Probation or Dismissal**

A department/school will recommend that the Dean for Graduate Studies either dismiss, or place on probation with conditions for reinstatement as a student in good standing, in the following cases:

1. A Grade of "C+" (2.33 on a 4.0 scale) or below in any course involved in the first 12 hours of graduate study for provisionally admitted students;

2. Receiving at least nine hours of graduate credit with the grade of "C+" (2.33 on a 4.0 scale) or below in any courses taken in the student's major field of study or in any courses included in the plan of study for master's or specialist's degrees or graduate certificates, regardless of the average;

3. Receiving at least six hours of graduate credit with the grade of "C+" (2.33 on a 4.0 scale) or below in any courses taken in the student's major field of study or in any courses included in the program of study for doctoral degrees, regardless of the average;

Failure to maintain a "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) average in all graduate work taken as part of the degree or certificate program.

**Student Responsibilities**

1. Students must be aware of the Quality of Work Standards of the Graduate College, as well as additional criteria of satisfactory performance in their respective department/school programs.

2. It is the student's responsibility to know when his or her previous course work has failed to meet those standards.

3. Students who are attending classes are still subject to dismissal if their department/school recommends that action based on its review of their previous performance.

**Special Performance Quality Rule (Psychology Department)**

If at any time two grades of "C" (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) in graduate courses become a matter of record, a graduate student in the department of psychology will be placed on departmental probation. An unexcused grade of "W" in a proseminar course will be considered equivalent to a grade of "C" for purposes of this policy. An excused "W" must be approved by the chair of the department of psychology. Students placed on this probation will forfeit any departmental graduate assistantship.
they may have and any approved programs of study will be subject to re-evaluation and change. Before registering for additional courses, a student placed on probation must, with the assistance and approval of the Program Director, submit a plan for remediation of his/her academic problems, and have that plan approved by the Graduate Program Committee. The Graduate Program Committee will review and, if appropriate, modify the plan. Further, any enrollment in graduate courses must be approved by the Graduate Program Committee. The student will remain on departmental probation until the Graduate Program Committee approves termination of probation status.

If a student receives a grade of C or C+ in any course of his/her Program of Study, this course must be retaken and a grade of B- or better is necessary to receive credit toward degree completion. If the student wants to take the course at a different University or replace the course with a different course, the student must make a petition to the ABA Program Committee for approval.

**Academic Integrity** (from UNO Student Affairs)

Under the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska [Sections 2.9 and 4.1(i)], the respective colleges of the University have jurisdiction over procedural matters concerning academic dishonesty. Just as the task of inculcating values of academic honesty reside with the faculty, the faculty are entrusted with the discretionary authority to decide how incidents of academic dishonesty are to be resolved. If a faculty member suspects that a student has intentionally violated the principles of academic honesty, the faculty member shall initiate the following procedures, starting at step 1, continuing only as necessary to steps 2 or 3.

**Step 1** The faculty member shall request a meeting with each student involved. At the meeting, the faculty member shall:

- Attempt to ascertain the facts pertinent to the incident;
- Explain to the student the basis for the suspicion of academic dishonesty; and
- Give the student an opportunity to explain the matter satisfactorily.

If the student offers an unsatisfactory explanation, the faculty member shall inform the student of the penalty for the offense, and shall explain to the student his or her rights to mediation, as described in step 2, and appeal as described in step 3. Any penalty imposed by the faculty member, such as retaking a test or rewriting a paper, or failure for the work involved or failure for the course, shall be limited to the course. If the student admits responsibility and accepts the penalty, the faculty member may consider the case closed, but will keep a confidential record of the action taken and retain any pertinent materials relating to the academic dishonesty until the end of the next regular semester following imposition of the penalty for academic dishonesty. A penalty of "F" for the course must be reported to the department chair and to the registrar. A faculty member who imposes a penalty for academic dishonesty may report the student and the penalty imposed to the department chair, the dean, and to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. If a faculty member reports any action taken to a department chair, a dean, the registrar, or the Assistant Vice Chancellor, the faculty member shall inform the student.

**Step 2** If the faculty member and student cannot reach agreement as to the matter of an alleged
incident of academic dishonesty, they may request the departmental chair to serve as a confidential
mediator, exploring the student's intentions, the gravity of the suspected offense, and the
appropriateness of the penalty. If the matter is satisfactorily resolved among these three parties,
a record of the resolution shall be retained by the chair. Violation of the policy may be reported to
Student Affairs. If reported, the student will be notified.

**Step 3** If the matter of an alleged incident of academic dishonesty cannot be mediated as provided in
Step 2, or if either the faculty member or the student do not wish the departmental chair to
mediate, either party may request the dean of the college to convene an appropriate college
standing committee with student representation or impanel a committee with student
representation to consider the matter of the alleged academic dishonesty. The college committee
will be drawn from the instructor's college. The college committee will function in accordance with
the procedural guarantees provided in Section 5.4 of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the
University of Nebraska. If the committee finds the student did not violate the policy, the faculty
member will award a grade for the student's work and course without prejudice, and all records
related to the incident will be destroyed in the absence of an appeal. If the committee finds that the
student has violated the policy, it will uphold the faculty member's proposed penalty. The dean will:

Convey the committee's decision to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs;
Retain the evidence and records of the committee's proceedings in accordance with the policies of
the Board of Regent's and UNO on the retention of disciplinary records; and Inform the student and
faculty member of the committee's decision.

**Policy:** The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is a vital concern of the University
community. Any student found responsible for violating the policy on Academic Integrity shall be
subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions. Violations of the policy on Academic Integrity
include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Transfer of Graduate Credit**

Approval of transfer of graduate credit for course work taken at another accredited university
(including extension credit but not including correspondence courses) is made at the time a Change
in Plan of Study form is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies. Grades received in courses for
transfer of credit must be the equivalent of "B" (3.0 on a scale of 4.0) or higher. Transfer of graduate
credits from a course taken with a pass/fail option must be recommended by the cognizant Graduate
Program Committee, supported by a written evaluation from the instructor and approved by the
Dean for Graduate Studies. All work accepted for transfer of credit must have been taken within the
prescribed time limits for graduate degrees and is subject to restriction if previously used to satisfy
requirements for another graduate degree.

The only course work from other institutions posted on the UNOmaha transcript will be those used
on the approved plan of study.
Transfer of Credits Taken Outside the University of Nebraska

Up to one-third of the course work required for a graduate degree program may be accepted from an accredited institution other than a unit of the University of Nebraska when the transfer is supported by the student's adviser and the appropriate Graduate Program Committee. Final approval will be made by the UNOmaha Dean of Graduate Studies. All other policies regarding graduate programs will apply. An official transcript must be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies documenting the course(s) that were taken for graduate credit.

Transfer of Credits Taken at the University of Nebraska

There are no a priori limits on the transfer and applicability of credits earned in one program of the University of Nebraska toward meeting degree requirements in another such program, except as they are used to earn distinct degrees. However, such credits must be individually evaluated and approved by the appropriate Graduate Program Committee and campus Dean of Graduate Studies before they can actually be transferred. UNOmaha students who wish to take courses for transfer of credit at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, or the University of Nebraska at Kearney should complete the intercampus application process at https://intercampus.nebraska.edu/pre_inter_campus.aspx.

Time Limit for Graduate Degrees

The degree program (as defined in the plan of study) for Master's degrees must be completed within ten consecutive calendar years. Course work over 10 years old at the completion of the degree program (as defined in the plan of study) cannot be used for a Master's degree. The first day of class of the earliest course which appears on the student's plan of study is the beginning of the student's graduate education.

If the student is not enrolled for two consecutive semesters, he or she shall be removed from the MS-ABA Program and must reapply for admission to the Program, as well as potentially to the Department and the Graduate College.

Graduation Policies

During what is expected to be the semester of graduation and prior to the posted deadline, students should apply for the conferral of the degree in the Office of the Registrar or through Mavlink. Graduation deadlines are available through the Office of Graduate Studies. See Graduation Checklist: https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/graduation-checklist.php

If you apply for graduation and do not complete all of the requirements in time to graduate, notify the Office of Graduate Studies as soon as possible so that your name can
be removed from the graduation list. You must REAPPLY for graduation in the Registrar's Office in the next semester in which you intend to complete the requirements for the degree; no additional fee is charged to reactivate your application.

Disability Services

The Accessibility Services Center (ASC) is available to arrange services for students with disabilities (i.e., reasonable academic adjustments, sign language interpreters, alternate print format, note takers, study mentors, use of the Testing Center, counseling, assistive technology, and classroom relocations). Programs coordinated through ASC are committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for enrolled or admitted students who have documented disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. To be considered eligible and to obtain services, students must provide appropriate documentation (i.e., medical, psychological) regarding their disability. Consultations with the ASC may be scheduled at any time throughout the year. For further information, please contact ASC (Location: UNO Milo Bail Student Center, Room 126; Phone: 402-554-2872; Email: unodisability@unomaha.edu). You may also obtain information from the ASC web site, www.unomaha.edu/disability/index.php.

ASC facilitates accommodations and accessibility for eligible students which may include:

- Screening of disability documentation
- Testing accommodations (arranged through Testing Center)
- Technology and assistive devices
- Provision of Sign Language interpreters
- Assistance with note taking
- Textbooks on tape
- Braille and large print materials
- Assistance to faculty in designing classroom accommodations
- Information about community resources
- Assist in accessing university departmental services
Plan of Study Checklist

___ PSYC 8000: The Profession of Psychology (no credit)
___ PSYC 9040/MMI 904: Proseminar: Learning (3 credits)
___ PSYC 8520: Foundations of Assessment (3 credits)
___ PSYC 9570/MMI 957 Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)

___ PSYC 9140/MMI 914 Assessment and Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders (3 credits)
___ PSYC 9100/MMI 910 Small n Research Designs (3 credits)
___ PSYC 8576/MMI 857: Behavior Analysis and Intervention (3 credits)

___ PSYC 8700/MMI 870: Ethics and Law for Psychology and Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)
___ PSYC 9560: Proseminar: Developmental Psychology (3 credits)
___ Breadth course in biological area (e.g., PSYC 9230 Behavioral Neuroscience or similar) (3 credits)

___ PSYC 9050/MMI 905 Applied Behavior Analysis in Education (3 credits)
___ PSYC 8550/MMI 855: Psychotherapeutic Interventions (3 credits)
___ MMI 813 Applications of Statistics in Psychology (3 credits)
   or *PSYC 9130 Applications of Advance Statistics in Psychology (3 credits)

___ PSYC 9470 Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis (12 credits, 1500-2000 hours)

___ Research
   ___ PSYC 9960/MMI 896 Research other than Thesis (3 credits)
   OR
   ___ PSYC 8990/MMI 899: Thesis (6 credits)

___ Comprehensive Exam
   ___ BDS Modules
   ___ Case presentation