



Applied Behavior Analysis Program Information

Thank you for your interest in Penn State's **Board Certified Behavior Analyst® Program**. This 18-credit, 5-course sequence is designed to prepare you to sit for the BCBA® certification examination sponsored by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board.

Our 18-credit program is currently pending approval by the BACB as meeting their 4th Edition Task List coursework requirements. Once approved, students that complete our program will have met the BACB's coursework requirement. However, before you sit for the BCBA certification exam, you must also show proof of an acceptable master's degree, plus proof that you have accrued the required number of supervised experience hours.

Please visit the BACB's web site for detailed information about their certification process: www.bacb.com. Click on "Becoming Certified."

The Courses

SPLED 503A – “ABA 1” – Applied Behavior Analysis for Special Education: Basic Principles I (4 credits)

Prerequisite(s): none

Offered once per year in the Fall semester (late August through December)

Course topics include definitions and characteristics; principles, processes, and concepts; behavioral assessment; experimental evaluation of interventions; measurement of behavior; and displaying and interpreting behavioral data. After completing this course students should be able to:

- Define the basic principles of behavior
- Identify the most effective methods to collect data in applied settings
- Interpret graphically represented data
- Use single-subject experimental design to develop methods to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

SPLED 503B – “ABA 2” – Applied Behavior Analysis for Special Education: Basic Principles II (4 credits)

Prerequisite(s): SPLED 503A

Offered once per year in the Spring semester (January through April)

Course topics include functional assessment, teaching new behaviors via shaping and chaining, increasing/decreasing behaviors using reinforcement, and decreasing behaviors using punishment. After completing this course students should be able to:

- Describe and implement the components of functional behavioral assessment.
- Develop an instructional program to teach desired behaviors.
- Use the results of a functional assessment to develop a program to teach appropriate behavior and/or decrease inappropriate behaviors.

SPLED 503C – “ABA 3” – Applied Behavior Analysis for Special Education: Extended Principles I (4 credits)

Prerequisite(s): SPLED 503A and SPLED 503B

Offered once per year in the Summer semester (May through July)

Course topics include self-management, designing effective instruction, ABA in organizations, ABA in classroom settings, and augmentative and alternative communication strategies. After completing this course students should be able to:

- Describe components of generalization programming
- Develop instructional programs to teach desired behaviors
- Develop programs to increase the use of behavior analytic strategies in organizations
- Describe systems for school-wide support
- Describe how AAC systems can be used to manage behavior

SPLED 503D – “ABA 4” – Applied Behavior Analysis for Special Education: Extended Applications II (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): SPLED 503A, SPLED 503B, and SPLED 503C

Offered once per during the first week of August

ABA 4 requires students to travel to Penn State University in State College, Pennsylvania for a week-long, face-to-face course held in conjunction with the National Autism Conference each year, which is typically held during the first week of August. This course focuses on current and emerging advanced topics in applied behavior analysis. To ensure professional currency, specific topics will change each time the course is offered but will generally address advances related to measurement, professional ethics, school applications, specific interventions, and emerging areas of behavioral research. Prior to attending the course, students will complete a mock certification exam. An item analysis of the exam results will be used to develop a review session held on the last day of class.

SPLED 511 – “Ethics” – Ethical Considerations for Special Populations (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): SPLED 503A strongly recommended but not required

Offered twice per year in the Fall and Spring semesters

Ethical behavior is a key component of any human service enterprise. Before a teacher or behavior analyst can effectively work with a client or student, they must first establish an environment of trust. This trust is built through ethical behavior on the part of the practitioner. In this class students will learn about the governmental and professional disciplinary standards that regulate the field of behavior analysis in education. Beyond the letter of the law, students will work through case studies where ethical dilemmas are presented in an effort to tease out the underpinnings of ethical behavior. After completing this course students should be able to:

- Describe ethical behavior
- Discuss relevant governmental regulations regarding behavior analysis in schools
- Discuss the disciplinary standards of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board
- Discuss the ethical standards of the Council for Exceptional Children
- Identify effective communication skills with clients and students
- Discuss ethical standards for research

The Program

Penn State's program is a five-course series offered through the World Campus, Penn State's online learning division. SPLED 503A, 503B, 503C, and 511 are offered via an online format and can be completed entirely from a distance. These courses feature online components such as streaming video, discussion forums, practice activities, and exams.

For SPLED 503D you must travel to Penn State University in State College, Pennsylvania. This course is a week-long, face-to-face course held each year during the first week of August. The course coincides with Penn State’s annual National Autism Conference and allows us to have nationally renowned experts serve as guest faculty while they are in town for the conference.

After successfully completing all five courses, you will have met all the coursework requirements set by the BACB in order to take their national certification exam. Again, please remember that the coursework is just one step in a multi-step process to become certified.

Completing Penn State’s program alone does not equate to professional certification, nor does it entitle graduates to claim that they are “certified behavior analysts” or “Board Certified Behavior Analysts.” To earn the title of Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) you must meet all of the BACB’s eligibility standards including degree requirements, coursework requirements, and supervised experience hours. You must then pass the BACB’s certification exam.

Program Timeline

Below are the two most popular options for working through the program in the least amount of time. Spreading the courses out over two or more years is also a feasible option. All students must start in the Fall semester.

OPTION 1*	SPLED 503A	SPLED 503B	SPLED 503C	SPLED 503D	SPLED 511
Fall	X				
Spring		X			
Early Summer			X		
Late Summer				X	
Fall					X

**This option allows you to take one course at a time and finish the program in 16 months.*

OPTION 2**	SPLED 503A	SPLED 503B	SPLED 503C	SPLED 503D	SPLED 511
Fall	X				
Spring		X			X
Early Summer			X		
Late Summer				X	

***This option requires you to take two courses concurrently during the Spring semester, but allows you to finish in one calendar year.*

Technology Requirements and Support

The basic technology requirement for participating in this program is a computer with high-speed internet access. For more detailed information about the minimum technical requirements for taking courses through the World Campus, please visit:

<http://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/technical-support/technical-requirements-for-world-campus-courses>

The World Campus HelpDesk staff is available seven days a week to help address any technical issues you may encounter. Please visit the following web site to familiarize yourself with HelpDesk services and read about best practices for easy and efficient access to Penn State's online resources:

<http://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/technical-support>

Admission Requirements

A bachelor's degree in education or a related field is required for participation in Penn State's program.

IMPORTANT: To become certified as a BCBA, the board requires a master's degree in an approved field (behavior analysis or other natural science, education, human services, engineering, medicine or a field related to behavior analysis and approved by the BACB). If board certification is your ultimate goal, we advise you to verify that your degree will satisfy the BACB requirements before you begin your coursework with Penn State. Please visit this page on the BACB's web site for more information: www.bacb.com/index.php?page=100378

Transferring Courses

You cannot transfer courses from another institution onto your Penn State transcript. However, if certification through the BACB is your ultimate goal, you do not have to complete all of your coursework at one institution in order to sit for the certification exam. You can combine coursework from two (or more) programs to earn the hours that you need. The BACB requires that (a) you complete 18 total credits, and (b) the total number of hours of instruction meets the prescribed content in each of the content areas defined by the BACB. They do not require that all 18 credits be earned from the same institution. We would be happy to look at your prior coursework and prescribe the specific Penn State courses that will help you meet the BACB requirements.

Use of ABA Courses as Part of a Graduate Program

Courses in the ABA series count as regular graduate SPLED courses. As such, these courses can be used as part of a master's or Ph.D. program in special education at Penn State. However, the graduate program at Penn State is currently available only through resident instruction (on campus). In other words, students can complete the ABA program via distance learning, but must come to University Park if they wish to complete a master's or Ph.D. program in special education. Students interested in combining the ABA coursework with a degree program should speak with Dr. David Lee, the Academic Director of the ABA program, before beginning study.

Penn State's ABA courses may be transferred into a graduate degree program at another university at the sole discretion of that program. Seeking advance permission from your program of interest is advised.

Minimum Grade Requirement

Penn State seeks to retain students who have demonstrated solid mastery of the skills and concepts of applied behavior analysis. Toward this end, we have established minimum grade criteria that must be achieved in order to progress through the sequence of courses: You must

earn a B- or better in SPLED 503A in order to move on to SPLED 503B and you must earn a B- or better in SPLED 503B in order to move on to SPLED 503C.

To summarize, the grade standards for this program are as follows:

To advance from SPLED 503A to SPLED 503B, you must earn a B- or better in SPLED 503A.

To advance from SPLED 503B to SPLED 503C, you must earn a B- or better in SPLED 503B.

To pass SPLED 503C, 503D, and 511, you must earn a C or better in each course.

A course may be repeated as many times as necessary to meet the minimum grade requirement.

Tuition, Fees, and Expenses

Tuition is charged at \$736 per credit.

Expenses in addition to tuition include the IT fee and the cost of course materials.

A nonrefundable information technology (IT) fee — which supports the development and maintenance of the technology infrastructure of the University — will be charged to each student each semester of enrollment. The amount of the fee varies depending on the number of credits in which you are enrolled for that semester:

- Less than 5 credits: \$83
- 5 to less than 9 credits: \$183
- 9 or more credits: \$244

Required course materials for the ABA program and their estimated expenses are listed below. Instructions on how to order your course materials will be provided in a Welcome Letter that is sent to all registered students several weeks before each course begins.

Course	Required Materials	Estimated Cost
SPLED 503A	Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heward, W. L. (2007). Applied Behavior Analysis (2 nd ed). Pearson Education. ISBN 9780131421134.	\$130
SPLED 503B	Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heward, W. L. (2007). Applied Behavior Analysis (2 nd ed). Pearson Education. ISBN 9780131421134. An additional required text on Functional Assessment may be added here	Previously purchased
SPLED 503C	Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heward, W. L. (2007). Applied Behavior Analysis (2 nd ed). Pearson Education. ISBN 9780131421134.	Previously purchased

SPLED 503D	Materials and provided meals (breakfasts and lunches) are covered in a \$200 course fee. However, your travel, lodging, and dinners while attending the course will be your responsibility.	\$200 plus travel expenses
SPLED 511	Bailey, J. & Burch, M. (2011). Ethics for behavior analysts (2nd). New York, NY: Routledge. ISBN 9780415880305.	\$35

Paying Your Tuition Bill

Tuition and fees are paid on a per semester basis and totals are dependent upon the number of credits in which you are enrolled for that semester.

Please visit this web site for information on how to pay your tuition bill:

<http://student.worldcampus.psu.edu/paying-for-your-education-GR>

Penn State has a deferred payment plan that allows you to defer payment of two-thirds of your tuition bill. This allows you to pay over a period of three months, with payments equal to one-third of the semester charges. The first third of tuition and fees is payable by the original due date of the tuition bill, and the remaining two-thirds is payable over the subsequent two months. There is a \$45 fee to use this plan, due with the first payment.

If you have any questions about paying your tuition bill, please contact World Campus Student Services at 800-252-3592 or 814-865-5403.

Financial Aid

Unfortunately, students who enroll in part-time non-degree programs, including the ABA program, are not eligible for federal student aid due to their status as a part time, nondegree students. Do not submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) – you are not eligible.

You can explore other strategies for financing your education by visiting this web site:

<http://studentaid.psu.edu/resources/understand-financial-debt/strategies>

You may want to consider an alternative loan. Visit this page for more information:

<http://studentaid.psu.edu/types-of-aid/loans/private-alternative/how-to-plan-decide-and-apply>

Take a minute to read the few paragraphs at the top of the page. Toward the bottom of the page is a list of lenders that previous and current students have borrowed from and is by no means a complete list. Penn State will be glad to work with any lender. Be sure that when you apply, you apply for a loan that specifies “non-degree seeking” AND “part time” or “less than half time” student status.

How to Apply to the Program

The next cohort of this program will start in Fall 2012. Applications are being accepted now. Please visit the following web site, click on How to Apply, and following the directions carefully.

<http://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/applied-behavior-analysis-for-special-education-certificates/overview>