

Master of Science in Behavior Analysis

Department of Psychology

Handbook

2023-2024

Contact info:

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Program Specializations: Experimental or Applied Behavior Analysis

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Master of Science in Behavior Analysis:

Program description

The Master of Science in Behavior Analysis program prepares students as basic scientists or applied scientist-practitioners in research and applied settings. At the same time, the program provides a strong foundation in theoretical, conceptual, and empirical concepts. Students can acquire the core knowledge and skill set needed to work in the competitive field of behavior analysis and to consider further study beyond the master's level.

Mission

To use behavior analysis to inspire solutions that lead to a more rewarding life. To create educational opportunities for every student to research and apply behavior analysis in their chosen field. To prepare students for professional roles in experimental and applied behavior analysis with a curriculum that also meets the course content requirements for eligibility for both certification and licensure as a behavior analyst. The flexible program experiences allow students to blend science and practice into their approach to solving real-world problems for a variety of populations, and to pursue higher degrees.

Objectives

The intent of the program is to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be a creative and critical thinker, and to learn to apply the concepts, principles, and procedures in the field. Students can opt to train as a behavioral scientist with the eventual plan to work as a researcher, in industry, or to continue onto doctoral-level study at another institution; they can also opt to train as an applied behavior analyst to work in a variety of settings related to behavioral problems.

Program Accreditation



The master's degree program in Behavior Analysis is fully accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International Accreditation Board. See ABAI Accredited Program Information [here](#). At time of writing (August 2023), our program is one of 28 accredited master's programs in the United States, and the only public state university that is fully accredited in the state of Massachusetts.

Certification, Pass Rates, and Licensure*

For our applied students seeking later certification and licensure, we are pleased to provide information about the requirements, and data on our student success:

- Eligibility requirements are determined externally by the BACB, and may be found [here](#)
- As a program accredited by the ABAI Accreditation Board, our program meets the educational coursework requirements for graduates to apply to the BACB to take examinations related to becoming a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).
- Click [here](#) to see the most recent University pass rates for the BCBA exam. Note that the SSU pass rate varies each year, but is consistently higher than the national average. (We are very proud of our hard-working alumni!)
- The requirements for licensure as an applied behavior analyst in the state of Massachusetts can be found [here](#). Our program's curriculum and requirements also prepare students for licensure.

*Please note that the above-linked agencies or institutions often update their websites. If you find that a link does not work, please let us know so that the information can be updated. We strongly encourage students to register online for the BACB newsletters.

Where to Look

For overall university information, please visit our university homepage: www.salemstate.edu. Among other things, you will be able to find university maps and building locations on this site.

For the school of graduate studies, please visit our SGS homepage. This website can give you information on the various programs and program combinations that might be of interest when deciding which path you would like to follow. You can also find information on tuition, funding your graduate education, as well as other graduate forms and admission information [here](#). If you cannot find specific information on the homepage, please don't hesitate to contact the School of Graduate Studies Office by phone at 978-542-6323. Additionally, the Student Navigation Center is a great resource for any registration, student involvement, or student account questions. Please see their [website](#) if you have any questions or concerns at any time.

For the MS Behavior Analysis Homepage, click [here](#), where you can find information about the application requirements, tuition and fees, and BACB guidelines as well as program expectations.

Physically, the program is located in Meier Hall with the Program Coordinator, Dr. Darlene Crone-Todd, BCBA-D, LABA, located in MH224 J. Dr. Crone-Todd, along with other program professors, can be reached through their office or the School of Graduate Studies as well.

You will need to meet with the program coordinator to complete your plan of study, and of course to ask any program-related questions you have. To make an appointment with Dr.

Crone-Todd, it is best to do so by using the Navigate system. All instructions are available for download from the Navigate, [Student Canvas Course](#).

Course Attendance and Modalities

As a master's level student, you are expected to act with a high degree of professional and ethical behavior. Part of that responsibility involves showing up for class, completing your assignments on time, and otherwise working toward becoming a professional with growing expertise in the field of behavior analysis. As such, you are expected to not only know which courses you are taking, but to have read the course descriptions and syllabi. You will also need to know what the expectations are for your course meeting times and modalities. Remember, each course might be different, so be sure to read the description when registering, and reach out to the professor teaching the course if you have any questions. Typically, you are expected to attend all classes, and not miss more than one hybrid class, or two face-to-face classes.

The program provides all of its courses in face-to-face or hybrid modalities. You will want to check how your course is being taught so that you can prepare for the teaching mode. Here are some important terms and descriptions to help you navigate the course modes. Be sure to check your course syllabus and discuss the mode and expectations with your course professor.

Please note that as a hybrid program, we cannot offer our courses fully online. This is based on our accreditation status. The only exception to this mode of course offering is in university-required emergency changes, such as the temporary shift to online during the global pandemic.

- **Face-to-Face courses** are fully in person and meet in the classroom assigned on the days and times scheduled.
- **Hybrid courses** use a combination of face-to-face weekly meetings, and either weekly synchronous meetings or asynchronous assignments.
 - **Synchronous** meetings are real-time online using Zoom or similar technology.
 - **Asynchronous** modes of teaching are fully online without a required class meeting.

Faculty (in alphabetical order)

Carlos Aparicio: *[Full time Faculty](#)*

Email: caparicio@salemstate.edu

Dr. Aparicio completed his Ph.D. in (1992) at the University of New Hampshire in the Experimental Analysis of Behavior. Since then, he has been serving as an associate and full professor at multiple universities including University of Mississippi (1992-95), University of Guadalajara (1998-2007), University of North Carolina Wilmington (2007-2009), George Mason University (2010), and Savannah State University (2010-13). In addition, he was the Head of Research at The Aurora School at the Arc of Loudoun. He came to Salem State as an associate professor in 2013 and in 2016 was promoted to full professor in the Department of Psychology, where he is responsible of the Laboratory for the Experimental Analysis of Behavior in nonhuman animals.

Darlene Crone-Todd: *[Program Coordinator](#)*

Email: dcronetodd@salemstate.edu

Dr. Crone-Todd completed her Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology at the University of Manitoba, Canada. She also completed her post-doc at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Behavior Pharmacology in 2003. Her current research interests include human choice behavior, computer-mediated learning environments, creative and higher-order thinking, and gradual change procedures. Ongoing projects involve behavioral interventions related to wellness, and the use of technology, AI, and robotics in behavior science.

Rebecca Imming: *[Visiting Instructor](#)*

Email: rimming@salemstate.edu

Visiting instructor Imming holds a Master of Social Work degree from Salem State University as well as a Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis from Endicott College. Rebecca has served as a field instructor for Antioch University, Cambridge College, William James College, and Salem State University, and serves on the Northeast Regional Council in the Massachusetts Association of Social Workers. She also delivers professional development training in schools to teachers and specialists as well as ACE training events to fellow BCBAs. Instructor Imming holds several licenses including her BCBA, LABA, LICSW and school teaching certificates as a school social worker and director/ manager. Her professional interests center around children and adolescents with various social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral needs. She is particularly interested in the application of Applied Behavior Analysis to non-traditional populations such as those with typical development but other mental health issues. She is also interested in cross-disciplinary collaboration and maximizing the effectiveness of consultation, training, and supervision.

Kenneth Jacobs: *[Assistant Professor](#)*

Email: kjacobs@salemstate.edu

Kenneth Jacobs earned his doctorate in psychology at the University of Nevada, Reno (2018). Dr. Jacobs was trained in the theory, philosophy, and experimental analysis of human behavior. As a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst - Doctoral (2019), he has applied the principles of learning and behavior in various settings. Dr. Jacobs has also taught the principles of learning and behavior as a behavioral consultant and instructor at the University of Nevada, Reno, and Santa Clara University. In addition to consulting and teaching, Dr. Jacobs is a translational researcher interested in beliefs and behavior regulation.

Samantha LaPointe, Ph.D., BCBA, LABA: [Visiting Instructor](#)

Email: slapointe@salemstate.edu

LaPointe completed her Ph.D. in Behavior Analysis at Simmons University under the advisement of Dr. Philip Chase. Their research has focused on evaluating training programs to teach adults complex behavior analytic skills. She is the Director of Clinical Operations for an organization that provides ABA therapy to children with autism and is a Visiting Professor at Salem State. She has a strong interest in Organizational Behavior Management / performance analysis and enjoys using the principles of behavior to improve organizational structure, staff productivity, and clinical quality of care.

Patrice Miller: [Professor](#)

Email: pmiller@salemstate.edu

Professor Miller attended Swarthmore College (1968-1970) and obtained her B.A. in Psychology, cum laude, from New York University in 1972. She obtained her Ed.M. in 1979 and her Ed.D. in 1988 from Human Development and Psychology at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Since 1993, she has been at the Department of Psychology, Salem State University, where she now is a Full Professor. Since 1994, she has also been a Research Associate in the Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, and between 1998-??? she served as the Coordinator of the M.S. Program in Counseling & Psychological Services at Salem State University. Dr. Miller has broad interests in developmental psychology. One long-standing interest has been in the social and emotional development of children, and the influence of early experiences, parenting, socioeconomic background, and culture on development. Along with collaborators, Dr. Miller also works on applying the Model of Hierarchical Complexity, a model that explains stages of development, to the success of graduate students, to understanding how smart different animals are, and to other interesting problems.

Ryan Snyder: [Visiting Instructor](#)

Email: rsnyder@salemstate.edu

Professor Snyder has spent over 20 years working in the field of special education and applied behavior analysis, first certified by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB) in 2002 after completing his BACB approved course work through UMass Boston. Professor Snyder has worked as an aide, classroom teacher, principal, as well as a consultant across a wide variety settings and populations and currently holds the position of Director of Behavioral Services for SEEM Collaborative. He has delivered over 100 presentations to a wide variety of audiences focusing on the use of Behavior Analysis to achieve meaningful results for individuals with intellectual and/or behavioral needs. Professor Snyder currently teaches ABA 1, ABA 2, Ethics, and Exam Preparation I at Salem State University.

Academic Integrity

At Salem State University, and particularly in the graduate program, we assume that students come to the University with serious educational intent and are expected to be mature, responsible individuals who will exhibit high standards of honesty and personal conduct in their academic life. All members of the Salem State University academic community have a responsibility to ensure that scholastic honesty and academic integrity are safeguarded and maintained. Cheating and plagiarism are unfair, demoralizing, and demeaning to all of us. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts that erode the University's educational role and cheapen and diminish the learning experience not only for the perpetrators, but also for the entire community. It is expected that Salem State University students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts. Policy and Regulations can be found in the [University Catalog](#) and on the University website. The formal regulations are extensive and detailed - familiarize yourself with them if you have not previously done so. If you are unsure ask your professors, and the [writing center](#) are valuable resources to help you with any questions.

Academic Honesty

You will be held to the highest standards of academic honesty. Specifically, cheating on examinations will not be tolerated. On out-of-class projects, you must complete all work on your own, unless instructed to work in groups by the instructor. The use of any AI-related applications will typically be considered as academic dishonesty if it is used to impersonate you, to create content related to discussions, group work, or for written assignments (e.g., writing drafts, entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers). *AI could be used as an instructional tool, but you should seek clarification from the professor teaching the course or thesis experience in which you are enrolled.* AI-use would be deemed inappropriate unless students were instructed to use AI for the purpose of an assignment.

Any suspected violations of these academic standards will be subject to the academic integrity policies. Typically, violations of academic honesty in most courses will result in a grade of "F" which will also result in expulsion from the program.

Disability Services: Responsibilities and Rights

Salem State University is committed to providing students with disabilities with an experience at the University which assures them equal access to all programs and facilities of the University. We make all reasonable accommodations for their disabilities and provides them with maximum independence and the full range of participation.

All students with disabilities should identify themselves and provide requested and appropriate written documentation to the Office for Students with Disabilities [OSD], 978-542-6217 as soon as possible after acceptance to assure accommodation of their disability and smooth coordination of available services. No otherwise qualified person may be excluded or denied any program, course of study or any other offering of the University, solely on the basis of disability.

Office for Students with Disabilities, Frederick E. Berry Library and Learning Commons, room G20, North Campus. **Email:** osd@salemstate.edu; **Phone:** 978-542-6217; **TTY:** 978-542-7146; **Fax:** 978-542-2064.

Please note that it is imperative that if you have a disability of the sort identified above that you are responsible for making arrangements with OSD. Individual instructors cannot ethically provide accommodations for students with disabilities without documentation from the OSD. Their office is bound to keep your information confidential and will only contact the professors you ask them to contact.

Salem State University has established specific internal complaint procedures to help resolve claims and complaints of discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and retaliation in its programs and on its campus. These procedures will also specifically address claims and complaints of failure to accommodate or to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and academic adjustments for a person with disabilities as prescribed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act, and Massachusetts General Laws Chapters 151B and 151C. The Discrimination Complaint Procedures serve as a system of review and resolution for both informal claims and formal complaints of disability discrimination. Any applicant for employment or admission, or any member of the University Community who believes that he or she has been a victim of disability discrimination may initiate an informal claim or formal complaint as outlined in the Discrimination Complaint Procedures. Further advice or information may be obtained by contacting the Assistant Vice President of Human Resources & Equal Opportunity or the Associate Director of Human Resources & Equal Opportunity. (Found in [Policies for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities](#))

Diversity and Inclusion

We value, and emphasize, multicultural and intercultural competency. We believe that representation of different cultures and backgrounds is important for our program. We value students from diverse neuro, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds and try to create fewer systemic barriers to graduate school. When considering applicants to the program, we consider the complete application package: GPA, courses and experience related to the program, letters of recommendation, a strong personal statement connecting to the program, and test scores. The diverse nature of the program applicants, coupled with opportunities to explore research, practical experience, or special topics in the discipline will bring students into contact with new experience, contacts, and cultures. It is through this unique set of experiences that we anticipate students will be better prepared to live and work in a pluralistic society.

Program of Study

Plan of Study, Satisfactory Progress, and Course Layout Information

Plan of Study. Once matriculated you will develop your plan of study in consultation with the program coordinator in order to best suit your goals within the program. Your plan of study is intended to be a guide for completing program requirements during your time in the program up until graduation but can be revised in consultation with program coordinator. However, failure to complete a plan of study will result in being ineligible to graduate and to take any further classes in the program. Please contact the School of Graduate Studies to set up a meeting with the program coordinator regarding your plan of study.

Satisfactory Progress. The School of Graduate Studies requires that all students must earn a GPA of at least 3.0 in order to graduate. Further, the MS Behavior Analysis program requires that all students must earn a “B or better” in all courses in order to satisfactorily progress. Any student who earns less than a “B or B-”, will be able to petition to retake the course, with a clear explanation of what the factors were that led to them earning the failing grade of less than a B, and what they will do differently if the petition to retake the course is approved. Up to one course can be petitioned in this manner; earning a grade lower than a B in two or more courses will result in dismissal from the program.

Course Plan. Salem State’s MS Behavior Analysis Program courses have been designed to meet the ABAI Accreditation Board [criteria](#). Note for students pursuing post-graduation certification that this program corresponds to Pathway 1 (see the [BCBA handbook](#) from the Behavior Analyst Certification Board).

Plan of Study Requirements:

These are the required (core) courses all students must complete (total number of courses required = 12)

- [PSY 715 - Behavioral Principles of Learning](#)
- [PSY 725 - Applied Behavior Analysis I](#)
- [PSY 726 - Applied Behavior Analysis II](#)
- [PSY 727 - Exam Preparation in Behavior Analysis*](#)
- [PSY 817 - Experimental Analysis of Behavior](#)
- [PSY 825 - Behavioral Assessment](#)
- [PSY 830 - Small N Research Design & Analysis](#)
- [PSY 840 - Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues in Applied Behavioral Analysis](#)
- [PSY 842 - Conceptual Issues in Behavior Analysis](#)
- [PSY 845 - Organizational Behavior and Supervision in Behavior Analysis](#)

** Please note that this course is changing to a Professional Development Course in Behavior Analysis and is now offered with that new description. This includes the exam preparation as well.*

In consultation with the program coordinator, students select one elective course (3 credits)

- [PSY 997 Special Topics \(PAIR Students\)](#)
- or
- [PSY 875 Directed Study \(Thesis Students\)](#)

All students must choose a capstone requirement. This choice will be entered on your plan of study, and you should consult with the faculty regarding expectations for your capstone.

- [Option A: Thesis I and Thesis II \(PSY 899 and PSY 999\) **](#)
- or
- [Option B: PAIR I and PAIR II \(PSY 898 and PSY 998\)](#)

Non-Course Experience Requirements

All students who have as their stated goal to seek out certification or licensure in behavior analysis must complete all of their supervision hours (as specified by the BACB) before they can graduate.

All students must present their research or application project at a local, regional, national, or international conference. Thesis manuscripts are expected to be published in the Digital Commons.

Practicum and Internship courses are also available but may incur additional time and cost in the program. These courses must be set up and approved at least one semester prior to undertaking the course. If this is of interest to you, be sure to discuss it with the program coordinator.

- [PSY 910 - Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis **](#)
- [PSY 911 - Internship in Applied Behavioral Analysis I **](#)
- [PSY 912 - Internship in Applied Behavioral Analysis II **](#)

** Must be set up one semester prior to undertaking course

Total Credits: 37.5

Plan of Study with Typical Course Offering Times

Below is a blank Plan of Study, which includes the typical schedule for our courses in the program. The schedule is subject to change, so it is important to work with the program coordinator to complete this and stay up to date by checking your SSU email on a regular basis.

Salem STATE UNIVERSITY		352 Lafayette Street Salem, MA 01970-5353 978-542-6323 Salemstate.edu/graduate graduate@salemstate.edu		
Master of Science in Behavior Analysis – Plan of Study			Check one: <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Revised	
Name: (last, first, middle, former)		Student ID:	Semester matriculated:	
Mailing address: (street/number)		Apt #:	City: State: Zip:	
Home phone:	Work phone:	SSU email: (see note below)		
Undergraduate degree: (college)	Year:	Major:	GPA:	
Master's degree: (college)	Year:	Major:	GPA:	
Conditional acceptance:			Needed Met	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No If yes, condition: Example Plan of Study - subject to change				
Program requirements:				
Course number	Title	Credit hours	Semester	Grade
Required Courses – 28.5 credits				
PSY 715	Behavioral Principles of Learning	3	Fall	
PSY 725	Applied Behavior Analysis I	3	Fall	
PSY 726	Applied Behavior Analysis II	3	Spring	
PSY 817	Seminar in Experimental Analysis of Behavior	3	Fall	
PSY 825	Behavioral Assessment	3	Spring	
PSY 830	Small N Research Design & Analysis	3	Spring	
PSY 840	Legal, Ethical and Professional Issues in ABA	3	Spring	
PSY 842	Conceptual Issues in Behavior Analysis	3	Fall	
PSY 845	Organizational Behavior and Supervision in Behavior Analysis	3	Spring	
PSY 727	Exam Preparation Course	1.5	Fall	
Capstone Experience – 6 credits <i>Select one of the two options below.</i>				
Option 1: Thesis				
PSY 899, and PSY 999	Psychology Masters Thesis I, and Psychology Masters Thesis II	3	By arrangement	
Option 2: Research in Practice				
PSY 898, and PSY 998	Practical Application in Research I, and Practical Application in Research II	3	Fall	
Electives – 3 credits <i>Choose one course from the list below.</i>				
PSY 875	Directed Study	3	By arrangement	
PSY 910	Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis	3	By arrangement	
PSY 911	Internship in Applied Behavior Analysis I	3	By arrangement	
PSY 912	Internship in Applied Behavior Analysis II	3	By arrangement	
PSY 997	Special Topics in Behavior Analysis	3	Summer	
Additional Program Requirements: Consult with program coordinator.				
Check boxes to indicate the following requirements have been met:				
<input type="checkbox"/> All students with a stated goal of working as a certified or licensed behavior analyst must provide evidence of completed supervision hours prior to graduating, and must secure an appropriate placement/position by their second semester in the program. If this is not applicable, check here: <input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Present at a local, regional, or national conference				
		Total Credits	37.5	
Program coordinator notes: This is a draft. If taking 899/999, then 875 must be taken before 899. If taking 898/998, then 997 must be taken at least the summer before the fall semester in which 898 is taken.				
Signatures: (student, program coordinator, graduate school dean, registrar)				
Student:		Date:		
Program coordinator:		Date:		
Graduate school dean:		Date:		
Registrar:		Date:		

SSU email note: All email correspondence to graduate students at Salem State University must go through your SSU email account. Signing this form indicates that you understand this policy and that you agree to consistently check your SSU email.

Fall 2021

Here is a list of course in the program:

Course	Title	Credits
715	Behavioral Principles	3
725	ABA I	3
726	ABA II	3
727	Prof. Development	1.5
817	EAB	3
825	Behavioral Assessment	3
830	Small N	3
840	Ethics	3
842	Conceptual	3
845	OBM	3
875/997	Directed Study/Special Topics*	3
898/899	Thesis I or PAIR I	3
998/999	Thesis II or PAIR II	3
		37.5 Total

This is a recommended full time, 2-year sequence for completion of courses:

		2 Year Plan		
Fall 1st Year	Spring 1st Year	Summer	Fall 2nd Year	Spring 2nd Year
715	726		817	825
725	830	875/997	842	845
727	840		898/899	998/999

This is a recommended part-time, 3-year sequence for completion of courses:

		3 Year Plan				
Fall 1st Year	Spring 1 Year	Fall 2nd Year	Spring 2nd year	Summer	Fall 3rd Year	Spring 3rd Year
715	726	817	825	875/997	898/899	845
725	830	842	840			998/999
727						

Note: Part time students are strongly encouraged not to take more than 3 years to complete their degrees. This is to ensure the highest likelihood that the courses are relevant to the field, and that you complete your hours on time.

Course Registration Information

Registration is completed through the SSU online navigation portal, which can be found [here](#). Navigator is home to registration information, payment history and upcoming tuition payments, among many other information banks. With regard to Behavior Analysis registration information, it is important that students follow their plan of study and meet with the coordinator to discuss any changes to their individual plan.

Navigator accounts are issued by the University, upon your admittance as a student. All of these technicalities can be discussed and changed through the SSU information technology department. The Navigator Center is located at 71 Loring Avenue on Central Campus on the 2nd floor of the Classroom building. Their phone number is 978.542.8000 and their email address is navcenter@salemstate.edu

Financial Aid and Assistantship Information

To apply for federal student aid, complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) using Salem State's federal code 002188. The FAFSA is available on October 1 at no cost to students. You will be considered for all federal aid.

Graduate Assistantships provide students with professional development opportunities and work experience; supports university projects.

Research Assistantships link a graduate student with a faculty member on a meaningful research project, which may lead to a presentation at a conference, a joint publication or other significant professional activity.

Graduate and research assistants receive several benefits in return for their time and work. They include:

- Tuition remission for fall and spring semesters (free tuition; the student is responsible for all fees). Tuition remission is considered a financial resource in any financial aid award.
- 10 hours per week or 160 hours each semester (fall and spring) at a rate determined by the university during the fall and spring semesters (excluding summer and winter sessions). Schedules are subject to agreement between graduate/research assistant and their supervisor.
- This financial help allows the student to focus on their studies instead of a full-time job.
- Hands-on professional experience in projects and/or research applying theory to practice. This is a great opportunity to increase future employment options.

Thesis Courses: Thesis I and II (PSY 899 and 999) versus PAIR I and II (PSY 898 and 998)

All students in the program must complete a capstone thesis option. The requirements for the thesis are derived from the guidance supplied by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (see [recent updates](#)), and the options provided are based on what is determined by our program through university governance. We offer two tracks: A traditional three-person committee-based thesis and a two-person committee practical application thesis. What follows below is an explanation of the two options.

Traditional Three-Person Thesis Committee (PSY 875, PSY 899, and PSY 999)

For students on the three-person thesis track, there is a requirement to ***first complete a directed study course (PSY 875) with your prospective thesis supervisor***. Plan to take this course in your second or third semester. (There is paperwork and faculty approval needed, so starting the semester before you plan to take the course is recommended.) During your directed study course, you typically complete a literature review around a selected topic that is conceptually and theoretically oriented in behavior analysis. You are also expected to meet individually with your faculty supervisor each week, and possibly attend larger lab meetings as part of the expectations. At the end of the directed study course, you should have a good start to your thesis topic in consultation with your thesis supervisor and program coordinator. This is when you will identify a potential thesis committee consisting of at least 3 faculty members. Two of the members must be from the program, and one member can be from outside the program or institution. The members of the committee must meet the thesis committee member requirements as described by the ABAI accreditation board. In consultation with your thesis supervisor and the program coordinator, determine who should be on your committee, and finalize your committee members and discuss your ideas with your advisor and committee members prior to taking PSY 899.

In your final two semesters in the program, you should plan to complete PSY 899 (Thesis I) and PSY 999 (Thesis II). During PSY 899, you will write a proposal for your thesis, and a draft IRB/IACUC proposal (if your project involves human or animal subjects). When your thesis proposal is approved by your thesis supervisor, you send it out to your committee for reading and feedback. When your committee members all agree that the draft is ready to move forward to the presentation, you set up a time at which to present the proposal. All members of the committee must agree that the proposal is passed before you can earn a grade in the course, which is pass/fail. Only once you have passed PSY 899 and the committee and program coordinator sign off on the pass result, may you then sign up for PSY 999. When completing PSY 999, you actually carry out and write up the final thesis. The process is very similar to the proposal: You work on the draft with your main supervisor, and when your supervisor approves it to go to the committee, then you send it out to the committee for feedback. When the committee gives the “go ahead,” you can set up a date on which to present and defend your final thesis.

A thesis is a major undertaking, but also very rewarding. You should anticipate that faculty members may take up to 1-2 weeks to read drafts of your proposal and final thesis manuscripts. They may also require revision or edits prior to giving the “go ahead” to send to your committee or to presentation. Plan ahead in consultation with your thesis supervisor to set goals and deadlines. Students are also expected to present their work at the Salem State University Research Day, which also fulfills their requirement to present their work per the Plan of Study. Students may also choose to present at other regional or national conferences and are definitely encouraged to discuss that with their course professor and supervisor.

All PSY 875, 899 and 999 forms can be found [here](#).

Two-Person Committee: Practical Application in Research Thesis (PSY 997, PSY 898 and 998)

The “PAIR” capstone option is typically chosen by students who plan to go into the applied field, but not necessarily onto a doctoral program of study. In this course sequence, students select a topic in consultation with the thesis course supervisor and at least one other core faculty or equivalent expert program contributor with expertise related to an applied research question. Examples from past students include studying burnout in the profession, staff training, or parent training. Students have also completed projects in which they developed online teaching modules or developed in-depth comprehensive systematic conceptual and theoretical reviews of the literature.

For this course sequence, there is a set meeting pattern in that PSY 898 is offered each fall, and PSY 998 offered each spring. Similar to the thesis course, students identify their topic, complete a literature review, and a proposal during the first semester. This typically involves CITI training for the IRB as well, and a significant amount of writing and planning. The proposal must be written, and presented, by the end of the first course. At that time, once approved, an IRB proposal is completed. Only once the course proposal and the IRB proposal are both approved may students start running any participants and collecting data. Failure to follow these protocols may result in a failing grade and expulsion from the program. This is because this would be a serious ethical violation.

During the second course, students complete their project, and finalize the written project in a thesis-like format. At the end of the semester, they also present a talk during class with an invitation to their site supervisor also extended. Students are also expected to present their work at the Salem State University Research Day, which also fulfills their requirement to present their work per the Plan of Study. Students may also choose to present at other regional or national conferences and are definitely encouraged to discuss that with their course professor and supervisor.

BDS Modules

The Behavior Development Solutions (BDS) are provided at a reduced cost to students, as they are integrated into the curriculum. The main reason is to develop the necessary fluency in terms and concepts covered in several courses throughout the program. For our applied students, these also include material from the BCBA 5th Edition Task List and. These modules can be used as a study tool for the BCBA certification exam as well as the program comprehensive exam. Typically, these modules will be assigned as a portion of your final grade for several courses as listed below. It is recommended to complete all modules even if not assigned by your instructor. All PAIR students are required to complete the modules before graduating. Salem State University students have a discount through BDS to help with cost of the subscription, and this is based on the modules being required as part of your coursework. You can find more about the BDS modules [here](#).

VCS courses	BDS Modules
PSY 715	A
PSY 725	B
PSY 726	G, H
PSY 825	F
PSY 830	C, D
PSY 840	E
PSY 845	G, H, I

The BDS modules are purchased directly from Behavior Development Solutions. At time of writing, they have options for purchase of different periods of time (e.g., 6-month, 12-month, or 24-month) for subscriptions. This is an investment, just as any textbook would be, that covers content that is part of seven of the degree program courses. To purchase these modules, you will need to login to the [Behavior Development Solutions](#) with a login provided by the coordinator or your professor. There you will find “Learning Module Series TL5 (v9)” and add that to your cart to purchase. If you do not have access, check with your instructor in one of the VCS courses in which you are currently enrolled.

A new resource for BDS is the [BDS Scholars Facebook](#) group. You may wish to join this group to find resources, ask questions, etc.

Combined Master of Science in Behavior Analysis 4 +1 program

Salem State University also offers opportunities to pursue combined graduate and undergraduate level coursework. Combined graduate and undergraduate programs are intended to provide an opportunity for well-qualified students to accelerate their transition from undergraduate to graduate level coursework, enabling students to reach their academic goals through innovative and challenging academic programs.

At a minimum, students are eligible to apply to a combined graduate/undergraduate program once they have reached second semester sophomore status (45 credits) and must apply before they reach senior status (90 credits). Exceptions may be made for transfer students or native students who have accumulated significant numbers of credits but still have significant remaining undergraduate degree requirements (30 or more credits to complete beyond the student's status at the point of application to the program). Students must have earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 and will be required to submit three letters of recommendation, a statement of interest and a resume or *curriculum vitae* (CV).

Our combined graduate/undergraduate program will include up to 24 credits of graduate coursework used towards the undergraduate degree program. Students wishing to pursue a combined program are encouraged to consult with the coordinator of the behavior analysis program. Students wishing to pursue a combined program must meet with program coordinator prior to picking classes. Students will also need approval from SGS, Coordinator and the Registrar.

To remain in this program, students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.25. If one's GPA drops below that level, then they will be dismissed from the program. At that point, you should work with the program coordinator and your academic advisor to determine whether your previously completed can count toward your undergraduate degree.

After you have finished undergrad credits, you will switch into the Master of Science in Behavior Analysis program with SGS. It is at that time you will complete your new plan of study with the program coordinator.

To obtain an application for this program, please contact [Jeremy Bubier](#) in the School of Graduate Studies.

Dispositions (Rights and Responsibilities)

As a student at Salem State University and as a developing professional in the field of Behavior Analysis, you can and should be informed of your rights and responsibilities as a student in the program. To begin, your responsibilities as a student can and should be outlined and explained in detail at the beginning of each course you take at Salem State. Every professor is required to provide you with a written syllabus for any course you take. With respect to class-related responsibilities, questions and clarifications can and should be made at the beginning of the semester. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to: attendance, participation, assignment criteria, ethical standards, and communication between peers and professors. Responsibilities in terms of your role as a student will vary depending on the course experience but attendance, communication, and ethical behavior is always expected and should be discussed on an ongoing basis with the faculty member or supervisor.

Ethical Behavior and Academic Integrity: Expectations and Guidelines

1. The field of Behavior Analysis has specific requirements and expectations which are expected of all SSU Behavior Analysis students as well. The BACB guidelines and all information regarding current students and potential BACB candidates can be found on their [website](#).
2. The BACB Ethics Code can be found [here](#).
3. As a program housed in a Psychology department, we also follow the [APA Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct](#).
4. Further, the MS Behavior Analysis Program as housed in the Department of Psychology, expects that all APA writing guidelines are followed by all students. This includes proper citation and documentation by all students, as outlined on their [website](#).
5. Unless otherwise specified in course syllabi plagiarism or cheating will result in a grade of F in the course and will be cause for expulsion from the program.
6. This is also extended to carrying out research: You must have IRB or IACUC approval prior to commencing any research, including recruitment of participants or subjects.
7. All students, regardless of the situation, are expected to behave in a truthful, ethical manner.
8. With respect to classes, students should be:
 - a. thoroughly prepared for their class meetings,
 - b. meet deadlines
 - c. Be on time, and be present for the whole class
 - d. Honor all faculty requests for appropriate behavior (e.g., not being on cell phones or other technology during class discussions or instruction unless specifically instructed to do so.

Expectations of Graduate Students

As a Graduate Student you are expected to attend and participate in all classes. Unless otherwise stated more than 2 absences from a face-to-face class or more than 1 absence from a hybrid class will typically result in a failure for the course.

Your rights as a student in a graduate program should be explained and understood as well. To begin, you have a right to be informed of any class-related changes prior to the changes occurring. For example, attendance policies or assignment-related changes should be communicated by the professor. Please be sure to clarify any questions you have at any time with your professor or the program coordinator. Students have the right to ask questions or concerns pertaining to their performance at any time while enrolled as a student in the program.

As professionals in the field of Behavior Analysis, you will be expected to uphold the professional, legal, and ethical behavior guidelines consistent with our field. The BACB Ethics Code can be found [here](#). Any behavior of concern should be addressed by the professor or coordinator, with an opportunity for the student to make changes.

In rare cases, when a student is not able to make required changes in their behavior that is deemed unprofessional or unethical, then the program coordinator, the Dean of SGS or other administrators may become involved.

Steps of clarification and remediation

Professors and students should meet 1-2 times to discuss the issue and make changes/improvements to address and remedy the issue at hand. If that does not result in a desirable change in behavior within a reasonable time (usually a 1–3-week period, specific to the situation and issue at hand), then the plan of improvement will continue up to the program coordinator.

The professor will then meet with the Program Coordinator to discuss the issue and come up with any alternatives to present to the student to help fix the issue. At this point, it is likely that the professor, coordinator, and student will all meet to plan these behavioral issues. If the outcome of this meeting does not result in a remedy within the specified period, the plan will continue to move forward.

If a student wishes to appeal the decision of a professor, then they must first speak with that professor. If they cannot resolve it with the professor, then they should initiate a meeting with the Program Coordinator. If they cannot resolve it with the Program Coordinator, then they should initiate a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies. If they cannot resolve the issue with the SGS, then it is their right to appeal the decision through the Graduate Education Council. The Graduate Education Council can determine whether or not to hear such an appeal, based on the merits of the case.

Please note that in all cases if a student disagrees with a grade, that the course syllabus will be used as the deciding factor for determining whether or not a grade is appropriately earned.

Student Involvement in the program

Students are not only expected to enroll and participate, in all of the required courses but are also expected to contribute to the field. This is done through independent research, literature reviews and comparisons, and lab discussions and seminars. Students should have discussions about opportunities with faculty early on in their program and should continue these discussions on an ongoing basis. Discussing research and applied experience should be done on an ongoing basis as well and should be communicated thoroughly and appropriately as the situation requires.

All students are expected to attend required meetings announced by the program. These are typically during the first week or two of each fall and spring semester.

We also highly encourage contributions to our upcoming newsletter and program event planning. Get involved!

Student involvement and opportunity in the community

Similar to student involvement in the program, our students are expected to be involved in the behavior analytic community as well. Whether it be working in applied settings, conducting basic experimental laboratory research, or doing research in the community to contribute to the field of behavior analysis, students are expected to be involved in the scientific or applied scientist-practitioner community whenever possible. It is important for students to play a role in the behavior analysis community and reach out and communicate with other behavior analysts as much as possible. This also includes attending and participating in regional and national conferences.

As a student in the Behavior Analysis program, you are encouraged and expected to be an active member of our community of scholars. Being an active member includes using our program's LinkedIn account. All members of the program are expected to link to this account to keep connected with our program. We also encourage you to make contributions to, and help edit, the program's newsletter.

Institutional Review Board Application Process

Once students have completed their plan of study with the program coordinator, it is important for thesis students to develop a research idea early in their time in the program. As a MS Behavior Analysis student, independent research in the Directed Study 1 semester will focus on researching a topic, writing up a research proposal, and developing an idea for how to conduct research. Once starting PSY899 (Thesis I), it is important that students submit an Institutional Review Board (IRB) or an International Animal Care Use Committee (IACUC) proposal on Canvas to the Salem State Institutional Review Board in order to complete the desired research. Prior to submitting a proposal students must complete any pre training required by the IRB or IACUC.

Note: It is very likely that you will need to complete, and maintain, an active certification in CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) training related to the IRB and/or IACUC committees. This must be completed before you submit any research protocols to be reviewed by the respective committee. ***It is very important to use your SSU email account***, since that should automatically upload the certification to the IRB website.

The IRB proposal for research with human participants should include a rationale for conducting the research, including references to previously published literature on the topic. An explanation of the ethical standards of which it is upholding is also necessary. An informed consent explanation is necessary as well. All recruitment materials, treatment materials, and experimental materials must be explained as well. It is important that students explain how they will keep their participants' information confidential. Sample IRB proposals can be found on Canvas.

With respect to animal research the proposal should be submitted to the IACUC and include a rationale for conducting the research, including references to previously published literature on the topic, an explanation of the ethical standards of which it is upholding is also necessary, as well as any certificates necessary for the handling of animals.

BACB and Licensure clarification and requirements for exam: Know the process

It is ultimately up to the student to find their own supervision mentors and follow through with documentation of their supervised experiences. Students are also responsible for ensuring that they meet all the requirements to be eligible to sit for the BCBA exam and/or qualify for state licensure.

Our program offers guidance and assistance with understanding regarding qualifications and requirements for sitting for the BACB exam and/or state licensure. In addition, our field experience coordinator works closely with the program coordinator and other faculty to identify sites at which our students gain their supervision hours, and we can provide students with recommendations and referrals to sites. Salem State can offer assistance regarding how to acquire these hours but does not offer the ability to get supervision hours directly through our faculty members.

Here are some important guidelines:

- A site supervisor must be a BCBA in good standing who is eligible to supervise and is so listed on the BACB's Certificant registry.
- The supervisor must also be licensed as LABA in the state of Massachusetts.
- The site must be appropriate and approved by the program with a site visit by the field experience coordinator and the program coordinator (or designated faculty member in the program).
- There must be two forms that are filled out before supervision can commence. One is a program-specific form, and the other is a contract between the supervisor and the student. The program-specific form is available from the field experience coordinator, and the contract should be set up per the guidelines by the BACB, found under "BCBA Documents and Resources" [here](#).

The program does offer practicum and internship courses are available but must be secured at least 2-3 months before the intended and are in addition to the 37.5 credits required for the completion of the program.

Students are strongly encouraged to work on their supervision hours while completing the program because the experience in the field will nicely compliment the coursework and the graduate experience. This can be done by securing a position in the related field, or volunteering to get these hours. The program is happy to put you in touch with these placements; however, it is the responsibility of the student to secure these positions. Students for whom becoming a BCBA is a goal must secure a position in which they can gain supervision hours by their second semester in the program. In other words, the placement should be secured within their first semester.

Whether students complete independent field work hours or practicum/internships, they will be expected to secure a suitable placement site and to provide the program with evidence that they have obtained their supervision hours prior to graduating.

Transfer of Credit

A maximum limit of up to nine graduate credits taken at Salem State University or through another graduate program, before admission into a Salem State University graduate program, may be counted towards a degree, except as noted.

1. The actual number of graduate transfer credits, up to the maximum of nine, is to be determined by the program coordinator. Please note that not all courses can count, and that the VCS courses across the 4th and 5th editions may not line up. It is important to meet with the program coordinator to discuss any consideration.
2. The nine graduate credits must be from accredited institutions and must have been taken within the past seven years.
3. A grade of B (3.0) or better must be earned in courses to be considered for transfer.
4. All courses submitted for transfer credit at the time of application must be completed prior to the student's acceptance into the program and decisions on acceptance of transfer credit must be made at the time the Plan of Study is approved.
5. All accepted courses must receive initial approval from the program coordinator and final approval from the Dean as pertinent to the appropriate degree being sought.
6. The applicant must provide course descriptions as well as official transcripts for all transfer requests and may additionally be asked to provide a syllabus and samples of the applicant's course work.

Withdrawing Policies

Spring and Fall Semesters:

When withdrawing from classes or the program there are several things you will need to consider. The School of graduate studies information can be found [here](#). If you are withdrawing from the program before your fourth class meeting you may do so online through your [navigator](#) account. If you are past the fourth class meeting you must submit this [form](#) to the School of Graduate Studies stating your reasons for withdrawal. If it has been 15 days past the add/drop period for graduate classes, you will not get a refund of your tuition.

Summer and Short sessions:

When withdrawing from summer and short session courses you will only get a refund if you have withdrawn before the add/drop period has ended. If it has been 1-7 calendar days past the add/drop you will get 80% of tuition back. 8-14 calendar days past the add/drop is 60% refund and anything over 15 calendar days is no refund. For more information please visit the [Salem State webpage](#).

Leave of Absence

Should students find themselves in a situation in which they need to request a leave of absence from the program, please note that there are specific policies and procedures regarding taking a leave. Briefly, they are as follows:

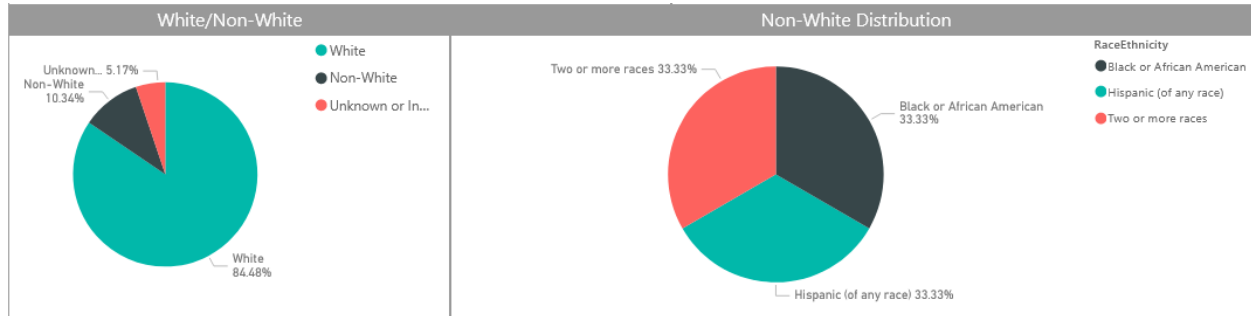
1. You must request the leave no later than four course meetings into the semester.
2. You cannot request more than two semesters of leave.
3. You must fill out the [request form](#) and submit it

You can find the policy and procedures [here](#).

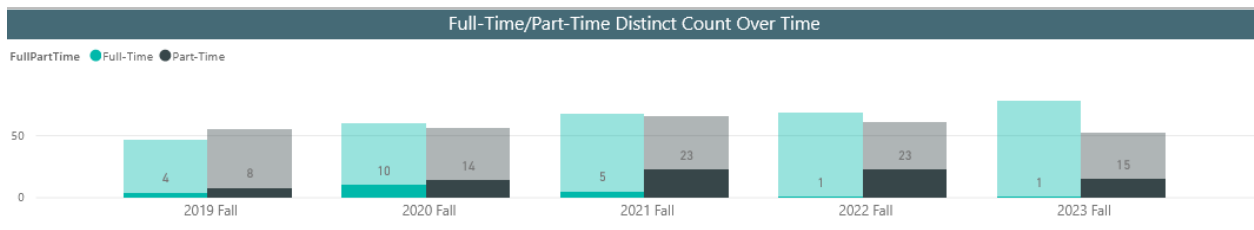
Program Demographics

The following data are reported as of September 2020 from the Power BI report based on students' self-report.

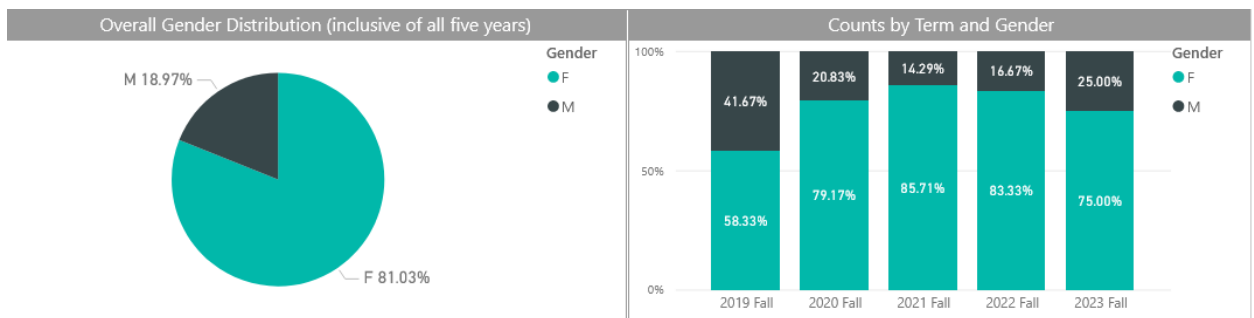
Race/Ethnicity



Part time/Full time



Gender



Program Statistics

- ❖ Annual reporting period ended: Spring **2023**
- ❖ Number of students whose degrees were conferred by the program: **4**
- ❖ Median years until graduation for students whose degrees were conferred by the program: **2.38**
- ❖ Number of students enrolled in the program: **29**
 - 29 M.S. Behavior Analysis
 - 3 in the 4+1 Combined Bachelor/Master Program
- ❖ Number of students no longer enrolled for any reason other than conferral of degree:
 - 4
- ❖ Number of completed applications received:
 - 2022: 53
 - 2021: 58
 - 2020: 59
 - 2019: 13
 - 2018: 9
 - 2017:14
 - 2016:13
 - 2015: 9
- ❖ Number of students admitted:
 - 2022: 12
 - 2021: 19
 - 2020: 20
 - 2019: 3
 - 2018: 1
 - 2017: 4
 - 2016: 4
 - 2015: 4

- ❖ Number of first-time candidates sitting for their Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) examination: **4**
- ❖ Percentage of first-time candidates passing the BCBA certification examination: **75%**
- ❖ Number of graduates obtaining a master-level state license as a behavior analyst: **3**
- ❖ Median undergraduate grade point average (GPA) for applicants admitted (reported on a 4-point scale): **3.37**

❖ Median standardized test scores of students accepted: GRE: 292* MAT: N/A

*Note that due to the global pandemic the GRE was not required during this reporting period.

The following is a list of resources to help you succeed. Use them!

Bookstore – Textbooks, supplies, and more!

Location: Central Campus

Phone: 978.542.7436

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9 am to 6pm, Friday 9 am – 4 pm

Career Services – This office guides you from your first day on campus through your entire professional life, from career exploration to resume building, from finding a potential employer to sharpening your interviewing skills.

Location: Ellison Campus Center room 105 (north campus)

Phone: 978.542.6406

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday, 8:30 am to 5 pm

Center for Academic Excellence

Location: Berry Library and Learning Commons, first floor (north campus)

Phone: 978.542.6215

Counseling and Health Services – this office provides mental health counseling and makes referrals for off-campus providers. It also provides the following services:

- Routine health visits and lab testing
- Treats minor illnesses and injuries
- Gynecological exams
- Sexual health, birth control, emergency contraception, STD testing, PEP, and PREP
- Immunizations and vaccines (including flu shot)

Location: Ellison Campus Center room 107 (north campus)

Phone: 978.542.6413

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday, 8 am to 5 pm

Disability Services – This office coordinates services for students with disabilities, provides campus accessibility tools and support, and facilitates classroom and educational accommodations.

Location: Berry Library and Learning Commons room G20 (north campus)

Phone: 978.542.6217

Video Phone: 978.910.0167

TTY: 978.542.7146

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday, 8:30 am to 5 pm

Gassett Fitness and Recreation Center – This area oversees campus recreation and provides access to the fitness center, group exercise classes, personal training, swimming pool and

lessons, intramural clubs and sports, special events, and equipment check out. You automatically receive a membership as a student.

Location: O’Keefe Sports Complex

Phone: 978.542.4442

Student Navigation Center – This office is the place to go for any business you might have with the University (i.e., registration, financial aid, billing, student accounts, Clipper Card, etc.).

Location: Classroom building, second floor (central campus, across from Starbucks)

Phone: 978.542.8000

University Police – This is a full police department within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Staffed 24/7, this department provides related police services, medical emergency response, crime prevention education, parking, parking passes, lost and found, traffic support, and a variety of other services to the SSU community.

Location: University Police (central campus)

Phone: 978.542.6111

Office Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Veteran’s Affairs – This office assists current and former service members of the armed forces as well as survivors and dependents with both state and federal educational benefit programs.

Location: Ellison Campus Center room 220 (north campus)

Writing Center - Use the Writing Center for assistance in topic development, brainstorming, paper organization, citations, oral and/or visual presentations, proposals, presentations, and professional documents (cover letters, resumes, personal statements). This is a great resource in the development of your project/thesis, or just for support with writing assignments in regular classes. It is FREE and you can meet with a representative in person or online for your convenience.

Location: Berry Library and Learning Commons, first floor (north campus)

Phone: 978.542.6215

Dining halls: A full list of dining options on campus can be found at this [link](#)

Coffee: There is a Dunkin’ Donuts in Meier Hall near the first-floor entrance. There is also a Starbucks on central campus.

Campus map: A campus map can be found at this [link](#)

Parking locations and passes: Campus parking and parking pass information can be found through the campus police. To park in any of the commuter lots you will need a parking pass decal on your car, or you will get ticketed. Commuter lots are located on North campus in the parking garage, on Central Campus in the Canal Street lot, on South campus in the Harrington lots, and in the O’Keefe Complex Main lot. More information can be found at this [link](#).