

Master of Science in Behavior Analysis

Department of Psychology

Program Handbook

Contact:

KENNETH W. JACOBS, Ph.D., BCBA-D

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, PSYCHOLOGY

Graduate Program Coordinator, Behavior Analysis

Salem State University

352 Lafayette Street

Salem, MA 01970

salemstate.edu

Office: Meier Hall 224H

Phone: 978.542.4725

Email: kjacobs@salemstate.edu

Table of Contents

Program Overview	4
Description	4
Mission	4
Objectives	4
Accreditation	4
Combined Undergraduate + Graduate (4+1) BS/MS in Behavior Analysis	5
Eligibility	5
Application Materials	5
How to Apply	5
Faculty & Contributing Members	6
Core Program Faculty	6
Kenneth W. Jacobs, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA, Program Coordinator	6
Carlos Aparicio, Ph.D.	6
Courtney Smith, M.S., BCBA	6
Associated Program Faculty	7
Darlene Crone-Todd, Ph.D., BCBA-D	7
Patrice Miller, Ed.D.	7
Samantha LaPointe, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA	7
Rebecca Imming, MSW, BCBA, LABA	7
Ryan Snyder, MEd, BCBA, LABA	8
Field Placement Coordinator	8
Katie Babione, MEd	8
Coursework (39 Credits)	8
Core Courses All Students Are Required To Complete (30 credits)	8
One Elective (3 Credits) Selected In Consultation With Program Coordinator	9
One Capstone (6 Credits) Selected In Consultation With Program Coordinator	9
Non-Course Experience Requirements	9
Practicum & Internship by Arrangement	9
Capstone: Thesis vs. PAIR	9
Which Capstone Option Is Right For You?	10
Thesis Option Process (Three-Member Committee)	10
PAIR Option Process (Two-Member Committee)	12
IRB & IACUC	12
Course Attendance & Modalities	13
Course Materials	14
Behavior Development Solutions (BDS)	14
Purchasing CBA Learning Modules Series TCO6	15
Microsoft Office 365	15
Supervision, Certification, & Licensure	16

Plan of Study	17
Satisfactory Progress	17
Coursework Standards	17
Experiential Hours	17
Sample Plan of Study	17
Full-Time vs. Part-Time	19
Two-Year Plan	19
Three-Year Plan.....	20
Course Registration	20
Financial Aid	21
Graduate Assistantships	21
Student Rights & Responsibilities	21
Ethical Behavior & Academic Integrity Guidelines	22
Academic Expectations for Graduate Students	22
Professional Expectations for Graduate Students	23
Remediation of Academic & Professional Conduct.....	23
Student Communication & Involvement	23
Email Communication	24
Student Involvement & Opportunity in the Community	25
Withdrawal Policies	25
Spring & Fall Semesters	25
Summer & Short Sessions.....	25
Program Withdrawal	26
Leave of Absence	26
Transfer Credits	26
Academic Standards	27
Academic Integrity	27
Academic Honesty	27
Academic Accommodations	28
Inclusive Excellence	28
Program Numbers	28

Program Overview

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 meets the course content requirements for eligibility for both certification and licensure as a behavior analyst, and experiences that 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.

Accreditation



The master's degree program in Behavior Analysis is fully-accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) Accreditation Board. See ABAI Accredited Programs [here](#).

Combined Undergraduate + Graduate (4+1) BS/MS in Behavior Analysis

Salem State University offers combined undergraduate/graduate programs to help qualified undergraduate students accelerate into graduate-level coursework. The combined BS/MS program allows select students to earn both a Bachelor of Science (BS) and a Master of Science (MS) in behavior analysis in as few as five years. Undergraduate students must be eligible to apply for the program.

Eligibility

- Minimum 3.25 cumulative GPA required
- Completed PSY 210 (Introduction to Learning) and PSY 203s (Research Methods & Statistics I) or PSY 208 (Research Methods in Psychology) with a grade of B or better
- Apply between 45-89 credits (second-semester sophomore to before senior status)
 - Exceptions possible for transfer students with ≥30 credits remaining

Application Materials

- Resume
- Statement of interest
- Three letters of recommendation

How to Apply

- Contact Jeremy Bubier (jbubier@salemstate.edu) in the School of Graduate Studies to obtain an application

If admitted to the program, then up to 24 graduate credits will count toward the undergraduate degree. Students must meet with the Behavior Analysis Program Coordinator before choosing courses and obtain approval from the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and Registrar.

To remain in the program, students must maintain a 3.25 GPA. If their GPA falls below this threshold, then they are dismissed from the program and must work with their academic advisor to reallocate coursework.

After completing all undergraduate requirements, students formally matriculate into the MS in Behavior Analysis Program, at which point a new graduate Plan of Study is developed with the Program Coordinator.

Faculty & Contributing Members

Core Program Faculty

[Kenneth W. Jacobs, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA, Program Coordinator](#)

Email: kjacobs@salemstate.edu

Dr. Jacobs completed his Ph.D. in Psychology with a specialization in Behavior Analysis at the University of Nevada, Reno in 2018. His training emphasized behavioral theory, philosophy, and the experimental analysis of human behavior. His research focuses on translating behavior-regulation approaches to learning, using quantitative models of regulation to predict behavior-change outcomes in both laboratory and applied settings. Since 2022, Dr. Jacobs has directed the Interbehavioral Regulation Laboratory (IRL), where he conducts basic human research on the effects of advertisements and videos in a social media analogue. As of 2025, Dr. Jacobs serves as Graduate Program Coordinator, where he continues to integrate his research expertise with program leadership, mentoring, and curriculum development.

[Carlos Aparicio, Ph.D.](#)

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 for the Laboratory for the Experimental Analysis of Behavior in nonhuman animals.

[Courtney Smith, M.S., BCBA](#)

Email: csmith2@salemstate.edu

Professor Smith is a doctoral candidate in the Behavior Analysis Department at the University of Nevada, Reno. She has training in the applied domain, with particular expertise in precision teaching, as well as in the philosophical foundations of behavior science and the experimental analysis of behavior. Her current research focuses on fluency, examining how mastery is defined and measured, along with the contextual factors that influence it.

Associated Program Faculty

[Darlene Crone-Todd, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

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.

[Patrice Miller, Ed.D.](#)

Email: pmiller@salemstate.edu

Dr. 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. 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.

[Samantha LaPointe, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA](#)

Email: slapointe@salemstate.edu

Dr. 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.

[Rebecca Imming, MSW, BCBA, LABA](#)

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.

Ryan Snyder, MEd, BCBA, LABA

Email: rsnyder@salemstate.edu

Visiting Instructor 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 coursework 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.

Field Placement Coordinator

Katie Babione, MEd

Email: kbabione@salemstate.edu

Field Placement Coordinator Babione graduated from the University of Vermont (UVM) in 2017 with her B.A. in Italian and Global Studies, then earned her Master of Education degree from UVM in 2021. She has worked in various student support roles for the past 8 years with a focus on internships and field experience. She now oversees fieldwork placement and site supervision for the MS in Behavior Analysis graduate students. Please contact Katie to submit your Site Supervision Acknowledgment & Agreement form and your monthly Fieldwork Supervision hours.

Coursework (39 Credits)

Core Courses All Students Are Required To Complete (30 credits)

- PSY 715: Behavioral Principles of Learning
- PSY 725: Applied Behavior Analysis I
- PSY 726: Applied Behavior Analysis II
- PSY 727: Professional Development
- 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

One Elective (3 Credits) Selected In Consultation With Program Coordinator

- PSY 875: Directed Study (For Thesis Students; see below)
or
- PSY 997: Special Topics (For PAIR Students; see below)

One Capstone (6 Credits) Selected In Consultation With Program Coordinator

- PSY 899: Thesis I and PSY 999: Thesis II ***
or
- PSY 898: PAIR I and PSY 998: PAIR II
 - PAIR = Practical Applications in Research

Non-Course Experience Requirements

1. All students seeking certification or licensure in behavior analysis must complete a minimum of **1500 supervised hours** at an approved site before they can graduate. They must secure this site by the end of their first semester in the program.
2. All students must **present their research or application project** at a local, regional, national, or international conference.
3. Thesis manuscripts are expected to be **published in Salem State Library's Digital Commons**.

Practicum & Internship by Arrangement

Practicum and Internship courses are available by arrangement but may incur additional time and cost in the program. These courses must be set up with the Program Coordinator and approved at least one semester prior to their start date.

- 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 arranged one semester prior to undertaking course

Total Credits: 39.0

Capstone: Thesis vs. PAIR

All students in the program must complete either the Thesis or the Practical Applications in Research (PAIR) course sequence as their capstone requirement for graduation.

- PSY 899: Thesis I and PSY 999: Thesis II
or
- PSY 898: PAIR I and PSY 998: PAIR II

The Thesis and PAIR options are established in accordance with the ABAI Accreditation Board [guidance](#) and approved through university governance.

Which Capstone Option Is Right For You?

- Students pursuing certification and licensure are encouraged to choose the PAIR Option.
- Students with the goal of pursuing a higher degree (e.g., doctoral) at a research-based institution are encouraged to choose the Thesis Option.¹

Students must consult with the Program Coordinator before choosing either option.

Thesis Option: Students pursuing this option will collaborate closely with a core faculty member on research conducted within their laboratory. The process typically begins with a Directed Study (PSY 875), where students develop their research interests via a literature review and may gain experience with an ongoing research project. If the faculty member agrees to supervise the thesis, the student then transitions to a committee-based thesis (see below). This pathway emphasizes research training and prepares students for academic or doctoral-level work.

PAIR Option: This option requires students to secure a position at a program-approved fieldwork site, where they gain practical experience under the supervision of a qualified professional. Supervisors must hold both Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) credentials and be Licensed as Applied Behavior Analysts (LABAs) in the state of Massachusetts. To complete this option, students must accrue a minimum of 1,500 documented fieldwork hours, recorded in collaboration with our Field Placement Coordinator and in accordance with the Behavior Analyst Certification Board's (BACB) monthly verification system.

Thesis Option Process (Three-Member Committee)

The first requirement is to complete a **Directed Study (PSY 875)** with your *prospective* thesis advisor, who must be a core faculty member. This course is typically taken in your second or third semester, and because it requires paperwork and faculty approval, you should begin planning the semester prior to enrollment.

During Directed Study, you will typically conduct a literature review on a selected topic in behavior analysis. You are expected to meet weekly with your faculty advisor and may also be asked to attend laboratory meetings. By the end of the Directed Study, you should have a well-developed thesis idea, refined in collaboration with your faculty advisor and the program coordinator.

¹ Students pursuing certification/licensure and a higher degree may choose the Thesis option. However, students will be required to participate in a core faculty member's laboratory on campus while also completing supervised experience at a program-approved site. This is a significant time commitment that must be discussed with and approved by the Program Coordinator.

At this stage, you will identify a **thesis-committee** consisting of at least **three members**.

- Two must be core faculty from the program
- One may be from outside the program or institution

All members must meet the thesis committee eligibility requirements as defined by the ABAI Accreditation Board. In consultation with your thesis advisor and the program coordinator, finalize your committee and begin discussing your thesis topic with each member. These steps should be completed prior to enrolling in Thesis I (PSY 899). In your final two semesters, you will complete **Thesis I (PSY 899)** followed by **Thesis II (PSY 999)**.

During **Thesis I**, you will:

- Develop and write your thesis proposal manuscript
- Prepare a draft of your IRB or IACUC application (see below)
- Collaborate closely with your thesis advisor to refine your proposal manuscript
- After advisor approval, send the proposal draft to your committee for feedback
- When all committee members agree the proposal is ready, schedule a proposal presentation
- A passing vote from all committee members is required to complete the course, which is graded pass/fail

Only after passing PSY 899—and receiving formal approval from both your committee and the Program Coordinator—can you enroll in **Thesis II**.

During **PSY 999**, you will:

- Carry out the research and write your final thesis manuscript
- Work with your thesis advisor to revise and finalize your draft
- Once approved by your advisor, send the final draft to your committee
- When the committee agrees the thesis is ready, you will schedule a presentation to defend your final thesis

Completing the Thesis Option is a significant but rewarding process. Faculty members may take **1-2 weeks** to review drafts of your proposal or final manuscript and may request revisions before granting approval to share it with your committee or schedule a presentation. Be sure to plan ahead and set clear goals and deadlines in consultation with your thesis advisor. Additionally, students are required to present their work at **Salem State University's Research Day**, which fulfills the presentation requirement in the Plan of Study (see below). Students may also choose to present at other regional or national conferences in consultation with their thesis advisor.

All registration and approval forms for PSY 875, 899, and 999 can be found here:

<https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/school-graduate-studies-forms>

PAIR Option Process (Two-Member Committee)

This sequence follows a set schedule: **PAIR I (PSY 898)** is offered in the Fall, and **PAIR II (PSY 998)** in the Spring. In this course sequence, the instructor is a core faculty member and serves as students' first committee member. The second committee member is the student's BCBA fieldwork supervisor with relevant expertise in the behavior analytic topic selected for application.

During **PAIR I**, you will:

- Identify your applied topic
- Complete a literature review
- Develop and complete a written proposal
- Complete CITI training for IRB application approval (see below)
- Present the proposal by the end of the semester

Once the course proposal is approved, students must obtain IRB approval before collecting data or involving participants. **Failure to follow this protocol is considered a serious ethical violation and may result in a failing grade and/or dismissal from the program.**

During **PAIR II**, you will:

- Carry out your proposed application to completion
- Submit a written report in a thesis-like format
- Finalize your written report by integrating feedback from your PAIR instructor and BCBA supervisor
- Present your project in class, with an invitation extended to your BCBA supervisor

Students are also required to present their work at **Salem State University's Research Day**, which fulfills the presentation requirement in the Plan of Study (see below). Students are encouraged to consider presenting at other regional or national conferences in consultation with their PAIR course instructor.

IRB & IACUC

At the onset of Thesis I or PAIR I, students should anticipate the submission of an application to Salem State University's [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) or [International Animal Care Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#). Whether you are conducting basic research in a laboratory or practical applications in the field, it must undergo IRB or IACUC review with approval.² All research and practical applications involving the recruitment of human or nonhuman animal participants must be reviewed and approved before recruitment,

² Certain research may be considered *exempt* from review. However, an application must still be submitted to the respective review board to receive approval as an *exempt* study.

observation, data collection, etc. **Failure to obtain ethical board review and approval—before the onset of a research study or practical application—is considered a serious ethical violation that may result in a failing grade and/or dismissal from the program.**

Prior to submitting review board applications, students must complete any pre-training required by the IRB or IACUC. In most cases, students will complete the [CITI Training](#) on *Social & Behavioral Research Investigators*. If working with nonhuman animals, then students will complete the [CITI Training](#) on *Working with the IACUC*. **Students must use their @salemstate.edu email address to register for CITI Training.** This is because courses will be made available based on your institutional affiliation and because your CITI Certificate of Completion will be automatically uploaded to Salem State's IRB and IACUC application portal.

Use the following links to find out more about submitting applications and materials:

- IRB Resources on Canvas: <https://elearning.salemstate.edu/courses/1110675>
- IACUC Resources on Canvas: <https://elearning.salemstate.edu/courses/1140953>

Course Attendance & Modalities

As a graduate student, you are expected to demonstrate a high degree of professional and ethical behavior. This includes showing up for class, completing your assignments on time, and actively working toward becoming an expert in the field of behavior analysis. You should know which courses you are enrolled in and understand the expectations for meeting times and instructional formats.

Each course may differ in how it is delivered. Be sure to read the course description when registering and contact the instructor with any questions. In general, you are expected to attend all classes. **You may not miss more than one hybrid session or two face-to-face sessions.**

The program offers courses in **face-to-face, hybrid, or blended modalities only**. Check the format of each course in advance so you can prepare accordingly. Refer to the course syllabus and speak with your instructor to understand the expectations. Below are some important terms and descriptions to help you navigate the course modes.

- **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 in real-time online using Zoom or similar technology
 - **Asynchronous** modes of teaching are fully online without a required class meeting

Click the following link to read more about Learning Modalities:

<https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/what-learning-modality>

Course Materials

Course materials such as textbooks, online programs of instruction, or other instructional aides will be specified in each course syllabus. Below are course materials that are **required** across multiple courses.

Behavior Development Solutions (BDS)

The [Behavior Development Solutions \(BDS\) CBA Learning Modules Series](#) is an online program of instruction that is **required** within a selection of core courses. These “BDS Modules” are required because they complement course content and prepare students for the BCBA certification examination. BDS Modules cover the most recent content specified in the [BCBA Test Content Outline \(6th ed.\)](#).

Each module within the CBA Learning Modules Series will be assigned in one or more of the classes listed below. These modules will make up a portion of your final grade in each class and it is recommended to complete all modules even if not assigned by your instructor. All PAIR students will be required to complete these modules before graduating.

Courses	Module Letter: Description
PSY 715	A: Behaviorism and Philosophical Foundations
PSY 725	B: Concepts and Principles
PSY 726	G: Behavior-Change Procedures H: Selecting and Implementing Interventions
PSY 825	F: Behavior Assessment
PSY 830	C: Measurement, Data Display, and Interpretation D: Experimental Design
PSY 840	E: Ethical and Professional Issues
PSY 845	I: Personnel Supervision and Management

Note. Module Letters and descriptions correspond with the [BCBA Test Content Outline \(6th ed.\)](#)

Purchasing CBA Learning Modules Series TCO6

This is a subscription-based purchase with options for a 3-month, 6-month, 12-month, 24-month, 36-month, or 48-month period. Students should consider the time it will take to complete the degree program (part-time vs. full-time) and their supervised fieldwork hours. This is considered an academic investment, similar to purchasing a textbook. Here is how to make your purchase:

1. Contact the Program Coordinator to receive your **student discount**
2. Go to <https://www.bds.com/>
3. Log in using the credentials provided by the Program Coordinator
 - a. Credentials will require your @salemstate.edu email address
4. Locate and purchase the CBA Learning Modules Series TCO6

If you do not have access at the discounted rate for students, then please contact the Program Coordinator.

Microsoft Office 365

Microsoft Office 365 is a suite of applications including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, and OneDrive. Microsoft Office is **free** for faculty and students to download and use on their devices. Students will be expected to engage with course content and submit their assignments with Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and more. Students should use the following instructions to download the Microsoft Office 365 suite to their desktops:

- <https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/install-microsoft-office-using-your-office-365-email-account>

Students must use their @salemstate.edu email address to initiate the free installation. Microsoft Office is the preferred software for email and word processing at Salem State University and within the MS in Behavior Analysis Program. Additionally, Microsoft Office is a common tool used within the field of Behavior Analysis for research, writing, editing, and presenting graphical or other information. Microsoft Office applications are also highly compatible with the [APA Style Guidelines](#) required in all student assignments unless otherwise specified.

Note: An inability to log in to software made available by Salem State University, on your personal devices or with multi-factor authentication, is not excusable unless an accommodation is required and granted by [Academic and Campus Accommodations](#). Students unable to log in must visit the [ITS Help Desk](#).

Supervision, Certification, & Licensure

Ultimately, students are responsible for their [Supervised Fieldwork](#). This entails securing a program-approved site, supervisor, and [documenting your Supervised Fieldwork hours](#).

Students are also responsible for ensuring that they meet all the requirements to be eligible to apply for the BCBA exam and/or qualify for [Massachusetts state licensure](#).

As an ABAI Accredited program, we offer the qualifying coursework that allows students to begin accruing fieldwork hours. Additionally, a degree from our ABAI Accredited program meets one of the eligibility criteria to apply for the BCBA exam. While the program does not offer fieldwork hours directly through faculty members, we do offer assistance with requirements to apply for the BCBA exam and/or state licensure. The Field Placement Coordinator works closely with the Program Coordinator to approve sites where students may gain fieldwork hours. We may provide students with recommendations and referrals to these sites.

Here are some important guidelines:

- A fieldwork site and supervisor must be secured in the student's first semester in the program
- A fieldwork supervisor must be listed in the [BACB's Certificant Registry](#) as a BCBA in good standing and eligibility to supervise (i.e., completed 8-hour supervision training)
- The fieldwork supervisor must be listed on the [License Verification Site](#) as a current Licensed Applied Behavior Analyst (LABA) in the state of Massachusetts
- The fieldwork site must be approved by the program with a site-visit by the Field Placement Coordinator and/or Program Coordinator (or designated faculty member in the program)
- Two forms must be filled out before supervised fieldwork can commence:
 - One is a program-specific form called the Supervision Acknowledgement & Agreement form (provided by the Field Placement Coordinator), which identifies the fieldwork site and supervisor credentials
 - Second is a Supervision Contract between the fieldwork supervisor and student, which should be arranged in accordance with guidelines in the [BCBA Handbook](#) and [BACB Resources for Supervision and Training](#)

The program does offer Practicum and Internship courses, but they must be arranged one-semester prior to their undertaking. These courses are in addition to the 39 credits required for completion of the program.

Whether students complete Supervised Fieldwork or practicum/internships, they will be expected to secure a program-approved site and provide evidence that they have obtained at least 1,500 supervision hours prior to graduating.

Plan of Study

Once matriculated you will develop your Plan of Study (see below) in consultation with the Program Coordinator. Your plan of study is intended to be a guide for completing program requirements from start to finish and may be revised in consultation with the 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 (SGS) to set up a meeting with the Program Coordinator regarding your Plan of Study.

Satisfactory Progress

The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) requires that all students must earn a GPA of at least 3.0 to graduate. Further, the MS in Behavior Analysis Program requires that all students earn a “B or better” in all courses 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 led them to 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.

Coursework Standards

The MS in Behavior Analysis Program courses have been designed to meet the [ABAI Accreditation Board Standards](#). Students pursuing post-graduate certification should note that this program aligns with Pathway 1, as outlined in the [BCBA Handbook](#).

Experiential Hours

All students in the program are required to obtain experiential hours. Students pursuing certification and/or licensure gain their hours through Supervised Fieldwork at a program-approved site and by completing the [PAIR Option](#). Students with the goal of pursuing a higher degree gain their hours through work in a core faculty member’s laboratory and by completing the [Thesis Option](#).

Sample Plan of Study

Below is a sample Plan of Study with the typical semester-by-semester schedule for our courses in the program. The schedule is subject to change from year-to-year, so it is important to meet with the Program Coordinator to complete this and stay up to date by checking your @salemstate.edu email.

Master of Science in Behavior Analysis – Plan of Study

Check one: ☐ New ☐ 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:

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	If yes, condition:	Needed	Met
------------------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------	--------	-----

Program requirements:

Course number	Title	Credit hours	Semester	Grade
Required Courses – 30 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	SPRING	
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	FALL	
PSY 727	Professional Development in Behavior Analysis	3	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 3	BY ARRNGMT BY ARRNGMT	
Option 2: Research in Practice				
PSY 898, and PSY 998	Practical Application in Research I, and Practical Application in Research II	3 3	FALL SPRING	
Electives – 3 credits <i>Choose one course from the list below.</i>				
PSY 875	Directed Study	3	BY ARRNGMT	
PSY 910	Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis	3	BY ARRNGMT	
PSY 911	Internship in Applied Behavior Analysis I	3	BY ARRNGMT	
PSY 912	Internship in Applied Behavior Analysis II	3	BY ARRNGMT	
PSY 997	Special Topics in Behavior Analysis	3	SUMMER	
Additional Program Requirements: <i>Consult with program coordinator.</i>				
<i>Check boxes to indicate the following requirements have been met:</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> All students with a stated goal of working as a certified or licensed behavior analyst must provide evidence of 1500 completed supervision hours prior to graduating and must secure an appropriate placement/position at a site that is pre-approved by the program by the end of their first 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		39		
Program coordinator notes:				

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 2024

Full-Time vs. Part-Time

Full-time students enroll in 3 courses per semester and typically complete their Plan of Study in 2 years. Part-time students enroll in 2-3 courses per semester and typically complete their Plan of Study in 3 years.

Two-Year Plan

FALL	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	SPRING
PSY 715: Behavioral Principles	PSY 726: ABA II	PSY 875: Directed Study (Thesis Option)	PSY 842: Conceptual Issues	PSY 817: EAB
PSY 725: ABA I	PSY 830: Small N Research	PSY 997: Special Topics (PAIR Option)	PSY 845: OBM	PSY 825: Behavioral Assessment
PSY 727: Prof. Develop.	PSY 840: Ethics		PSY 898: PAIR I or PSY 899: Thesis I	PSY 998: PAIR II or PSY 999: Thesis II
Academic Year: One			Academic Year: Two	

Note. This is the typical 2-year sequence for students starting in the Fall.

Three-Year Plan

FALL	SPRING	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	SPRING
PSY 715: Behavioral Principles	PSY 726: ABA II	PSY 842: Conceptual Issues	PSY 825: Behavioral Assessment	PSY 875: Directed Study (Thesis Option)	PSY 898: PAIR I or PSY 899: Thesis I	PSY 817: EAB
PSY 725: ABA I	PSY 830: Small N Research	PSY 845: OBM	PSY 840: Ethics	PSY 997: Special Topics (PAIR Option)		PSY 998: PAIR II or PSY 999: Thesis II
PSY 727: Prof. Develop.						
Academic Year: One		Academic Year: Two			Academic Year: Three	

Note. This is the typical 3-year sequence for students starting in the Fall.

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

Registration is completed within SSU's [Navigator](#) portal. A link to the Navigator portal and instructions on how to register for classes can be found here:

- <https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/how-register-classes>

Navigator is where you will register for classes, review your bills and/or financial aid, and “take any action” requested from an SSU office. Students should check their Navigator on a regular basis. Navigator accounts are issued by SSU when students are admitted to the program. Please use the following link for more information on account usernames to log in to Navigator:

- <https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/logging-navigator>

For assistance with Navigator or related issues, students can visit the Student Navigation Center in-person or online:

- <https://www.salemstate.edu/campus-life/student-navigation-center>

The Student Navigation Center is located on the Harrington Campus and is on the Second Floor of the Classroom Building.

Financial Aid

To apply for federal student aid, students must follow the detailed instructions found here:

- <https://www.salemstate.edu/gradfinaid>

Importantly, students must register for six credits per semester and maintain a GPA of 3.0 to be eligible for federal student aid. This and more important guidelines can be found in the link provided.

Graduate Assistantships

The School of Graduate Studies at Salem State offers [two types of assistantships](#):

- **Graduate Assistantships** provide students with professional development opportunities and work experience through involvement with projects that support 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 including tuition remission, an \$18/hour stipend for 10 hours of work per week, and hands-on professional experience applying theory to practice. More detailed information on Assistantships can be found [here](#).

Student Rights & Responsibilities

As a student and developing professional, you are expected to understand and uphold your rights and responsibilities within the program. Every instructor is required to provide you with a written syllabus for any course you take, so you have the right to a syllabus. Your responsibilities as a student can and should be explained within that syllabus.

Responsibilities include but are not limited to attendance, participation, assignment criteria, ethical standards, and communication between peers and instructors.

Clarification questions about your rights and responsibilities can and should be made at the beginning of the semester. While course-related responsibilities will vary, ethical

behavior is always expected and should be discussed with faculty/supervisors on an ongoing basis.

Ethical Behavior & Academic Integrity Guidelines

1. As an ABAI Accredited program, faculty and students are expected to uphold the ethical standards of their respective profession within the field of Behavior Analysis. [ABAI's Code of Ethics Statement](#) includes links to the specific standards within Behavior Analysis
2. As students pursuing certification as Behavior Analysts within this program, you are specifically expected to uphold the [BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts](#)
3. As a program within the Department of Psychology at Salem State University, students are expected to uphold the [APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct](#)
 - a. This expectation extends to [APA Style Guidelines](#) on proper citation and documentation by all students
4. Unless otherwise specified in a course syllabus, plagiarism and/or cheating will result in a grade of "F" in the course and will be cause for expulsion from the program
 - a. This expectation extends to carrying out research or practical applications: You must have [IRB or IACUC](#) approval prior to commencing any research, including recruitment of participants, observation, or data collection
5. All students, regardless of the situation, are expected to behave in a truthful and ethical manner
6. Regarding coursework, all students are expected to:
 - a. Thoroughly prepare for class meetings
 - b. Meet all deadlines
 - c. Be on time and be present for the whole class period
 - d. Honor all faculty requests for appropriate behavior (e.g., not being on cell phones or other devices during class discussions or instruction unless specifically instructed to do so)

Academic Expectations for 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.**

Students have a right to be informed of any class-related changes prior to those changes occurring. For example, attendance policies or assignment-related changes should be communicated by the instructor. Please be sure to ask your instructor or the Program Coordinator for clarification at any time. Furthermore, students have the right to ask questions or raise concerns pertaining to their performance while enrolled as a student in the program.

Professional Expectations for Graduate Students

As professionals in the field of Behavior Analysis, you will be expected to uphold the professional, legal, and ethical guidelines within our field. Students in this program are specifically expected to uphold the [BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts](#). If any student behavior of concern arises, it should be addressed by the instructor or Program Coordinator, with an opportunity for the student to make changes. In rare cases, when a student cannot make the required changes in the behavior deemed unprofessional or unethical, then the Program Coordinator and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) or other administrators may become involved.

Remediation of Academic & Professional Conduct

If any student behavior of concern arises, then certain steps should be taken to clarify and remediate the conduct in question. Faculty and students should enact the following steps.

Instructors 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 to 3-week period, specific to the situation and issue at hand), then the plan of improvement will continue up to the Program Coordinator.

The instructor will then meet with the Program Coordinator to discuss the issue and identify alternative solutions to present to the student. At this point, it is likely that the instructor, coordinator, and student will all meet to address the behavioral issues with a plan. 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 an instructor, then they must first speak with that instructor. If they cannot resolve it with the instructor, 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 (SGS). 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 to hear such an appeal, based on the merits of the case.

Please note that in all cases where a student disagrees with a grade, the course syllabus will be used as the deciding factor for determining whether a grade is appropriately earned.

Student Communication & Involvement

Students are not only expected to enroll and participate in all required courses but are also expected to contribute to the field. This is done through independent research, literature reviews, conceptual analysis, and discussions in seminars and faculty laboratories. Students should have discussions about opportunities with faculty early on in their Plan of

Study and should continue these discussions on an ongoing basis. Discussing research and applied experiences should be done on an ongoing basis and should be communicated thoroughly and appropriately as the situation requires.

All students are expected to attend required meetings announced by the Program Coordinator. Meetings are typically in the first week or two of each Fall and Spring and are communicated via email.

Email Communication

All students are expected to communicate through their **@salemstate.edu** email address. Email communication between faculty, supervisors, and the Program Coordinator is a vital part of your success in the program. Email communications will include important information pertaining to:

- Plans of Study
- Program Meetings
- Course Registration
- Add/Drop Periods
- Withdrawal Periods
- Supervision Hours
- Graduate Assistantships
- Research Opportunities
- Applied Opportunities
- Scholarships
- SSU's Research Day
- Behavior Analysis Conferences
- Other important dates/deadlines and opportunities

If a student does not reply to emails addressed directly to them, then this will be considered an instance of unprofessional conduct to be addressed with the instructor and by the Program Coordinator. Steps to remediate this conduct will be followed as described in the [Remediation of Academic & Professional Conduct](#) section.

Click the following link for how to sign in and set up your **@salemstate.edu** email:

- <https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/outlook-email-help>

Note: An inability to log in to software made available by Salem State University, on your personal devices or with multi-factor authentication, is not excusable unless an accommodation is required and granted by [Academic and Campus Accommodations](#). Students unable to log in must visit the [ITS Help Desk](#).

Student Involvement & Opportunity in the Community

In addition to their involvement in the program, students are expected to be involved in the behavior analytic community. Whether it be working in applied settings or conducting laboratory research, students are expected to be involved in the community whenever possible. It is important for students to play a role in the behavior analysis community by contacting and communicating with other behavior analysts as much as possible. This includes attending and participating in regional and national conferences. As an ABAI Accredited Program, students in the program receive a **20% discount** on all [ABAI Conference](#) registration for events during the 2024-2025 membership cycle. Students may also be eligible to receive a [Graduate Student Presentation Travel Award](#) from the School of Graduate Studies.

Students are highly encouraged to learn more about the field of behavior analysis by connecting with ABAI on social media (e.g., LinkedIn) and visiting their [website](#). In particular, students should explore [ABAI's Special Interest Groups \(SIGs\)](#) to make connections with professionals in their area of interest. Furthermore, students are encouraged to connect with program faculty and other behavior analysts on LinkedIn.

For students who do not have a LinkedIn, resume, or professional headshot, please visit Salem State University's [Career Services](#) for a free headshot and help with your professional presence. Behavior Analysis is a growing community and scientific discipline, so we encourage all students to represent the field in accordance with all ethical standards and in a professional manner. For example, students should not misrepresent themselves as a "BCBA" or "BCBA in training" and should not disclose any information about clients or services. Please see the [BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts](#) for more information.

Withdrawal Policies

Spring & Fall Semesters

When a student wants to drop or withdraw from a specific course before the "Add/Drop Period Ends" or the "Last Day to Withdraw," they may do so through their [Navigator](#) portal. Students can find the last day to Add/Drop or Withdraw on the [Academic Calendar](#). If it is 15 calendar days past the Add/Drop Period End, then students will not get a tuition refund. Students should review Salem State University's [Refund Policy](#) for Graduate Students. In the case of an *extraordinary* circumstance, students may submit a [Refund Appeal](#) form with documentation to the School of Graduate Studies (SGS).

Summer & Short Sessions

When withdrawing during summer and other short sessions, students have only 1 business day after the official start of the session to receive a full refund. Four calendar days after the Add/Drop will result in No Refund. Students should see the [Refund Policy](#) and regularly check the [Academic Calendar](#).

Program Withdrawal

If a student chooses to permanently and completely withdraw from the program, then they must complete the [Program Withdrawal](#) form to be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies (SGS). Non-attendance does **not** constitute a withdrawal from the program, so an official Program Withdrawal form must be submitted. Students should also consult the other forms under [Addressing Life Circumstances](#), for medical situations and/or Leave of Absence.

Leave of Absence

If students need to request a leave of absence from the program, then they should follow the 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 submit an official [Leave of Absence](#) form to the School of Graduate Studies (SGS)

Click the following link for more information on the policy and procedures:

- <https://ask.salemstate.edu/kb/what-graduate-leave-absence-policy>

Transfer Credits

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.
 - a. Not all courses can count, and courses from previous Verified Course Sequences may not align with current program standards. Students must 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 of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) 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.

More information about Transfer Credits can be found in the [Graduate School Course Catalog](#). The form for requesting Transfer Credits can be found [here](#).

Academic Standards

Academic Integrity

At Salem State University, and particularly in the graduate program, we assume that students come to the University with serious educational intent. Students are expected to be mature, responsible individuals who 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 for the School of Graduate Studies](#). The formal regulations are extensive and detailed, so students should familiarize themselves. If a student is unsure, ask your instructors, and visit the [Writing Center](#) for tutoring and help with any questions.

Academic Honesty

Students will be held to the highest standards of academic honesty. Specifically, cheating on examinations will not be tolerated. For out-of-class projects, students must complete all work on their 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 instructor teaching the course in which you are enrolled. AI-use will be deemed inappropriate unless students are instructed to use AI for the purpose of an assignment.

Any suspected violations of these academic standards will be subject to the University's [Academic Integrity policies](#). **Typically, violations of academic honesty in most courses will result in a grade of "F" and expulsion from the program.**

Academic Accommodations

Salem State University is committed to providing equal access to the educational experience for all students in compliance with Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act and to providing all reasonable academic accommodations, aids and adjustments. Any student who has a documented disability requiring an accommodation, aid or adjustment should speak with the instructor immediately. Students with Disabilities who have not previously done so should provide documentation to and schedule an appointment with the office for [Academic & Campus Accommodations](#) to obtain appropriate services.

Note: If you have a disability, you are responsible for making arrangements with the office for [Academic & Campus Accommodations](#). Individual instructors cannot ethically provide accommodations for students with disabilities without documentation from the [Disability Accommodations](#) office. Their office is bound to keep your information confidential and will only contact the instructors you ask them to contact.

Click the following link to report any incidences of bias, discrimination, or misconduct:

- <https://www.salemstate.edu/campus-life/student-services/report-incident-or-concern>

Inclusive Excellence

We value, and emphasize, multicultural and intercultural competency. We believe that representation of different cultures and backgrounds is important for our program. We value the inclusion of students from diverse backgrounds and try to create fewer barriers to studying at the graduate level. 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 range 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 experiences, 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 Numbers

For more information about the MS in Behavior Analysis Program, students can find our Annual Report on the [ABAI Accreditation Board website](#). The report includes year-by-year numbers on graduation rates, retention, faculty to student ratios and more.