

Program Approval

I. General Information

A. Institution Wichita State University

B. Program Identification

Degree Level:	Master's
Program Title:	Applied Behavior Analysis
Degree to be Offered:	Master of Education - Applied Behavior Analysis
Responsible Department or Unit:	College of Applied Studies, Department of Intervention Services and Leadership in Education (ISLE) Department
CIP Code:	42.2814
Modality:	Online
Proposed Implementation Date:	August 1, 2025

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours for the Degree: 36

II. Clinical Sites: Does this program require the use of Clinical Sites? yes

Students will be securing their employment with a school district/cooperative or ABA clinic to complete field experience and training hours. Faculty will support candidates in this process by discussing the current and previous sites students have been placed. Students may also work with faculty to secure a new location if appropriate affiliation agreements are completed with the partner and the program. Dr. Angela Beeler, the program coordinator, will work to complete an approved affiliation agreement through general counsel similar to the agreements currently in place for the school psychology program. Supervision of applied experiences will be offered remotely via telehealth, as it is currently offered in the school psychology field experiences. These methods of supervision comply with the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) standards for fieldwork supervision and satisfy requirements for credentialing (Behavior Analyst Certification Board Handbook, 2024).

III. Justification

The Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Master's program would prepare a variety of school and community professionals with the knowledge and experience needed to better understand human behavior. Training in ABA would positively impact a wide variety of individuals with behavioral needs. The ABA Master's Program is focused on addressing the needs for school professionals and community service providers to address challenging behaviors of children and youth that interfere with the teaching and learning required to increase K-12 student outcomes. Broadly, ABA is a science that uses learning principles to improve socially important behavior. The practice of applied behavior analysis is focused on assessing environmental influences on behavior, function-based intervention, and data-based decision making. As such, ABA can address the behavioral needs of individuals in multiple areas, including education, counseling, gerontology and more.

The field of ABA is expected to grow by 22% by 2034 (Yellow Bus ABA Therapy, 2024) primarily because of the growing Autism Treatment Market that has widely accepted ABA as an evidence-based treatment option (Autism Treatment Market, 2022). The interdisciplinary nature of this program exists in the space where students and instructors from a variety of educational backgrounds, experiences, fields, and/or disciplines come together to learn about the science of behavior analysis and then explore how to apply it ethically across multiple settings. ABA is the leading evidence-based treatment approach for autism, as well as for other developmental disabilities, but there appears to be a shortage of qualified ABA professionals in Kansas (McClendon et al., 2019). There are over 450 current jobs for Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and related fields credentialed with ABA training currently posted on Indeed.com alone with the average salary at \$71,327. The average salary is based on a nationwide average. In 2023 there were 61,112 new BCBA jobs posting nationwide; 999 of those

were in the state of Kansas, which constituted a 228.6% increase from the previous year.⁵ The annual nationwide demand for professionals possessing BCBA certification has consistently risen each year since 2010, experiencing a notable 14% increase from 2022 to 2023. There is a clear need for trained ABA professionals across multiple professional fields nationwide. The applied focus of ABA, combined with the applied training embedded in the proposed coursework, directly aligns with the WSU mission to increase applied training opportunities for students.

The proposed 36-credit hour ABA Master’s Program includes 21 credit hours from the WSU ABA certificate, which was approved through the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) as a verified course sequence (VCS) in 2019. The ABA certificate courses provide the training required to become a Board-Certified behavior analyst; however, a master’s degree (or higher) is required to be eligible to sit for the BCBA exam. Currently, students take the certificate in route to an EdS in school psychology or after the completion of a master’s degree in a related field, such as counseling or educational psychology. The ABA master’s degree will provide a degree option that directly aligns with the ABA certificate and allow students to be eligible to become a BCBA without completing a degree in a different field.

IV. Program Demand: Select one or both of the following to address student demand:

A. Survey of Student Interest

Number of surveys administered: 150
 Number of completed surveys returned: 47
 Percentage of students interested in program: ... 89%

There is an increasing demand for professionals proficient in applied behavior analysis (ABA) across a broad spectrum of sectors, including non-profit organizations, social service agencies, educational establishments, private enterprises, and beyond, where expertise in human behavior is critical. Consequently, the program is anticipated to attract candidates from diverse educational and experiential backgrounds. Additionally, applicants that complete the master’s degree in ABA and choose to further their education through applying for an Educational Specialist (EdS) degree in School Psychology will be able to work in the field of ABA while they pursue the EdS degree, ultimately broadening their career possibilities and shortening the duration to employment while they further their education.

In line with these expectations, a survey was conducted to gauge the interest level in an Applied Behavior Analysis Master’s program among current students and alumni of the school psychology program and the ABA VCS. A total of 150 surveys were emailed, aiming to capture a wide range of perspectives on the potential integration of ABA training into their educational and professional pathways. A total of 47 individuals responded indicating their current or past enrollment in the WSU School Psychology (SP) program and/or the ABA program. Of the 47 responses, one was not fully completed and therefore not included in the following breakdown:

Affiliation	Current SP Students	SP Alumni	Current ABA VCS Students
Total Responses	60%	36%	2%
Would apply current ABA work toward Master’s in ABA or return to WSU to complete Master’s program	89%	89%	100%
If Master’s degree en route was an option, would have pursued that enrollment	75%	83%	100%

Given the data, it is clear that there is a strong interest among both current students and graduates of the WSU School Psychology and ABA VCS programs in furthering their education through a Master’s degree in ABA. This

interest is particularly pronounced when the opportunity to integrate this degree into their existing educational path with minimal additional credit-hour requirements is presented. Such integration not only promises to diversify career options but also to expedite the professional readiness of students while they continue their education. These results offer compelling evidence for the integration of an ABA Master's program into the existing curriculum, promising to meet the aspirations and needs of our educational community.

B. Market Analysis

On a national scale, demand for individuals holding BCBA or BCBA-D certification has consistently increased each year since 2010. From 2022 to 2023 alone, this demand grew by 14%. In Kansas, the growth in demand for BCBA's was even more pronounced, with job postings for BCBA's increasing by a staggering 228.6% in the same period (Behavior Analyst Certification Board, 2024). The demand for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services in Kansas has dramatically increased, particularly for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), yet access remains limited. In 2017, only 153 of 5,405 children with an ASD diagnosis in KanCare received ABA services, highlighting a significant gap in care. Families face long wait times—over two years for KanCare recipients and 19 months for those with private insurance (McClendon et al., 2019)—due to a lack of qualified providers. A recent local news segment highlights the urgent need for more ABA professionals in Wichita, as local clinics fill their capacity within a year, leaving families facing long wait times for autism therapy (Lytle, 2024). While existing programs nearby, such as at Oklahoma State University and the University of Kansas (KU), contribute to the field, the increasing job postings within the field demonstrates a need for additional training programs.. The creation of a master's program in Applied Behavior Analysis in Wichita, Kansas is essential to addressing the significant and growing demand for ABA services, particularly for individuals with ASD, by addressing this workforce shortage, allowing residents to pursue BCBA certification and creating a direct pipeline of behavior analysts to serve the region. This would reduce wait times and improve access, especially in underserved and rural areas, while also addressing economic barriers by increasing competition and insurance coverage options.

Finally, an important distinction between this proposed new program at WSU and the existing master’s degree at KU centers on the proposed new program’s alignment with WSU’s Ed.S.-School Psychology degree. KU’s program is a M.A. in Applied Behavioral Science, housed in its College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Per available catalog information, students completing that degree can only count six of those hours toward KU’s Ed.S.-School Psychology, which requires 59-64 credits and is housed in its College of Education. Both the proposed M.Ed.-ABA master’s and the Ed.S.-School Psychology at WSU are housed within the College of Applied Studies, and using School Psychology post-master’s option, students would be able to count all 36 credit hours from their master’s degree toward the Ed.S. degree’s 66 credit-hour requirement.

V. Projected Enrollment for the Initial Three Years of the Program

Year	Total Headcount Per Year		Total Sem Credit Hrs Per Year	
	Full- Time	Part- Time	Full- Time	Part- Time
Year 1	8	4	144	36
Year 2	12	6	216	54
Year 3	18	8	324	72

VI. Employment

Students can complete the Master’s in ABA and enter the field or en route to their School Psychology EdS degree. This master’s degree opens up an additional career path where graduates can work as independent practitioners, offering behavior-analytic services across a spectrum of needs and settings. The demand for such specialized skills is more than just a trend; it's a reflection of the growing recognition of ABA's effectiveness in addressing a wide

range of behavioral and developmental issues.

Labor market analyses, including data from the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB), affirm the growing need for ABA professionals. Since 2010, the demand for certified behavior analysts has consistently risen, with a notable 23% increase from 2021 to 2022. Specifically, in Kansas, there has been a 228.6% surge in demand (Behavior Analyst Certification Board, 2024). This upward trend is not confined to a single region; states like California, Massachusetts, Texas, Florida, and New Jersey have emerged as hotspots, offering a wealth of opportunities for ABA professionals.

ABA's appeal is enriched by its diverse subspecialties, ranging from Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities to Behavioral Gerontology, and from Organizational Behavior Management to Public Health. Each subspecialty offers unique opportunities to impact various societal challenges positively. Whether it's making strides in the field of Behavioral Pediatrics, contributing to advancements in Brain Injury Rehabilitation, or pioneering efforts in Substance Use Disorders, ABA professionals are equipped with the skills and knowledge to lead change. The specialization achieved through a Master's degree in ABA not only provides a competitive edge in the job market, but also equips graduates with a deep understanding of behavior principles and their application. This expertise is increasingly recognized across sectors, including healthcare, education, and corporate environments, expanding employment opportunities beyond traditional settings.

VII. Admission and Curriculum

A. Admission Criteria

The admission requirements will include a bachelor's degree, a cumulative GPA of 3.000 or higher based on the last 60 credit hours of undergraduate or graduate coursework, three letters of recommendation, a goal statement indicating reasons for pursuing degree, and resume.

B. Curriculum

ABA Masters Requirements

CESP 704 Introduction to Educational Statistics
CLES 712 Philosophical Underpinnings of ABA
CESP 858 Introduction to Assessment, Research, and Program Evaluation
CLES 715 Concepts and Principles of Behavior Analysis
CLES 721 Fundamental Elements of Behavior Change and Behavior Change Procedures
CLES 723 Single Subject Design
CESP 853 Ethics in ABA
CESP 914 Consultation
CESP 859 Curriculum Based Assessment and Intervention
CLES 725: Nonverbal Assessment and Intervention*
CLES 943: School Based Behavioral Interventions*
CLES 944: Field Experience in ABA*

*Indicates a new course

Program Sequence: Full-Time Students

Year 1: Fall

SCH = Semester Credit Hours

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 712	Philosophical Underpinnings of ABA	3
CLES 715	Concepts and Principles of Behavior Analysis	3

CESP 704	Introduction to Educational Statistics	3
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Year 1: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 725	Non-Verbal Assessment and Intervention	3
CLES 943	School Based Behavioral Interventions	3
CLES 858	Introduction to Assessment, Research, and Program Evaluation	3

Year 2: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CESP 859	Curriculum Based Assessment and Intervention	3
CESP 853	Ethics in ABA	3
CLES 721	Fundamental Elements of Behavior Change and Behavior Change Procedures	3

Year 2: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 914	Consultation	3
CLES 944	Field Experience in ABA	3
CLES 723	Single Subject Design	3

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours 36

Program Sequence: Part-Time Students

Year 1: Fall

SCH = Semester Credit Hours

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 712	Philosophical Underpinnings of ABA	3
CESP 704	Introduction to Educational Statistics	3

Year 1: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 715	Concepts and Principles of Behavior Analysis	3
CLES 858	Introduction to Assessment, Research, and Program Evaluation	3

Year 2: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 725	Non-Verbal Assessment and Intervention	3
CLES 943	School Based Behavioral Interventions	3

Year 2: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 721	Fundamental Elements of Behavior Change and Behavior Change Procedures	3
CESP 859	Curriculum Based Assessment and Intervention	3

Year 3: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 914	Consultation	3

CESP 853	Ethics in ABA	3
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Year 3: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
CLES 944	Field Experience in ABA	3
CLES 723	Single Subject Design	3

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours 36

VIII. Core Faculty

Note: * Next to Faculty Name Denotes Director of the Program, if applicable
 FTE: 1.0 FTE = Full-Time Equivalency Devoted to Program

Faculty Name	Rank	Highest Degree	Tenure Track Y/N	Academic Area of Specialization	FTE to Proposed Program
Angela Beeler*	Assistant Professor, Program Chair	PhD	Y	Educational Psychology and Applied Behavior Analysis	0.25
Patty Nuhfer	Assistant Professor	PhD	Y	Educational Psychology and Applied Behavior Analysis	0.25
LaKaya Beiker	Clinical Professor	EdS	N	School Psychology	0.25

Number of graduate assistants assigned to this program **3**

IX. Expenditure and Funding Sources [List amounts in dollars. Provide explanations as necessary. Please double-check the math.]

A. EXPENDITURES	First FY	Second FY	Third FY
Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions			
Faculty*	\$3,755	\$3,830	\$3,906
Administrators (<i>other than instruction time</i>) (Chair at 0.05)	\$5,875	\$5,992	\$6,112
Graduate Assistants**	0	0	0
Support Staff for Administration (<i>e.g., secretarial</i>) (0.05)	\$1,851	\$1,888	\$1,926
Fringe Benefits (<i>total for all groups</i>)***	\$2,318	\$2,364	\$2,411
Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Total Existing Personnel Costs – Reassigned or Existing	\$13,799	\$14,074	\$14,355
Personnel – New Positions			
Faculty – Two lecturers – 1 course each	\$4,800	\$5,000	\$5,200
Administrators (<i>other than instruction time</i>)	0	0	0
Graduate Assistants	0	0	0
Support Staff for Administration (<i>e.g., secretarial</i>)	0	0	0
Fringe Benefits (<i>total for all groups</i>)	0	0	0

Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Total Existing Personnel Costs – New Positions	\$4,800	\$5,000	\$5,200
Start-up Costs - One-Time Expenses			
Library/learning resources	0	0	0
Equipment/Technology	0	0	0
Physical Facilities: Construction or Renovation	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Total Start-up Costs	0	0	0
Operating Costs – Recurring Expenses			
Supplies/Expenses	0	0	0
Library/learning resources	0	0	0
Equipment/Technology	0	0	0
Travel	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Total Operating Costs	0	0	0
GRAND TOTAL COSTS	\$18,599	\$19,074	\$19,555

*-Minimal costs assigned for current faculty because they are already teaching most of the courses required for the M.Ed.-ABA degree as part of the current ABA VCS. One current faculty member will receive overload pay for teaching one of the three new courses in the master's degree.

** -No additional costs as the three graduate assistant positions that will support this program are already in place within the current Ed.S.-School Psychology.

***-Fringe calculated only for the additional portion of faculty, department chair and administrator roles that would be assigned to this program.

B. FUNDING SOURCES		First FY (New)	Second FY (New)	Third FY (New)
Tuition / State Funds		\$61,020	\$91,530	\$134,244
Student Fees		\$23,400I	\$35,100I	\$51,540
Other Sources – Applied Learning Support		0	\$24,000	\$36,000
GRAND TOTAL FUNDING		\$84,420	\$150,630	\$221,784
C. Projected Surplus/Deficit (+/-) (Grand Total Funding <i>minus</i> Grand Total Costs)		\$65,821	\$131,556	\$202,229

X. Expenditures and Funding Sources Explanations

A. Expenditures

Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions

All three of the core school psychology faculty are also the instructors for the ABA certificate and will be the core faculty for the ABA Master's Program. Furthermore, since the ABA program courses are already integrated into the school psychology program, the core faculty members already teach seven of the 12 courses. Two of the courses are taught by adjuncts that are board certified behavior analysts (BCBA) in the field. In addition to the nine courses that currently exist, there will be three new courses added to complete the master's degree program in ABA, which will be taught by the core faculty and lecturers. There will not be any role reassignments or changes for the core faculty. GRA's assigned to the School Psychology Faculty will also work under the ABA master's. Salaries assume a 2% increase each year.

Personnel – New Positions

Costs associated with hiring two lecturers to teach one course each are included. Salaries assume a \$100 increase per course each year.

Start-up Costs – One-Time Expenses

None

Operating Costs – Recurring Expenses

None additional given current Ed.S.-School Psychology program and ABA VCS support already in place.

B. Revenue: Funding Sources

The amounts above were figured based on 2024-25 online graduate student tuition and fee rates. For example, in year one, the program is estimated to have eight full time students that will take 18 credit hours each in year one at \$339 per credit hour. In addition, it was estimated that there would be four part time students would take an estimated 9 credit hours in year one. Mandatory university-level fees total \$765 per full-time student, \$270 per part-time students per semester. The ISLE department has a standard program fee of \$150 per student each semester. The department also has course fees and experiential learning fees. To simplify calculations a department rate of \$30 per credit hour was utilized.

C. Projected Surplus/Deficit

As a result of the efficiencies involved in simply expanding the current ABA VCS, the new master's program is revenue positive in year one and grows its surplus each year.

XI. References

Autism Treatment Market In U.S. Is Larger Than Expected - \$4+ Billion (2022, September 7). *Web News Wire, NA*. Retrieved from https://link-gale-com.proxy.wichita.edu/apps/doc/A716381642/ITOF?u=ksstate_wichita&sid=summon&xid=e777c55e

Behavior Analyst Certification Board (2024). US employment demand for behavior analysts: 2010-2023. https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/us_employmentdemand_ba/

Behavior Analyst Certification Board Handbook. (2024, April). *BCBA handbook*. Behavior Analyst Certification Board. https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/BCBAHandbook_240426-a.pdf

- McClendon, S., Hoover, M., Corbett, S., & Lin, W.-C. (2019, March). *Applied behavior analysis services in Kansas*. Kansas Health Institute. https://www.khi.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/final_aba_report.pdf
- Lytle, D. (2024, September 15). *Autism diagnosis waitlist can take two years, Wichita therapy center looks to help*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XsRGDirgdUw>
- Yellow Bus ABA Therapy In New York. (2024, February 19). *The rate of job growth for BCBA's*. <https://www.yellowbusaba.com/post/the-rate-of-job-growth-for-bcbas>

ATTACHMENT - Wichita State University –M.Ed.-Applied Behavior Analysis

Revenue Calculations

Projected Enrollment by Year

Year	Total Headcount Per Year		Total Sem Credit Hrs Per Year		
	Full- Time	Part- Time	Full- Time ¹	Part- Time ²	Total
Implementation	8	4	144	36	180
Year 2	12	6	216	54	270
Year 3	18	8	324	72	396

1 – Based on 18 credits per year

2 – Based on 9 credits per year

Revenue Rates

Source	Amount	Note
Tuition	\$339	Online tuition rate
University Fee	\$765 (7 hrs+) \$270 (<4 hrs)	Per semester fee
Program Fee	\$150	Per semester fee
Course Fees	\$30	Estimated rate per credit. All courses have a \$25 fee. Applied learning courses have an additional \$100 supervision fee.

Revenue Calculations – Year 1 (Implementation)

Source	FT Student	PT Students	Total
Tuition	\$ 48,816.00	\$ 12,204.00	\$ 61,020.00
Total Fees ¹	\$ 18,960.00	\$ 4,440.00	\$ 23,400.00
-University Fee ²	\$ 12,240.00	\$ 2,160.00	
-Program Fee ³	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 1,200.00	
-Course Fees ⁴	\$ 4,320.00	\$ 1,080.00	
Other Sources ⁵	--	--	\$ 0
Total ⁶			\$ 84,420.00

Notes:

1 – Sum of University, Program and Course fees. This is the figure reported for Student Fees within the proposal.

2 - Based on head count. FT students @ 7 hrs+ rate. PT @ <4 hrs rate. Two semesters each.

3 – Based on head count. Two semesters @ \$150 each.

4 – Based on SCH. \$30 per credit.

5 – Applied learning support via KSBHCoE, the State of Kansas, and other sources

6 – Sum of Tuition, Total Fees, and Other Sources

Revenue Calculations – Year 2

Source	FT Student	PT Students	Total
Tuition	\$ 73,224.00	\$ 18,306.00	\$ 91,530.00
Total Fees ¹	\$ 28,440.00	\$ 6,660.00	\$ 35,100.00
-University Fee ²	\$ 18,360.00	\$ 3,240.00	
-Program Fee ³	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 1,800.00	
-Course Fees ⁴	\$ 6,480.00	\$ 1,620.00	
Other Sources ⁵	--	--	\$ 24,000.00
Total ⁶			\$ 150,630.00

Notes:

1 – Sum of University, Program and Course fees. This is the figure reported for Student Fees within the proposal.

2 - Based on head count. FT students @ 7 hrs+ rate. PT @ <4 hrs rate. Two semesters each.

3 – Based on head count. Two semesters @ \$150 each.

4 – Based on SCH. \$30 per credit.

5 – Applied learning support via KSBHCoE, the State of Kansas, and other sources

6 – Sum of Tuition, Total Fees, and Other Sources

Revenue Calculations – Year 3

Source	FT Student	PT Students	Total
Tuition	\$ 109,836.00	\$ 24,408.00	\$ 134,244.00
Total Fees ¹	\$ 42,660.00	\$ 8,880.00	\$ 51,540.00
-University Fee ²	\$ 27,540.00	\$ 4,320.00	
-Program Fee ³	\$ 5,400.00	\$ 2,400.00	
-Course Fees ⁴	\$ 9,720.00	\$ 2,160.00	
Other Sources ⁵	--	--	\$ 36,000.00
Total ⁶			\$ 221,784.00

Notes:

1 – Sum of University, Program and Course fees. This is the figure reported for Student Fees within the proposal.

2 - Based on head count. FT students @ 7 hrs+ rate. PT @ <4 hrs rate. Two semesters each.

3 – Based on head count. Two semesters @ \$150 each.

4 – Based on SCH. \$30 per credit.

5 – Applied learning support via KSBHCoE, the State of Kansas, and other sources

6 – Sum of Tuition, Total Fees, and Other Sources