

# **PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

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

**2024-2025**

**(This handbook is effective for students beginning the program in Fall 2024)**

**A jointly administered program between the  
Psychology Department  
at the University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO)  
and the Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI)  
at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC)**

**MS ABA Program Committee  
2024-2025**

**Mark Shriver, MMI, Program Director**  
**Regina Carroll, MMI**  
**Sarah Frampton, UNO**  
**Mary Halbur, MMI**  
**Abigail Kennedy, MMI**  
**Sara Kupzyk, UNO**  
**Cynthia Livingston, MMI**  
**First Year Student Representative**  
**Second+ Year Student Representative**

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

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

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Program Mission .....	4
Program Description .....	4
Training Competencies and Objectives .....	5
Faculty .....	5
Faculty Advisement.....	6
Advisory Committee.....	6
Admission Policies and Requirements .....	6
Degree Requirements .....	7
Required Coursework.....	7
Required Research.....	9
Required Comprehensive Exam.....	12
Applied Experiences.....	13
Ethical Conduct .....	13
Background Check.....	13
Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis.....	17
Academic Expectations and Quality of Work Standards .....	17
Special Performance Quality Rule .....	19
Academic Integrity .....	19
Grievance Process.....	19
Transfer of Graduate Credit.....	19
Transfer of Credits Taken Outside the University of Nebraska .....	19
Transfer of Credits Taken at the University of Nebraska .....	20
Time Limit for Graduate Degrees.....	20
Graduation Policies .....	20
Counseling and Psychological and Disability Services .....	20
Appendix A Plan of Study Checklist.....	21

**Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis Program  
University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) and  
University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI)**

**Introduction**

The contents of this handbook are intended to help current and prospective students understand the structural and procedural operations of the UNO and MMI Applied Behavior Analysis training program. In addition to program information, this handbook reviews relevant departmental and graduate school policies for the program. The MS ABA program is jointly administered between UNO and UNMC/MMI. This handbook reflects policies and procedures particular to the MS ABA program. More specific information pertinent to respective graduate college policies and procedures at each campus will be found at the links below:

[UNO Graduate Studies](#)

[UNMC Graduate Studies](#)

*It is expected that students will be familiar with the contents of this handbook as well as the policies and procedures of their respective campus.*

**Program Mission**

The University of Nebraska Omaha and Munroe Meyer Institute Applied Behavior Analysis Program's mission is to graduate students who have met high levels of academic excellence in clinical and research skills in behavior analysis. The ABA Program trains students to provide person-centered, culturally responsive, and collaborative services for individuals across the lifespan, including those with neurodevelopmental disabilities, to promote behavioral health outcomes.

**Program Description**

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

Coursework in the MS ABA Program also addresses most of the content areas required for licensure as a mental health practitioner in Nebraska. During or upon completion of the program, students interested in obtaining Provisional Licensure as a Mental Health Practitioner (PLMHP) will need to complete 3-4 additional courses not offered by our program. These courses may be taken through UNO or through other local universities. Once these courses are taken, the student may submit application for review by the mental health board of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. With the PLMHP, the student will also need an additional 3000 hours of supervised

experience and will need to successfully pass a licensing exam to be a Licensed Mental Health Practitioner (LMHP) in the State of Nebraska. Practitioners holding the BCBA® and/or the LMHP typically work in clinical mental health settings, behavioral health community agencies, inpatient and outpatient clinics in hospitals, and schools.

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

## Training Competencies and Objectives

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

1. Ethical, Legal, and Professional Practice
2. Collaboration and Consultation
3. Cultural Responsiveness
4. Theoretical Foundations
5. Research and Scientific Literacy
6. Application of Assessment and Behavior Change Procedures
7. Professional Development: Interpersonal, Professional, Leadership Skills
8. Certification/Licensure, Employability, and/or Higher Education Competencies

As part of these competencies, students will also attain all objectives identified on the [Behavior Analyst Certification Board® 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Task List](#). These BACB specific objectives are considered the *minimal objectives* that will be acquired as part of this training program.

## MS ABA Program Core Faculty

[Regina A. Carroll, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Sarah Frampton, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Mary Halbur, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Abigail E. Kennedy, Ph.D., LIMHP, BCBA](#)

[Sara Kupzyk, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Cynthia Livingston, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Mark D. Shriver, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

## MS ABA Program Affiliate Faculty

[Brenda Bassingthwaite, Ph.D., BCBA](#)

[Tara Fahmie, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Hanna Grandgenett, PhD, LP](#)

[Bethany Hansen, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Brett R. Kuhn, Ph.D., C.BSM](#)

[Catalina Rey, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Nicole Rodriguez, Ph.D., BCBA-D](#)

[Amanda Zangrillo, PsyD, BCBA-D](#)

## Faculty Advisement

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

## Advisory Committee

Students will be expected to form an advisory committee consisting of at least 2 additional faculty beyond their faculty advisor. At least one of the additional faculty needs to be from a department or program outside the student's primary area of applied behavior analysis. The student will develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) in consultation with their faculty advisory and the IDP needs to be presented and approved by the committee by the end of the student's first semester of courses. IDP progress needs to be presented to the advisory committee at least annually. The advisory committee may also serve for the student's research committee.

## Admission Policies and Requirements

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

All UNO or UNMC Graduate College admission requirements are prerequisite for admission to the MS ABA program. A minimum of 15 undergraduate semester hours *or the equivalent* of psychology courses including basic statistics and an upper level laboratory course emphasizing the experimental method, data collection, statistical analysis, and report writing are required. For example, classes offered at UNO that would fulfill this requirement include laboratory research in Cognitive Psychology (PSYC-4074), Sensation and Perception (PSYC-4214), Behavioral Neuroscience (PSYC-4234), Animal Behavior (PSYC- 4280), Learning (PSYC- 4024), and Behavior Analysis (PSYC- 4414).

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

- Undergraduate and Graduate (if applicable) grade point average (GPA)
- 3 Letters of Recommendation
- Statement of purpose

- Senior authored writing sample
- Vitae
- Transcripts
- Graduate College forms

## Degree Requirements

All students take the same program of study. The course sequence reflects the requirements for a Verified Course Sequence of the Association of Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) allowing eligibility to sit for the BCBA exam upon completion of fieldwork experience requirements. See Appendix A for a sample Plan of Study.

### Required Coursework

PSYC 9040/MMI 904: Proseminar: Learning (3 credits)

PSYC 9560: Proseminar: Developmental Psychology (3 credits)

MMI 813 Applications of Statistics in Psychology (3 credits)

or PSYC 9130 Applications of Advance Statistics in Psychology (3 credits)

PSYC 9150 Experimental Analysis of Behavior (3 credits)

PSYC 9160 Behavior Analytic Approaches to Organizational Change and Human Performance Improvement (3 credits)

PSYC 9050/MMI 905 Applied Behavior Analysis in Education (3 credits)

PSYC 9140/MMI 914 Assessment and Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders (3 credits)

PSYC 8550/MMI 855: Psychotherapeutic Interventions (3 credits)

PSYC 8576/MMI 857: Behavior Analysis and Intervention (3 credits)

PSYC 8700/MMI 870: Ethics and Law for Psychology and Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)

PSYC 9570/MMI 957 Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)

PSYC 9100/MMI 910 Small n Research Designs (3 credits)

PSYC 9470 Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis (12 credits, 750 hours- 1500 hours)

PSYC 9960/MMI 896 Research other than Thesis (3 credits)

or PSYC 8990/MMI 899: Thesis (6 credits)

Courses are available online. Most online courses have a synchronous weekly meeting requirement. Students who are on campus may attend in person if possible. All students off campus will attend via a video platform (e.g., Zoom). Research advisement may be online, but research will typically need to be onsite where the student is participating in fieldwork experience or in another setting in person where research is occurring. The placement and modality of research supervision will be determined between the student and faculty advisor. Similarly, practicum/fieldwork experience is in-person, but may be off campus and supervision may be arranged to be virtual if needed and available.

UNO students taking UNMC courses and UNMC students taking UNO courses need to complete an [Intercampus Registration Application](#) every semester.

Once intercampus registration is approved, students will complete registration for the course at the campus from which the course is being taught

**Total Credit Hours Required: 51-54**

**Typical Program Course Sequence for a Full-Time Student**

First Year

Fall

PYSC 9040/MMI 904 Proseminar: Learning (3 credits)  
MMI 957/PSYC 9570 Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)  
PSYC 9100/MMI 910 Small n Research Designs (3 credits)  
PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

Spring

MMI 813 Applications of Statistics in Psychology (3)  
MMI 857/PSYC 8570 Behavior Analysis and Intervention (3)  
PSYC 9150 Basic Research in Behavior Analysis (3)  
PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

Second Year

Fall

PSYC 8700/MMI 870 Ethics and Law for Psych and ABA (3 credits)  
PSYC 9560 Proseminar: Developmental Psychology (3 credits)  
PSYC 8550/MMI 855 Psychotherapeutic Interventions (3 credits)  
PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

Spring

MMI 905/PSYC 9050 ABA in Education (3 credits)  
PSYC 9140 Assessment and Treatment of ASD (3)  
PSYC 9160 Behavior Analytic Approaches to Organizational Change and Human Performance Improvement (3 credits)  
MMI 947/PSYC 9470 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

Comprehensive Examination (required)

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



### **Course Sequence for Part-Time Students**

Course sequence for part-time students will vary depending upon their unique circumstances. The part-time student will need to work closely with their advisor to create a program of study that outlines which courses will be taken when. Since part-time students may take 3-4 or more years to complete the sequence of courses, there is no guarantee that courses will always be offered the same semester as outlined above. In addition, with an extended program beyond two years, it is possible that changes in requirements for BCBA may be enacted by the BACB or changes in coursework requirements may be enacted by ABAI. Part-Time students are subject to potential changes in program requirements that may occur during their time in the program. A sample 3 year course sequence is available on the MS ABA program's Canvas course page.

### **Required Research**

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

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

1. Go to the [UNMC IRB CITI Training website](#)
  - a. If you have not completed the training at another institution:
    - i. Click at the bottom of the page or this link [CITI Training Website \[citiprogram.org\]](#)
    - ii. Register for an Account (you can also view their getting started video for assistance in the process). This [CITI Training Guide](#) might also be helpful for navigating the website.
    - iii. Complete Group 3- Social/Behavioral Research AND do the extra module on Research with Children). You do NOT need to do Group 1. It is for biomedical research, so you would only need this if there is a project you are working on that falls into that umbrella.
    - iv. Send you certificate and list of courses completed to our UNO program teaching assistant.
  - b. If you have completed the training at another institution:
    - i. Follow the directions provided to email your certificate to IRB
    - ii. Send you certificate and list of courses completed to our UNO program teaching assistant.

There are two options available to students in the MS ABA Program to conduct independent research projects: Research other Than Thesis or Thesis.

## Research Other than Thesis

This is an independent research project conducted under the supervision of a graduate faculty member, typically the Academic Advisor or an Affiliated program faculty. The student and faculty member agree upon a project and the faculty member will provide the grade for the student's research project. Students should be involved in at least the following activities: creating research materials, implementing research protocols, collecting data, and graphing and or analyzing results. If the identified project is being completed in coordination with other students (i.e., master's students, doctoral students), the roles, expectations, and independent contributions should be outlined at the start of the project.

Student's completing Research other than Thesis need to complete a project outline with their faculty advisor in the **Individual Research Tracking and Evaluation Workbook** (found on UNO/UNMC MS ABA Program Course found in UNMC Canvas) file prior to beginning their project.

The **final product** is required to be a formal presentation at a conference as first author AND a brief written report. The product must be unique to the student (e.g., not the same presentation or written report as another student if they are coordinating on the same project). The final products will be reviewed by the supervising graduate faculty member and at least one other member of the student's committee. A grade will be assigned by the faculty members. If there is disagreement, the student's remaining committee member will review and submit a recommendation. If requirements are not met, a remediation plan will be created that specifies expectations and timeline for completion.

## Thesis

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

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

Students should refer to the **guidelines for the university they are enrolled in**. Students should always check the graduate studies website for their respective campus for the most up-to-date guidance.

[UNO Thesis Guidelines](#)

[UNMC Thesis Guidelines](#)

## **Year 1**

### **September**

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

### **October**

- Identify research advisor (typically your faculty advisor)

### **October-December**

- Meet with research advisor regularly to begin planning and developing thesis research project

### **January-February**

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

### **March-April**

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

### **May-August**

- Conduct research study

## **Year 2**

### **September-December**

- Conduct research study

### **January-March**

- Write up thesis document
- Prepare thesis defense presentation
- Schedule thesis defense with committee
- Revise thesis as recommended by committee
- Submit thesis to graduate studies office

## **Research Support**

### **Office of Sponsored Programs and Research**

Funds may be available for student research through the University Committee on Research and Creative Activity (UCRCA). The application deadline is the first day of the month October - March. For more details regarding the application process read the proposal guidelines and complete the application found on the [UCRCA website](#).

Funds may also be available through MMI for research conducted at MMI. These opportunities will be disseminated to students as they become available.

## **Required Comprehensive Exam**

There are 2 parts to the Comprehensive Examination (1) completion of Behavior Development Solutions BCBA exam preparation modules and (2) a case presentation and oral questions. Students must pass both parts of the exam.

### **Behavior Development Solutions Modules**

Students must complete all modules from Behavior Development Solutions except the final practice exams. Students will be provided access to these modules starting in the Fall semester of their second year and will have until April 1st to complete all modules and exams. Note that there may be a student fee required for these modules and exam.

### **Case Presentation**

The case presentation is designed to simulate the work of a BCBA in a clinical setting. The goal is for you to demonstrate key knowledge and skills needed to manage a new referral to your caseload.

The process will include the following steps:

1. You will be given information on a referral (e.g., evaluation report, parent interview, and direct observation data) to review.
2. You will use the information to prepare a 20 min presentation to demonstrate your conceptualization of the presenting concern and intervention development. You will also graph and demonstrate data-based decision making.
3. You will deliver your presentation to the comprehensive exam committee. The committee will also ask you to orally respond to questions based on the BACB Task List.
4. The committee will evaluate your presentation and response to questions to determine if you passed the exam.

Note: It is expected that you complete the case presentation on your own. You should not discuss the contents of the case with your peers, supervisors, or advisors. If you have questions about the expectations or requirements, you can ask your advisor or Dr. Shriver.

## Applied Experiences

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

### Ethical Conduct and Professional Behavior

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

Students are reminded that they represent the UNO MMI MS ABA Program when attending classes and engaging in practicum experiences and other activities or events associated with the MS ABA program. As such, students should always present themselves in a professional and appropriate manner. This includes dressing, speaking, and writing (including emails) professionally at all times. Students should ensure that if they maintain any personal websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.), their sites are private and unavailable to the general public. Recognizing that almost nothing is entirely private on the internet, students should refrain from posting anything that may present themselves or the program in a negative manner. Professionalism also means checking emails and other forms of communication regularly and responding in a timely manner to faculty, peers and colleagues.

### Background Checks and Procedures

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

**UNMC students** will receive notification from UNMC Graduate Studies to complete background check and will not be allowed to register for courses until that background check is completed. The process will be similar to that described below.

**UNO students** will receive notification about completing background checks from a UNO Psychology ABA program faculty during the summer prior to beginning coursework and practicum. An outline of the process is provided below.

The background check will be conducted:

- by a vendor selected by the university
- prior to the student's participation in any public or private, school, clinic, or community-based experience (this may include activities participated in during the summer prior to enrollment)

Students will be responsible for:

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

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

The vendor contracted to conduct the UNO Psychology Department background checks is *One Source—The Background Check Company*. Many Nebraska school districts and teacher preparation programs also use this vendor to conduct background checks on prospective employees and practicum students. In addition, the university uses this vendor to conduct background checks on its employees and new hires. **If you are an employee of UNO or UNMC, you will need to complete a separate background check for Human Resources.** The Psychology Department does not share its database with Human Resources; the checks are for two different purposes and Human Resources has its own policies and procedures.

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

- **Applicant Verification.** A search of the Social Security Administration (SSA) Database to confirm that the SSN is valid, when the SSN was issued, and if registered as a SSN reported as deceased.
- **County Criminal History (Statewide if Available).** The criminal history will cover all names and locations from the last 7 years. The County Criminal Records report includes a search of felony, misdemeanor and all non-traffic infraction court records in applicants' counties of residence. If statewide is available, all counties within the state will be investigated. The report will include jurisdiction, case number, disposition and date, charges, amended charges, and how the record was verified.
- **Multi-Court Jurisdictional Database.** The Nationwide Alert is a Multi-Court Jurisdictional Database that includes:
  - Proprietary Offender Data

- Department of Corrections
- Administrative Office of the Courts-dated back 7 years
- Department of Public Safety
- Traffic Court
- **National Sex Offender Registry.** This search includes Sex Offender Registration Information from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam.
- **Federal Criminal Search.** One Source searches the government's Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) U.S. Party Case Index. This search is a national index for U.S. district and appellate court cases. One Source cross references these searches with a search of Federal Bureau of Prisons.
- **Global Watch.** This search involves accessing a variety of federal, state, and industry sanctions lists or Terrorist Watch Lists. These lists include:
  - OFAC Specially Designated nationals (SDN) & Blocked Persons
  - OFAC Sanctioned Countries, including major cities and ports
  - Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories
  - Department of State Trade Control (DTC) Debarred Parties
  - U.S. Bureau of Industry and Security Unverified Entities List, Denied Entities List, Denied Persons List
  - FBI Most Wanted Terrorists and Seeking Information, Top 10 Most Wanted
  - INTERPOL Most Wanted List
  - Bank of England, OSFI Canadian, United Nations Sanctions List
  - Politically Exposed Persons List
  - European Union Terrorism List
  - World Bank Ineligible Firms
- **State Health and Human Services Adult and/or Child Abuse Registry.** Searches the Department of Health and Human Services or designated state agency records for documented records/reports of abuse against children or adults.
- **OIG.** OIG-Office of Inspector General-Department of Health and Human Services, under a Congressional mandate, established a program to exclude individuals and entities affected by these various legal authorities, contained in sections 1128 and 1156 of the Social Security Act, and maintains a list of all currently excluded parties called the List of Excluded Individuals/Entities. This legislation is to prevent certain individuals and businesses from participating in federally-funded health care programs. Basis for exclusion include convictions for program-related fraud and patient abuse, licensing board actions and default on Health Education Assistance Loans.
- **System for Award Management (SAM).** The System for Award Management (SAM) combines federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one system. SAM includes Central Contractor Registry (CCR), Federal Agency Registration (Fedreg), Online Representations and Certifications Application and Excluded Parties List System (EPLS).

Once the database searches are completed, the vendor will forward each student's background check report to the designated faculty member(s) in the Psychology Department (currently Sara

Kupzyk). To ensure the safety and confidentiality of all students, the reports will be maintained in a secure manner by the Psychology Department.

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

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

ABA graduate students who have an offense which may preclude them from participating in school-based experiences, fieldwork/practicum, and/or receiving a professional certificate or license will be:

- contacted immediately by an ABA faculty member
- asked to meet with staff members in the College of Education Student Services Office and/or the Psychology Department to discuss the background report
- allowed to review the report
- asked to provide documentation of the incident to keep on file with the College of Education Student Services Office and/or the Psychology Department

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

At any time during their time in the program, students may be asked to complete an additional background check. In addition, it is possible that certain practicum sites will not accept the background check completed with UNO or UNMC and expect the student to complete an additional background check prior to starting practicum.

Students should report ANY misdemeanor or felony charge that occurs while enrolled in any graduate program IMMEDIATELY to program faculty members, upon which time the steps described above will be followed.



## **Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis**

**Course description:** This is a 750 (minimum) – 1500 hour practicum\* designed to provide students with concentrated supervised fieldwork providing applied behavior analytic services to improve the well-being of the individuals receiving services.

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

A student's practicum is expected to adhere to requirements of the [Behavior Analysis Certification Board \(BACB\) Fieldwork Experience Standards](#).

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

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

Students may also complete practicum experiences with another agency outside of MMI or with whom MMI does not have a contractual relationship with yet. The faculty advisor and/or practicum coordinator will visit and discuss with that agency the requirements for practicum placement and determine if the experience meets our program standards and BACB standards for providing relevant experiences in applied behavior analysis. The student will be responsible for helping identify and establish a contract agreement with a BCBA supervisor at that agency consistent with BACB standards and approved by the faculty advisor and practicum coordinator.

Additional detail regarding Practicum can be found in the PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis syllabus each semester.

## **Academic Expectations and Quality of Work Standards**

All students, regardless of campus, will be expected to follow the [academic expectations and quality of work standards for current students](#).

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

### **Automatic Dismissal**

Graduate students are expected to do work of high caliber. Failure to do so will result in

dismissal. In particular, the following will result in automatic dismissal from the degree or certificate program:

1. Receiving a grade of "C-" (1.67 on a 4.0 scale) or below in any course taken in the student's major field of study or in any course included in the plan of study or program of study;
2. Departments/Schools may have additional and more stringent criteria for evaluating a student's performance and progress and may demand a higher level of performance than that demanded by the Graduate College. A department/school or program unit may, under some circumstances, recommend dismissal of a student from a graduate program even though quality of work standards has been maintained. Grounds for dismissal could include, but are not limited to:
  - a. failure to be accepted by an appropriate thesis or dissertation adviser within stipulated time limitations;
  - b. failure to make timely progress toward the degree or certificate; and
  - c. failure to perform in course work, qualifying examination or research at an acceptable level in the respective department/school or program unit.

### **Probation or Dismissal**

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

1. A Grade of "C+" (2.33 on a 4.0 scale) or below in any course involved in the first 12 hours of graduate study for provisionally admitted students;
2. Receiving at least nine hours of graduate credit with the grade of "C+" (2.33 on a 4.0 scale) or below in any courses taken in the student's major field of study or in any courses included in the plan of study for master's or specialist's degrees or graduate certificates, regardless of the average;
- 3.

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

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Students must be aware of the Quality of Work Standards of the Graduate College, as well as additional criteria of satisfactory performance in their respective department/school programs.
2. It is the student's responsibility to know when his or her previous course work has failed to meet those standards.

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

### **Special Performance Quality Rule (ABA MS Program)**

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

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

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

All students, regardless of campus, will be subject to the academic integrity policy and procedures outlined at the link below

[UNO Academic Integrity](#)

### **Grievance Processes**

All graduate students have rights to appeals or grievance process. Visit the following links for information about UNO and UNMC student rights and responsibilities.

[UNO Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[UNMC Student Policies](#)

### **Transfer of Graduate Credit**

The Transfer of Graduate credit for course work taken at another accredited university differs across the UNO and UNMC campuses. Students wishing to use credit taken from a university outside the University of Nebraska system should contact the MS ABA program director and review the transfer of credit policy respective to UNO or UNMC campus.

## **Transfer of Credits Taken at the University of Nebraska**

There are no a priori limits on the transfer and applicability of credits earned in one program of the University of Nebraska toward meeting degree requirements in another such program, except as they are used to earn distinct degrees. However, such credits must be individually evaluated and approved by the appropriate Graduate Program Committee and campus Dean of Graduate Studies before they can actually be transferred.

## **Time Limit for Graduate Degrees**

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

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

## **Graduation Policies**

While advisors and faculty will do what we can to support a student's timely completion of program requirements for graduation, *students are ultimately responsible for knowing and adhering to timelines for graduation requirements at their respective campus.* Failure to do so can result in a delay in graduation.

[UNO Graduation Checklist](#)

[UNMC Current Students](#)

## **Disability Services and Counseling and Psychological Services**

Accommodations are available for students with disabilities at either UNO or UNMC campus.

[UNO Accessibility Services Center](#)

[UNMC Accessibility Services](#)

In addition, counseling and psychological services are available on UNO and UNMC campuses.

[UNO Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

[UNMC Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

We encourage students to utilize the resources on each of the campuses that will help ensure and enhance their wellness.

## Appendix A

### Plan of Study Checklist

#### First Year

##### Fall

- PYSC 9040/MMI 904 Proseminar: Learning (3 credits)
- MMI 957/PSYC 9570 Applied Behavior Analysis (3 credits)
- PSYC 9100/MMI 910 Small n Research Designs (3 credits)
- PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

##### Spring

- MMI 813 Applications of Statistics in Psychology (3)
- MMI 857/PSYC 8570 Behavior Analysis and Intervention (3)
- PSYC 9150 Basic Research in Behavior Analysis (3)
- PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

#### Second Year

##### Fall

- PSYC 8700/MMI 870 Ethics and Law for Psych and ABA (3 credits)
- PSYC 9560 Proseminar: Developmental Psychology (3 credits)
- PSYC 8550/MMI 855 Psychotherapeutic Interventions (3 credits)
- PSYC 9470/MMI 947 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

##### Spring

- MMI 905/PSYC 9050 ABA in Education (3 credits)
- PSYC 9140 Assessment and Treatment of ASD (3)
- PSYC 9160 Behavior Analytic Approaches to Organizational Change and Human Performance Improvement (3 credits)
- MMI 947/PSYC 9470 Practicum in ABA (3 credits)

- Research (often taken Fall/Spring second year)
  - PSYC 9960/MMI 896 Research other than Thesis (3 credits)

OR

- PSYC 8990/MMI 899: Thesis (6 credits)

- Comprehensive Exam
  - BDS Modules
  - Case presentation