

# PSYCHOLOGY: BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

*Classes are offered at our Newport campus.*

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Anyone interested in a career in behavior analysis should be aware of the two primary credentials that are often needed to do so. The first is Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), and the second is a Licensed Behavior Analyst (LBA; sometimes called a Licensed Applied Behavior Analyst or LABA).

The BCBA credential is a nationally recognized professional credential focused on discipline-specific professional standards. The LBA credential is a state-established credential that is related to specific state regulations on the practice of applied behavior analysis. The requirements for each state's LBA credential vary. Some states require the BCBA credential to obtain the LBA credential, while others list the BCBA credential as one possible option for obtaining the LBA. For example, the state of Rhode Island permits two possible options for obtaining the LBA credential. The first is having a BCBA credential, but it is also possible to obtain the LBA credential by becoming a licensed Rhode Island Psychologist and completing behavior analytic coursework and 15 hundred hours of behavior analytic services. Students interested in other state licenses should review that desired state's criteria or contact Dr. Cody Morris at [cody.morris@salve.edu](mailto:cody.morris@salve.edu).

Because obtaining a BCBA credential is often the most efficient way of acquiring licensure in any state and is often recognized by insurance companies in states without licensure, the Behavior Analysis Graduate Program at Salve Regina University is designed to help students meet the criteria for the BCBA credential (listed below). Again, in many states, including Rhode Island, obtaining a BCBA credential makes individuals eligible for licensure.

There are many available pathways (<https://www.bacb.com/bcba/>) for obtaining the BCBA credential. Because it is accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International Accreditation Board (<https://www.abainternational.org/welcome.aspx>), Salve Regina's master's degree program in behavior analysis meets the criteria for the first pathway.

**For more information, the following resources are available.**

- Information about the BCBA credential
  - <https://www.bacb.com/bcba/>
  - <https://www.bacb.com/about/>
- Information about state licenses
  - <http://health.ri.gov/licenses/detail.php?id=290#pgm>
  - <https://www.bacb.com/u-s-licensure-of-behavior-analysts/>
  - <https://www.appliedbehavioranalysis.edu.org/state-by-state-guide-to-aba-licensing/>
- Information about required courses.
  - <https://www.abainternational.org/vcs.aspx>

## Salve's BA Programs

Salve's Behavior Analysis MS Graduate Program offers two tracks for students to meet the coursework requirements toward becoming a BCBA. One track is the traditional track that is completed by students who already have a completed bachelor's degree when they start the program. The other is the accelerated track that is started by Salve students in their senior year. By starting in their senior year, Salve undergraduates can complete the MS program with one additional year of coursework after they complete the bachelor's degree.

Students in our Ph.D. in Behavior Analysis program who complete the degree will meet the qualifications to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst- Doctoral (BCBA-D), the highest credential in behavior analysis.

## Psychology: Behavior Analysis (M.S.) Student Learning Outcomes

**At the completion of the program, students will be able to:**

- Engage in professional behavior consistent with the Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts
- Demonstrate an understanding and apply the concepts and principles of behavior analysis
- Apply behavior analytic research design and methodology
- Implement effective behavioral interventions
- Conduct relevant behavioral assessments
- Perform supervision of behavior analytic activities and design systems that support that task
- Demonstrate an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of behaviorism

(Source: 2022 Assessment Report)

## Programs

- Behavior Analysis (M.S.) (<https://catalog.salve.edu/graduate/academic-programs/psychology-behavior-analysis/behavior-analysis-ms/>)
- Behavior Analysis (Ph.D.) (<https://catalog.salve.edu/graduate/academic-programs/psychology-behavior-analysis/behavior-analysis-phd/>)

### PSY-502: Survey of Behavior Analysis (3 Credits)

This course will introduce the profession and practice of behavior analysis by providing an overview of the common occupations and activities associated with the field. The course will include a review of research conducted across the major concentrations of behavior analysis to demonstrate the field's scope of practice and research methodology. \*Note: This course is a prerequisite for entering the program. It cannot count toward credit within the ABA program.

### PSY-510: Ethics and Professional Conduct (3 Credits)

This course focuses on the information and strategies necessary to practice applied behavior analysis ethically and to establish high standards of professional conduct. The course will include review and application of the BACB's Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts, various research integrity resources, and relevant BCBA task-list items.

**PSY-511: History of Behaviorism (3 Credits)**

**Pre-requisite(s):** PSY-520 is required.

This course addresses the historical development of behaviorism. Emphasis will be placed on the parallel development of the philosophy of behaviorism and resulting development in research and treatment techniques.

**PSY-513: Educational Psychology (3 Credits)**

This course in Educational Psychology will focus on how students learn and effective teaching practices. A variety of successful teaching strategies will be studied with an emphasis on behavioral techniques that maximize student learning, objective setting, curriculum development, classroom management and assessment of student learning.

**PSY-520: Concepts and Principles (3 Credits)**

This course focuses on the philosophical underpinnings of behaviorism and the science of behavior analysis. The course includes introduction to and application of the principles and concepts of behavior analysis to applied issues.

**PSY-521: Health Psychology (3 Credits)**

This course in Health Psychology focuses on using behavioral principles in the prevention of illness and death and in promoting healthy lifestyle choices. Health damaging personal habits are the leading cause of death in America, therefore there is great importance to learn to assess for behavioral risk factors, to use early prevention techniques and to promote changes to life threatening practices. The emphasis will be on the implementation of behavioral and cognitive strategies for change. The behavioral medicine practices used to manage chronic illnesses and pain control will be studied. Self-management techniques and behavioral indices of change will be emphasized.

**PSY-523: Autism Spectrum and Other Developmental Disabilities (3 Credits)**

This course will focus on ethical and practical issues when serving individuals with developmental disabilities and ASD as a behavior-analytic practitioner. Topics include the historical development of evidenced-based treatments for these populations, cultural and treatment system interactions, assessment and treatment techniques.

**PSY-525: Abnormal Psychology (3 Credits)**

Topics in this course include an in-depth exploration of several widespread conditions, including, but not limited to, the anxiety disorders, somatoform and dissociative disorders, mood disorders, and schizophrenia. The current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders will serve as the explanatory basis for the description and analysis of these dysfunctional conditions.

**PSY-530: Research Methods (3 Credits)**

This course focuses on the scientific approach and research methodology of behavior analysis. Successful completion of this course indicates that students are able to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of measurement, data display and analysis, and research design in behavior analysis.

**PSY-531: Consultation (3 Credits)**

**Pre-requisite(s):** PSY-520 is required.

To implement effective behavior analytic services, clinicians must be able to deliver services that meet diverse client needs. This course will teach students to identify important contextual variables and adapt assessment and treatment strategies accordingly. Important contextual variables will include the cultural and ethnic diversity of clients, the setting services are delivered, and other idiosyncratic needs of clients.

**PSY-533: Organizational Behavior Management (3 Credits)**

Improving human functioning in the workplace is the goal of the Organizational Behavior Management subfield of ABA. Human behavior in the workplace is studied to match job skills to employee applicants and provide job training for success; and to identify organizational structures that improve worker performance. This course emphasizes evidenced-based behavioral approaches shown to increase job satisfaction, worker efficiency and employee retention in organizations.

**PSY-535: The Experimental Analysis of Behavior (3 Credits)**

**Pre/Co-requisite(s):** PSY-520 and PSY-530 are required.

The purpose of this course is to expose students to basic principles of learning that have been developed through the experimental analysis of behavior. The course will also focus on conceptual frameworks and ways to use basic principles to support behavior-analytic research and practice.

**PSY-540: Intervention (3 Credits)**

**Pre-requisite(s):** PSY-520 is required.

This course focuses on the skills necessary to select and implement effective behavior analytic intervention and treatment. The course includes review and practice of function-based intervention to address problem behaviors, procedures targeting skill and communication development, and other crucial behavior change techniques.

**PSY-542: Behavior Analysis and Societal Issues (3 Credits)**

The purpose of this course is to expose students to the behavioral analysis of pervasive societal issues focused around the Sisters of Mercy's Critical Concerns. Issues discussed in the course will include the 5 critical concerns prioritized by the Sisters of Mercy (earth, immigration, nonviolence, racism, and women) in addition to other social issues like education, mental health, drug abuse, criminal justice, and poverty. By reviewing this range of issues that can be understood and addressed through the science of behavior, students will form a deeper connection to Salve's mission and interest in using behavior analysis to address large scale social issues. The course will utilize a combination of books, research articles, non-scientific articles, podcasts, and online videos.

**PSY-550: Assessment Interventions (3 Credits)**

**Pre-requisite(s):** PSY-520 is required.

This course focuses on the foundational skills of analyzing behavior with applied behavior analytic methodology. The course includes review and practice of assessment procedures related to functional behavior assessments, skill and language assessment, and other supplemental behavioral assessments.

**PSY-551: Critical Thinking and Decision Making in Psychology (3 Credits)**

This course focuses on developing the skills the student needs to discriminate evidence-based programs from those based on pseudoscience and "pop" psychology. On completion of this course, the student will have an understanding of the social and cognitive variables involved in decision making, why apparently irrational decisions hold such attraction and how we can think more carefully about evidence that we should and shouldn't trust.

**PSY-560: Supervision & Systems (3 Credits)**

**Pre-requisite(s):** PSY-520 is required.

This course focuses on the skills necessary to effectively supervise applied behavior analytic assessment and treatment in practical settings. The course will include review and application of evidence-based supervision practices, systems analyses, and training procedures.

**PSY-570: Practicum I (3 Credits)**

This course is designed for students who have not yet taken another ABA practicum. Practicum is designed to provide students supervised experience working with populations of need and practicing the material learned in their coursework. To accommodate a wide range of student interest, multiple sites are available that specialize in different areas of applied behavior analysis and work with different populations. Permission of instructor is required.

**PSY-571: Practicum II (1-3 Credits)**

This course is designed for students who have already completed at least one semester of practicum. Practicum is designed to provide students supervised experience working with populations of need and practicing the material learned in their coursework. To accommodate a wide range of student interest, multiple sites are available that specialize in different areas of applied behavior analysis and work with different populations. Permission of instructor is required.

**PSY-580: Individual Research (1-3 Credits)**

**Pre-requisite(s):** PSY-520 and PSY-530 are required.

This course will empower students to be active participants in the research process from question formulation to presenting findings. The course will discuss the etiology of research questions, the value of research in behavior analysis, and how to embed research in a variety of contexts using a variety of methods. The class will be collaborative (with the instructor and with students) and rarely use a lecture format.

**PSY-585: Thesis Research and Writing (1-3 Credits)**

**Pre/Co-requisite(s):** PSY-520 and PSY-530 are required.

Thesis research is focused on helping students to develop competence in conducting behavior analytic research. Students may decide to write a six-credit thesis under appropriate faculty direction and with the permission of the program director. Details are established prior to registration and in consultation with the thesis supervisor and the program director.

**PSY-590: Advanced Seminar in Behavior Analysis (3 Credits)**

**Pre-requisite(s):** PSY-520, PSY-530, PSY-540 and PSY-550 are required.

This course will provide students with the tools necessary to critically analyze and apply advanced behavior analytic philosophy, concepts, and principles to practice. This course will strengthen the foundational knowledge necessary to successfully practice applied behavior analysis by exposing students to important content areas related to obtaining the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) credential and practicing as such. By the end of the course, students will be fluent in the skills needed to address research, conceptual, and professional issues in applied behavior analysis.

**PSY-599: Special Topics (3 Credits)**

Special topics courses vary each semester and include advanced topics in Applied Behavioral Analysis or related fields. Example courses include Verbal Behavior, Legislation and Regulations in Special Education, Curriculum and Program Development, Relational Frame Theory, and more.