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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

College of Education

SPECIAL EDUCATION
MASTER'S IN APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS
(ABA)

GRADUATE HANDBOOK
AY 2026-2027

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[Eliane Acuna](#), Graduate Program Coordinator

NEW STUDENT CHECKLIST

This guide is an initial resource for understanding the overall process. It is not meant to be comprehensive; any questions or concerns regarding academics should be directed to your advisor, [Dr. Rebecca Hartzell](#)

☐ **Accept offer of admission:**

After you have been officially admitted, the UA Graduate College will send (via email) you your Student Identification Number (SID), and your Certificate of Graduate Admission (by mail) with your Personal Identification Number (PIN). These two numbers are needed to create your UA NetID.

☐ **Set-up NetID/email:**

- Using your SID and your PIN you will set up your NetID at this link [NetID](#)
- Use your NetID and password to login to:
 - ❖ [Catmail](#): The first time you log in to your account, Google will have you go through a confirmation page. After your first login, all future logins will take you directly to your account. You should begin checking your email for official communication from the UA, College of Education and ABA program. [Learn more](#)
 - ❖ [D2L](#): Sites are automatically activated 1 week prior to the course start date.
 - ❖ [UAccess](#): Login to the Student Center to register for classes, sign up for payment plan, view financial aid, etc. If you have any issues, contact [UITS 24/7 IT Support](#). Students are highly encouraged to use this [demonstration](#) to get the most out of Student Center and to log into UAccess before the start of the term.

☐ **[Register for classes:](#)**

- Login to [UAccess](#) Student Center to register for your courses following the recommended course sequence (see Appendix B). Watch this [video tutorial](#) on how to enroll in classes.

☐ **Pay for Tuition and Fees:**

- Login to [UAccess](#) Student Center to pay your tuition and fees by the [first day of classes](#). UA also offers a Tuition Payment Plan for the Fall and Spring semesters only. It allows students to spread their tuition payments over three installments per semester. Learn more about the [Tuition Payment Plan](#)

☐ **Prepare for classes:**

- Purchase textbooks from the [UA Bookstore](#) (use “SERP” for Department)

- Check [Catmail](#) daily for important emails
 - Check [D2L](#)
- **Financial Aid:** Financial aid is awarded through the University of Arizona's Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (OFSA). Application requests for financial aid should be made in the semester prior to the anticipated funding needs. Further information can be found on the [OFSA](#): Office of Financial Scholarship Aid website.

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I. Introduction to the Department and MA program

The Department of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies (DPS)

Welcome to the Master of Arts Degree Program in the Department of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies (DPS) at the University of Arizona. We are pleased to have you as part of our department and look forward to guiding and working with you as you pursue your online Master's degree. The purpose of this guide is to provide you with information about the department; as well as the processes, procedures, and forms you will use as you work toward your degree. The completion of all degree requirements and paperwork are ultimately the responsibility of the student pursuing the degree.

Special Education MA - Applied Behavior Analysis Overview

This program delivers a flexible and rigorous asynchronous online education to prepare students interested in working with people with problem behavior, and/or delays in communication, social, and adaptive skills. Our program prepares students to provide evidence-based services in applied behavior analysis in clinical, school, and home setting. This program consists of 36 units and includes the seven courses (21 units) [verified](#) by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) that provides the didactic requirements to take the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) examination. This program does not lead to teacher certification, but provides a path to board certification as a Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

Expected Outcomes

The Special Education-Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) program aims to prepare future Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA) with the requisite knowledge, skills, and collaborative disposition to deliver high-quality services to families and educators interacting with children with severe problem behavior. The primary goal is to prepare behavior analysts to understand and implement the principles of behavior analysis.

- Outcome 1: Prepare graduates to identify and describe philosophical underpinnings of behavior analysis as a science.
- Outcome 2: Prepare graduates to define and provide examples of the concepts and principles of behavior analysis.
- Outcome 3: Prepare graduates to execute measurement, create data display and interpret behavioral data.

- Outcome 4: Prepare graduates to identify defining features of experimental design and describe rationale for conducting experimental analysis.
- Outcome 5: Prepare responsible and ethical graduates to conduct behavior analysis with clients, supervisors, and supervisees.
- Outcome 6: Prepare graduates to conduct functional analyses of problem behavior.
- Outcome 7: Prepare graduates to prepare and use behavior-change procedures.
- Outcome 8: Prepare graduates to select and implement appropriate behavior interventions.
- Outcome 9: Prepare graduates to provide functionally designed supervision and management.

II. The Graduate College

While pursuing your degree, you are a student of the Graduate College at the University of Arizona. This can be confusing because your major is in special education, which is your professional discipline. However, all graduate students at the University of Arizona are administratively organized under the Graduate College. This administrative unit establishes policies and standards for the completion of graduate degrees. Early in your program, you will submit a Plan of Study to the Graduate College so that there will be a record of your strategy for completing the required coursework for your degree. The DPS Graduate Coordinator, [Eliane Acuna](#), is our departmental liaison with the Graduate College, and she can usually answer questions about the documents that are required by the [Graduate College](#) through [Gradpath](#).

Academic Integrity

Integrity is expected of every student in all academic work. The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be the student's own work. Students engaging in academic dishonesty diminish their education and bring discredit to the academic community. Students shall not violate the [Code of Academic Integrity](#) and shall avoid situations likely to compromise academic integrity, including information acquired through artificial intelligence. Students shall observe the provisions of the Code whether faculty members specify rules of academic integrity in the syllabi. Failure of faculty to prevent cheating does not excuse students from compliance with the Code of Academic Integrity. Any attempt to commit an act prohibited by these rules will be subject to sanctions to the same extent as completed acts. The procedures for reviewing a suspected violation are found in the complete Code of Academic Integrity available at [Dean of Students Office](#).

Responsible Conduct of Research

You are expected, throughout each semester, to exhibit ethical conduct that meets academic, professional, practice, and research standards. You will be expected to maintain high ethical standards as you engage in coursework and interact with faculty and peers. Be sure to abide by the academic and behavioral policies of the University, Graduate College and College of Education. Adhere to any additional academic and behavioral standards noted in the syllabi of your courses. You will be expected to maintain high ethical standards in your interactions with children, youth, parents, caregivers and other professionals. The Special Education programs in DPS expect students to adhere to the professional [ethical principles and practice standards](#) set forth by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Students conducting research should must be aware and sign the responsible conduct form in [Gradpath](#), and abide by University of Arizona standards for the ethical conduct of research outlined in the [Human Subjects](#) Protection Program (HSPP). Consult your advisor and become familiar with the materials available through the Office for the [Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

Student Responsibility

The department and program have established the academic requirements described in the degree requirements for the program (i.e. IV: Degree Requirements), which must be met before the degree is granted. These requirements concern program of study, courses, expected outcomes and grades. Advisors, faculty, directors, department heads, and deans are available to help the student understand and meet these requirements; but the student is responsible for completing the program requirements.

III. Funding

Currently this program does not offer any funding. For further information regarding funding opportunities, please visit the Financial Aid [webpage](#).

IV. Degree Requirements

Master's program Core Coursework, Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements

Program students must complete the following twelve 3-unit courses totaling 36 units. These courses are listed in numerical order and outlined in Appendix B.

SERP 500 FOUNDATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION:

Provides beginning graduate students with an overview of issues surrounding the fields of special education and rehabilitation, including legal principles, concepts of assessment; and principles of teaching and counseling. Students will examine and develop their personal philosophies regarding assessment of, services to and intervention with individuals with exceptionalities.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Demonstrate understanding of history of field of Special Education.
- Demonstrate understanding of exceptionalities that may result in the provision of special services.
- Demonstrate understanding of current trends in service delivery.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 502 BEHAVIOR PRINCIPLES AND DISABILITY:

Introduces students to the basic principles and concepts of ABA. This course aims to provide students with the skills and knowledge to identify and describe basic behavioral processes (e.g., reinforcement, punishment, extinction) and concepts (e.g., stimulus control, three term contingency). By the end of this course, students should be able to apply these concepts and principles to an applied situation and analyze and describe behavior from a behavior-analytic perspective

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Describe and provide examples of behavior, response, response class, stimulus, and stimulus class in relation to the application of behavior analysis to human behavior.
- Discuss the importance of the environment to behavior.
- Distinguish between operant and respondent behavior and describe the relevance of these types of behavior to the application of behavior analysis to change human behavior.
- Describe the core concepts, principles, and processes of behavior analysis in the context of specific socially significant behavioral concerns (i.e. generalization, maintenance), and highlight the value of emphasizing and incorporating behavioral processes in practice.
- Discuss potential limitations, side effects, and ethical considerations of the behavioral processes.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 503 SPECIAL SERVICES IN THE SCHOOLS:

Provides information to aid teachers in dealing with responsibilities and concerns in school settings with regard to P.L. 94-142, Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and other legal issues.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Describe the purposes of special education services;
- Identify how special education services are delivered in the schools;
- Describe the laws, regulations, statutes, and rules regarding the provision of special education services in schools;
- Describe the rights of students, parents, and educators with respect to special education services;
- Distinguish the roles and responsibilities of general education teachers, special education teachers, administrators, students, and parents in special education;
- Demonstrate skills in writing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and interacting on decision-making teams.
- Demonstrate appropriate conflict resolution/collaboration skills and related language usage and vocabulary.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 504 CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS:

Provides a theoretical base and practical approach to the study of special needs of students with language and cultural differences; basic premises of bilingual special education and the interface of the two fields.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Define inclusive education and explore the manner in which it is implemented within the schools.
- Develop an understanding of the processes of cultural identification and development within the context of social justice and cross-cultural interactions.
- Demonstrate competency (i.e. cultural competency) as a self-reflective and culturally aware community participant.
- Analyze different models of cultural diversity to better understand and reflect on cultural orientations to improve inter-group and intra-group interaction.
- Assess the impact culture has on the teaching and learning of students from diverse backgrounds with special educational needs.
- Learn about the processes involved in second language acquisition in relation to first and second language development.
- Learn about the philosophical, legal, and practical bases of bilingual/ESL/ELD and special education programs.

- Demonstrate an understanding of an “empowerment” theoretical framework (cultural/linguistic pedagogy, assessment and community/family participation) for students from diverse backgrounds in general and special education.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 529A ADVANCED POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT:

Introduce students to the behavior-analytic approach for assessing behavior. This course aims for students to be able to implement various assessments and analyze their results to develop and guide treatment recommendations. At the end of this course, students should be familiar with the literature and practice related to the identification of behavior in its natural context, the development of an appropriate assessment to determine the antecedents predictive of and reinforcers maintaining behavior, the development of assessments to identify preferences and reinforcers, and development of assessments to evaluate skill repertoires and most effective teaching procedures. In this course, student will complete a functional behavior assessment including conducting indirect assessment, descriptive assessment, a preference assessment, proposing a functional analysis method, and identifying treatment recommendations for a behavior intervention plan. Students will be required to write a FBA report based on their results.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Identify and prioritize socially significant behavior-change goals.
- Select appropriate assessment procedures based on the client’s skills, cultural variables, and environment.
- Describe the different types of FBA procedures in the assessment of problem behavior.
- Conduct, interpret, and utilize behavioral assessments (e.g., preference, skill acquisition, functional behavioral assessments) to develop and guide treatment.
- Discuss and describe the advantages and disadvantages of various assessment procedures for skill acquisition, preference, and functional behavior assessments.
- Describe common functions of challenging behavior.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 529B ADVANCED POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT:

Addresses other factors that can affect development and implementation of interventions such as legal issues, crisis intervention, and teaming and collaboration issues. Participants review Functional Assessments, and conduct Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and develop and monitor function-based interventions and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs).

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Review records and data.
- Determine need for behavior-analytic services.
- Identify and prioritize socially significant behavior-change goals.
- Conduct preference assessments and assessments of strength and deficits.
- Describe common functions of problem behavior.
- Conduct a descriptive assessment of problem behavior.
- Conduct a functional analysis of problem behavior.
- Interpret functional assessment data.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 552 ISSUES IN APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS:

Addresses advanced skills and knowledge in applied behavior analysis and the factors that affect the application of behavior principles. Topics examined include reinforcement, punishment, extinction, stimulus control, self-management, verbal behavior, and functional analysis.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Use reinforcement, motivating operations, reinforcers, stimulus and response prompts and fading.
- Use modeling, imitation, instructions, rules, shaping, chaining, and equivalence-based instruction.
- Use discrete-trial, free-operant, and naturalistic teaching arrangements.
- Use high-probability instructional sequence.
- Use reinforcement procedures: DRA, FCT, DRO, DRL, and NCR.
- Use extinction and punishment.
- Use token economies.
- Use group contingencies, contingency contracting, and self-management strategies.
- State intervention goals in observable and measurable terms.
- Identify potential interventions based on assessment results.
- Select acceptable alternative behavior to increase when decreasing target behavior.
- Plan for possible unwanted effects in behavior intervention.
- Monitor client progress and treatment integrity.
- Make databased decisions about effectiveness of the intervention.
- Collaborate with others who support and provide services to clients.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 553 ETHICAL ISSUES IN BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS:

Enables students to explain the need for ethical guidelines, identify appropriate ethical standards and guidelines of behavior analysis within the field of Applied Behavior Analysis and apply the ethical guidelines in practice.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Define responsible conduct of behavior analysts.
- Define behavior analysts' responsibility to clients.
- Responsibly assess behavior.
Define ethical ways to release public statements, conduct research and create behavior-change program.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 555 APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS: PERSONNEL SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT:

Provides students with skills and Information to assist students in training personnel and providing appropriate supervision as board certified behavior analysts. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to a behavior-analytic approach to supervision and personnel management. The goal of this course is to provide students with the skills and knowledge to identify the importance of supervision and training, identify the risks of ineffective supervision, assess workplace performance, conduct evidence-based staff training, provide ongoing monitoring of staff performance using treatment integrity data, identify, select, and implement function-based strategies to improve workplace performance and evaluate the effects of supervision.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- State reasons for behavior-analytic supervision and potential risks.
- Establish clear performance expectations for supervisor and supervisee.
- Select supervision goals based on assessment of supervisee's skills.
- Train personnel to perform assessment and intervention procedures.
- Use performance monitoring, feedback, and reinforcement systems.
- Use a functional assessment approach to identify variables affecting personnel performance.
- Use function-based strategies to improve personnel performance.
- Evaluate the effects of supervision.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 556 RESEARCH METHODS IN EDUCATION:

Provide basic concepts essential to the comprehension of research in education, including measurement principles and descriptive statistics.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Familiarize students with basic concepts used in educational and counseling research.
- Familiarize students with techniques for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of published research.
- Familiarize students with basic measurement, design, and analytical tools used for a) conducting research studies and program evaluations and b) interpreting research and program evaluation reports
- Prepare students to be critical reviewers of research and program evaluation reports.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 590 SINGLE SUBJECT RESEARCH DESIGN:

Addresses the advantages and disadvantages of various research designs and how to select a research design appropriate to a given scenario. Participants learn to critically evaluate professional research that incorporates single subject research designs, create data graphs, and develop a comprehensive research proposal.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Describe the appropriate recording methods to collect data for a specific research question.
- Describe the reliability and validity issues related to a specific research question.
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct basic visual analysis of SCR data, including level, trend, and variability within and across phases.
- Describe whether AB or withdrawal designs are appropriate for a specific research question.
- Describe whether multiple baseline designs are appropriate for a specific research question.
- Describe whether comparative designs are appropriate for a specific research question.
- Describe whether a combination or other design is appropriate for a specific research question.
- Demonstrate the ability to create a properly formatted SCR graph.
- Describe how you might use new graphing knowledge in your research or practice.
- Describe a position on the use of statistical analysis of SCR data.
- Describe how peer feedback will impact revisions on a SCR proposal or article reviews.
- Describe two or three of the most important take-aways from the course.

- Develop a SCR proposal that includes 10 essential elements.
- Identify and assess the quality of implementation of SCR elements in four SCR articles.
- Student must earn a C or better to continue in the program.

SERP 909 MASTER’S REPORT/PROJECT:

An original applied project in an area of behavior analysis. Projects are supervised by individual faculty and are conducted in lieu of a master’s thesis.

Expected Outcomes and Grade Requirements:

- Design and execute a project that is behavior analytic in nature, contribute to the field of behavior analysis and result in a permanent product.
- Student must earn a Pass to graduate from the program.

Master’s report

The Master’s Report will be discussed and developed under the guidance of the student’s advisor. Students shall register for three units of the Master’s Report (SERP 909) in the final semester of the program, in the section of the instructor designated by the director of the ABA program (i.e. Dr. Rebecca Hartzell). ***When you register for SERP 909 – make sure to enter 3 CREDITS, by using the drop down menu to register for 3 instead of 1 unit.***

Comprehensive Exam

There is no comprehensive exam in this program.

V. Graduate Student and Academic Services

GradPath

[GradPath](#) is the Graduate College’s degree audit system that facilitates the tracking and monitoring of graduate student academic progress. GradPath allows the student, the program coordinators, and the Graduate College to identify where a student is in their academic journey. Students are able to fill in and submit forms online through [UAccess Student](#).

To qualify for graduation, the GradPath forms (Responsible Conduct of Research, Plan of Study, and the Master’s/Specialist Committee Appointment) must be submitted electronically through GradPath and receive final approval through the program director, director of graduate studies and Grad College.

- **Responsible Conduct of Research**

The first GradPath form you will be required to submit is to verify mandatory compliance with the Responsible Conduct of Research regulations. You cannot access other forms in GradPath until you signal your compliance. Before conducting research, a student needs to indicate intention to fulfill all responsibilities required in the [Responsible Conduct of Research](#), particularly with human subjects.

- **Master's Plan of Study**

Develop a [Plan of Study](#) as **early as the second semester of the program**, to be submitted to the Graduate College through “GradPath Forms.” Please review the Graduate College [requirements](#).

In conjunction with your academic advisor, Dr. Rebecca Hartzell, create a list all the courses you have taken and include courses you are planning to take in the future. Use the recommended course sequence (see Appendix B). The Graduate College Requirements for this program is thirty-six (36) units to complete the master's degree, and all courses are three (3) units. Instructions on how to develop the plan of study in GradPath (see Appendix B).

- **Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment Form**

The [Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment](#) form is required for all graduate programs. Indicate that you do not have a committee (check No) and list your academic advisor: Dr. Rebecca Hartzell. The form will remain “pending for approval” until the course SERP 909 is completed and a grade is posted. Without submitting this form, the Graduate College cannot initiate the Completion of Degree, and the diploma will not be awarded to the student.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding GradPath, or if expected graduation date changes, please contact the Degree Auditor, [Kristi Davenport](#).

Transfer Students

Due to the process by which The Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB), students are unable to transfer any credits within the required seven courses of the Verified Course Sequence (VCS). Consideration can be given on a case-by-case basis for credits of coursework that are not related to the BACB requirements, for example, “Research Methods” and “Foundations of Special Education”. Syllabi of similar courses from other programs would need to be provided for consideration of transfer credits.

Note: Transfer of the awarded graduate credit toward the degree will not be made unless the grade earned was A or B.

Registration

Each [term](#), students should consult the ABA Recommended Course Sequence (see appendix B) to determine what courses should be taken each semester. If there are any questions or concerns, contact your Academic Advisor to determine what courses should be taken. Be mindful that if there are any holds on the student account, the student will be unable to enroll until the hold has been resolved. All holds must be cleared before each term starts in order to register for courses. After registration, student should verify the schedule and check the account balance. Watch this [video tutorial](#) on how to enroll in classes.

Course Sections

Students admitted in **Online Campus** must complete courses in section number **201** (i.e. SERP 502-201). Students admitted in **Global Direct Campus** must complete the above courses in section number **401**. (i.e. SERP 502-401). Do not enroll in sections numbers that end in 001 or 101; these sections are reserved for main campus students only.

Add/Drop Procedure

Until the add/drop deadline, most changes to courses can be made through [UAccess](#) Student Center. If a course is dropped, the Plan of Study must be updated to indicate the course will be taken. NOTE: Withdrawing from courses will likely result in a delay in degree completion. Courses dropped after the deadline are not eligible for refunds.

Dates and Deadlines

The Online ABA Program follows the Office of the Registrar's Dates and Deadlines for courses. Dates to add classes, drop classes, and receive refunds are available through the [Office of the Registrar's](#) website.

VI. Academic Policies

Continuous Enrollment

According to Graduate College [Policy](#), graduate students must be continuously enrolled fall and spring semesters for a minimum of one graduate unit(s) from original matriculation until all degree requirements

are met. Unless excused by an official Leave of Absence (which may not exceed one year total throughout the student's degree program), all graduate students are subject to the [Continuous Enrollment Policy](#) and must pay tuition and fees in order to remain in the program. If the student fails to maintain continuous enrollment or obtain a Leave of Absence, the student will be required to apply for readmission, pay the Graduate College application fee and pay all overdue tuition and fees, including cumulative late penalties. Students need to be aware that this decision has implications for financial assistance, loan repayment, and/or visa status; particularly that enrollment in just one unit means that the student is not at full-time enrollment status. It is the responsibility of the student to verify this with the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships before requesting/finalizing enrollment. To qualify to take the board certification exam for behavior analysis, the VCS courses should not exceed 5 years on university transcripts based on admission date of the first semester of enrollment.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of I (for Incomplete) may be awarded with the instructor's concurrence only near the end of a term, when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed. The incomplete grade will not be awarded in place of a failing grade or when the student is expected to repeat the course; in such a case, a grade other than incomplete must be assigned. Students must make arrangements with the instructor to receive an incomplete grade before the end of the term, and will not automatically receive an incomplete simply because all course requirements were not met. The course instructor will determine the conditions of the incomplete grade and set a date for completion of all required assignments at any point within the year following the end of the course. Those conditions will be outlined on a Report of Incomplete Grade form, which serves as a contract between the student and the instructor. The Report of Incomplete Grade form will be kept on file until the conditions for completion have been met. When the work has been completed, a Change of Grade form will be submitted for the course. If assignments are not completed, incomplete grades convert to "E" (Failure) one year later on the last day of classes of the same semester in which the course was taken. Students will not be permitted to graduate until all incomplete grades are cleared. An Incomplete grade cannot be awarded for 909 units (Master's Report).

Lapse in Enrollment

The program has a five-year limit from the start of the coursework. Students who have an interruption in enrollment of one semester or more, and have not been approved for a Leave of Absence (LOA), will be required to reapply for admission to the program through the [Graduate College Admission Application](#) in order to resume coursework. Note that per Graduate College policy, the student may be required to pay retroactive registration for all missed semesters.

Leave of Absence (LOA)

Graduate students may apply for a Leave of Absence from a program for a semester or for the academic year using the [Graduate Petition for a Leave of Absence](#). If a student fails to register and does not have a Leave of Absence on file, the student will be discontinued from the program. A new application will be necessary for the student to continue in the program, and readmission is not guaranteed. See [Continuous Enrollment](#) and [Readmission Policies](#) for more information.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Rules

Students in the Special Education Master's Degree Program at the University of Arizona are continually evaluated on both academic and non-academic standards.

Academic Standards & Grounds for Dismissal

- A minimum grade of C must be earned on all course work to obtain graduate credit.
- A cumulative 3.00 grade point average must be maintained in all graduate level courses.
- Students unable to meet the grade requirements become ineligible for graduation and are placed on academic probation.
- Students will remain on probation until an additional nine credit hours have been completed with a 3.00 grade point average. Those unable to remove the probationary status are subject to academic dismissal.
- Withdrawal from a course while on probation will not be allowed.

Nonacademic Standards

In addition to maintaining high scholastic standards, students enrolled in the program must develop professional skills necessary to work with people with diverse needs. The faculty expects students to:

- Be committed to personal growth and professional development.
- Demonstrate appropriate social skills.
- Be concerned about people.
- Demonstrate emotional and mental fitness in their interactions with other students and faculty.
- Be able to receive and give constructive feedback.
- Use the skills and techniques that are generally accepted by others in the profession.

Students are expected to adhere to the code of ethics of their professional associations (e.g. CEC, BACB) and the relevant regulatory boards of the state of Arizona. A student's acceptance in the program does not guarantee academic and professional skills to remain in the program. The faculty is responsible for assuring that only those students who continue to meet program standards continue in the program.

Evaluating Student Fitness & Performance

Members of the faculty evaluate student academic and professional performance at the end of each semester. The faculty make judgments as to the student's performance based on observations of course performance, evaluations of student's performance in simulated practice situations, supervisors' evaluations of student's performance in practicum and internship, and adherence to the discipline's code of ethics. Faculty will identify additional help a student may need to be successful and recognize outstanding achievements of students in their work. Faculty may become concerned about a student's suitability for entry in the education and/or Applied Behavior Analysis field, even though the student may be demonstrating satisfactory performance in academic course work.

Professional Email Communication

Email correspondence is considered a formal method of communication. All students are expected to use professional language and email etiquette in any email correspondence. Make sure to use professional language and tone when communicating with professors, program coordinators, students, and peers. Advisors are happy to meet with anyone in the program to explain the expectations of the program regarding professional communication. Email communication is part of the professional behaviors expected of any student in the program.

Evidence of professional behaviors that may cause concern for suitability in the field may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violation of professional standards of ethical codes.
- Inability or unwillingness to demonstrate appropriate professional skills at an acceptable level of competency.
- Behaviors that can reasonably be predictive of poor future professional functioning, such as extensive and/or habitual tardiness in client record-keeping or poor compliance with supervisory requirements.
- Interpersonal behaviors that impairs one's professional functioning.

- Inability to exercise sound clinical judgment, exhibit poor interpersonal skills, and/or demonstrate pervasive interpersonal problems.

An effort will be made to identify the concern, and work out a solution with the student to continue in the program. When difficulty with a student is identified by the a professor, the following procedures will be followed:

- Professor initiates a meeting with the student to discuss concerns.
- Faculty member presents in writing the concern(s) to the Program Director.
- The concerns might be discussed in a faculty meeting.
- The Program Director or academic advisor will arrange a student conference in which the concerns of the faculty member are shared with the student and an improvement plan will be developed.
- The advisor presents the contract to the other faculty members involved.
- The advisor will monitor subsequent progress in carrying out the recommendations of the improvement plan.
- The advisor presents an evaluation to involved faculty.
- The advisor provides feedback to the involved faculty on plan progress.
- A student not satisfied with the decision would be allowed to continue in the program as outlined by the improvement plan.
- If it is deemed that a student's professional performance is in question, the faculty may recommend the following actions:
 - A formal reprimand
 - Additional practicum and/or clinical work
 - Additional Assignments
 - Personal mental health counseling (individual or group)
 - Temporary leave of absence from the program
 - Additional academic course work
 - Additional supervision
 - Formal probation
 - Encouragement to withdraw from the program
 - Formal dismissal from the program

Remediation Plan

Remediation plans will be determined on an individual basis with the academic advisor.

APPENDIX A

Faculty in Special Education – Applied Behavior Analysis

Rebecca Hartzell is an Associate Professor of Practice in the Special Education Program and Program Director for the Masters-Applied Behavior Analysis program. She earned her doctorate in special education with an emphasis in autism and applied behavior analysis. She teaches courses and supervises students pursuing board certification in applied behavior analysis, and provides clinical support to parents and families of children with neurodevelopmental disabilities. She is the author and co-author of peer-reviewed journal articles focused on social skills interventions and inclusion.

Carl Liaupsin is a Professor of Special Education in the College of Education who earned his Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky. He specializes in the area of emotional and behavior disorders and is the Department Head of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies. His research addresses the validation of function-based behavior intervention procedures and issues of treatment integrity in individualized interventions.

John Umbreit is a Professor Emeritus of Special Education in the College of Education and a Professor of Family and Community Medicine in the College of Medicine. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California and specializes in severe disabilities, behavior analysis, and positive behavior support. His research focuses on function-based intervention and PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports) in natural environments. In 2010, Dr. Umbreit received the Most Outstanding Teaching/Mentoring Award from the College of Education. In 2019, he received the Outstanding Leadership Award from the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD).

Chelsea Carr, PhD, BCBA-D is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst with over 10 years of experience serving families of children with neurodevelopmental disabilities. She received her doctoral degree in special education with an emphasis in applied behavior analysis at the University of Arizona and completed a clinical externship at the University of Iowa. She has experience conducting assessments and supporting and training caregivers and other providers on behavior intervention plans in school, clinical, and home settings. She has presented research at regional and national conferences on topics related to the assessment and treatment of challenging behavior displayed by children with and without disabilities. In her free time, Chelsea enjoys running and cycling, trying all the amazing food in Tucson, and traveling with family and friends.

APPENDIX B

MA Recommended Course Sequence

Take note of the availability of the courses required in the Master's Course Sequence.

Submit the plan of study to the Graduate College through "GradPath" Forms.

All courses are 3 credits

Use the term cohort in which you were accepted

[Class Search](#)

FALL COURSES	SPRING COURSES	SUMMER COURSES
Fall Year 1: SERP 500 SERP 502	Spring Year 1: SERP 552 SERP 504	Summer Year 1: SERP 553 SERP 503
Fall Year 2: SERP 529a SERP 590	Develop your Plan of Study Spring Year 2: SERP 555 SERP 529b	Develop your Plan of Study Summer Year 2: SERP 556 SERP 909

***SERP 909-Master's Project** – Consult with Dr. Hartzell to decide in which section to enroll. When you register for SERP 909 – use the drop down menu to select 3 instead of 1 unit.

APPENDIX C

Important links to ABA and University

[BCBA database to assist with the search for supervised hours](#)

[BACB information about supervision](#)

[Class Search](#)

[Convocation Information](#)

[Dates & Deadlines Office of the Registrar](#)

[GradPath](#)

[How to access GradPath](#)

[How to Register for Classes](#)

[Reporting supervised hours](#)

[2025-2026 Academic Calendar](#)