College of Management and Human Service

School of Education and Human Development

Master of Science in Educational Psychology with Concentration in Applied Behavior Analysis (MS-ABA)

PROGRAM HANDBOOK
2015-2016

Ψ

8 Bailey Hall
Gorham, ME 04038
(207) 780-4300
1-800-800-4USM, ext. 4300
espy@maine.edu

USM’s MS-ABA Program is Approved by the:
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<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
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</thead>
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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to assist students in the USM Master of Science in Educational Psychology with Concentration in Applied Behavior Analysis (MS-ABA) as they determine and engage in course planning and program completion activities. The M.S. in ABA provides the course work needed to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). There are three steps to becoming a BCBA:

1. Complete an approved course of study that includes completion of a master’s degree (USM’s program is approved);
2. Complete 1500 hours of supervised experience under the direction of a BCBA; and
3. Take and pass the national BCBA exam.

USM’s MS-ABA program provides only the courses needed to become a BCBA. This handbook includes information regarding required courses, course schedules, advising, and student evaluation. It has been designed to give the student and the faculty supervisor(s) a better understanding of each other's roles. Students are advised that this handbook does not include all Department, College, and University policies. Students should consult the University of Southern Maine Graduate Catalog for other information. Students are reminded that consultation with their advisor is an essential component to individual program of study planning.

Comments about this handbook are encouraged so that these experiences can be more valuable to students, faculty and supporting agencies. Please send your comments directly to the Director of the Educational and School Psychology Programs.

Mark W. Steege, Ph.D., NCSP, BCBA-D
Professor of Educational and School Psychology
School of Education and Human Development
8 Bailey Hall
University of Southern Maine
Gorham, ME  04038
(207) 780-5309
E-mail: msteege@usm.maine.edu

Note: Program faculty reserve the right to change any of the terms of the handbook in any section at any time.
II. FACULTY

Rachel Brown, Ph.D., NCSP
Rachel earned her doctorate at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (2000). Prior to that she taught middle and high school history and special education for 10 years. Her research areas include curriculum-based measurement, response to intervention (RTI), and scientifically based reading instruction methods. Rachel is the editor of Assessment for Intervention: A Problem-Solving Approach (2005, 2012), and co-author of Response to Intervention: Principles and Strategies for Success (2005; 2010) and RTI in the Classroom: Guidelines and Recipes for Success (2009). In addition, Rachel has authored articles about reading assessment and instruction as well as implementation of RTI. Rachel is a nationally and state certified school psychologist and a licensed psychologist, and has consulted with numerous schools and districts to support RTI implementation. She is a native Alaskan and spends the school years in Maine and summers in Alaska with her husband and daughter.

Mark W. Steege, Ph.D., NCSP, BCBA-D
Mark earned his doctorate in School Psychology at the University of Iowa and worked as a school psychologist in a number of Iowa schools. Mark’s research focuses on person-centered applied behavior analysis. He has written extensively on functional behavioral assessment, single-subject research methods, and use of empirically-based interventions for students with behavioral difficulties. Mark has served on the editorial board of Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis. Mark is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral (BCBA-D), Maine Licensed Psychologist, Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP), and Maine Certified School Psychologist-Doctoral.
III. MS-ABA PROGRAM OF STUDY

The MS-ABA program includes all of the courses necessary to meet the course preparation requirements for BCBA. Students in the MS-ABA program must complete the following twelve (12) courses:

- EDU 600: Research Methods
- SED 540: Nature and Needs of Learners who are Exceptional
- SED 682: Special Education Law
- SPY 601: Behavioral Principles of Learning
- SPY 602: Clinical Research Methods
- SPY 604: Functional Behavioral Assessment
- SPY 605: Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis
- SPY 606: Behavior Therapy
- SPY 607: Consultation in School Psychology
- SPY 608: Professional Ethics in Behavioral Analysis
- SPY 671: Physical Bases of Behavior
- SPY 673: Social Foundations of Behavior

Importantly, the courses must be taken in a specific order. All of the courses are offered no more than one time each academic year so students are encouraged to plan ahead and be ready for the course sequence. Below is the recommended MS-ABA course schedule.

Recommended Course Schedule for MS-ABA Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Total Cumulative Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SPY 601</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPY 605</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SED 540</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPY 673</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPY 608</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPY 606</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>EDU 600</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPY 604</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SED 682</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPY 602</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPY 671</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPY 607</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This schedule is for student guidance purposes only and does not guarantee that courses will be offered at the stated times. The University of Southern Maine retains the right to make changes to the actual course schedules at any time for any reason. As much as possible, the courses are offered at 3:30, 4:10, or 7:00 pm on weekdays. As of Fall 2014, all courses are also offered using synchronous online sessions using Adobe Connect. This means that students can enroll in and take classes from any internet-connected computer that has the necessary software and connection speed. There are two sections of each course. One section is for students who will attend on campus and the other for students who will attend online. It is imperative that students enroll in the section that matches the attendance location. Those students who attend on campus will pay a parking fee, whereas those who enroll online will pay a
computer fee that covers technical support if needed. The Program is designed to meet the needs of working professionals and to be completed over two years. It may be possible to complete the MS-ABA courses over one academic year, but students are required to complete the courses in the order shown above. Seven of the courses have one or more prerequisite courses and those who want to complete the program in one year will need to fulfill all course prerequisites. Below is a list of the required courses and prerequisites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Prerequisite(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDU 600</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SED 540</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SED 682</td>
<td>SED 540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 601</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 602</td>
<td>SPY 601, SPY 605</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPY 604</td>
<td>SPY 601, SPY 602, SPY 605</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPY 605</td>
<td>SPY 601</td>
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<td>SPY 606</td>
<td>SPY 601, SPY 605</td>
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<td>SPY 607</td>
<td>SPY 601, SPY 602, SPY 604, SPY 605, SPY 606, SPY 608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 608</td>
<td>SPY 601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 671</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 673</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptions of each of the classes are given below.

**EDU 600: Research Methods**
This course studies the concepts, principles, and techniques of educational research with an emphasis on scientific inquiry and problem solving, designed for both the producer and consumer of educational research. Individual research critiques and a research review are completed.

**SED 540: Nature and Needs of Exceptional Learners**
The primary goal of this survey course is to construct an understanding of the range of exceptionalities, including students with disabilities and those identified as gifted and talented. The course is based on the premise that students in special education should be educated and socially interact to the greatest extent possible with their peers engaging in the general education curriculum. Topics include characteristics of areas of exceptionality; planning and strategies for differentiating instruction; classroom management; assistive technology strategies; state and federal laws and regulations; working with parents; and inclusion philosophy and practices, including collaboration between general education and special education teachers.
SED 682: Special Education Law
This course is designed to help bring students to a relatively current understanding of the several federal and state statutes and accompanying regulations governing special education delivery. The term “relatively current” is appropriate here since case law, being developed daily throughout the country, emerges at such a pace that keeping up with it in real time is virtually impossible.

SPY 601: Behavioral Principles of Learning
This course provides a comprehensive review of the psychological principles of learning derived from experimental research and validated by applied experimental/empirical studies. General topics include the nature of learning, behavior without learning, learning without words, and learning with words. Specific topics covered include types of behavior, motivational influences on behavior, respondent behavior and conditioning, operant behavior and conditioning, stimulus control, schedule influences on behavior, observational learning, verbal behavior and rule-governed behavior, and behavioral accounts of language and cognition. The course is designed to give students a good grounding for assessment and intervention courses with a behavior analytic orientation. This course emphasizes the dynamic relationships of social-emotional, academic, behavioral, and adaptive behavior functioning of students within educational and clinical settings, including ones that serve students with suspected and identified disabilities.

SPY 602: Research Methods in Applied Interventions
This course is designed to introduce students to research designs used in school and clinical settings. This course will emphasize methods for evaluating the effectiveness of behavioral interventions with individuals from birth through age 21 who are receiving special education services. A history of experimental design, types of experimental reasoning, and experimental validity lay the groundwork for understanding how group research and single-case research designs are used to assess the efficacy of applied interventions. Students will learn how to identify and record behaviors, match research designs to the research question and how to flexibly employ research designs in applied settings.

SPY 604: Functional Behavioral Assessment
This course examines a variety of behavior assessment methods addressing behavioral issues. Assessment techniques covered in the course emphasize a functional behavioral assessment methodology including interviews, observations, behavior rating scales, descriptive assessments, and functional analyses. This course includes practica experiences in which students practice in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of assessment procedures. This course emphasizes the dynamic relationships of social-emotional, academic, behavioral, and adaptive behavior functioning of students within educational and clinical settings, including ones that serve students with suspected and identified disabilities.
SPY 605: Applied Behavior Analysis
The primary focus of this course is to provide graduate students with exposure to evidence-based systematic instruction methods that are used within school/agency settings. This course will review functional assessment procedures used to identify appropriate educational programs for students/clients. This course will emphasize instruction and practice in implementing instructional methods (e.g., shaping, chaining, discrete trial teaching, task analysis, incidental teaching, functional communication training, among others).

SPY 606: Behavior Therapy
This course emphasizes the application of applied behavior analysis interventions in addressing socially meaningful behaviors within applied settings. This course will focus on the application of behavior analytic principles and procedures addressing both the decrease in disruptive behaviors and the increase in adaptive replacement behaviors. The course includes a blend of assigned readings, lecture, discussion, clinical case examples, and applied learning experiences. This course emphasizes the dynamic relationships of social-emotional, academic, behavioral, and adaptive behavior functioning of students within educational and clinical settings, including ones that serve students with suspected and identified disabilities.

SPY 607: Consultation in School Psychology
This course examines how school psychologists and behavior analysts provide consultation services in school and clinical settings. A review of research which outlines a variety of consultation roles and procedures with case studies and opportunities to explore the use of consultation as part of a problem-solving, data-based approach to consultation. This course emphasizes behavioral consultation and supervision models. This course emphasizes the dynamic relationships of social-emotional, academic, behavioral, and adaptive behavior functioning of students within educational and clinical settings, including ones that serve students with suspected and identified disabilities. This class includes 10 hours of applied learning experiences.

SPY 608: Professional Ethics in Behavior Analysis
This course provides in-depth preparation for ethical practices in behavior analysis. Drawing from the ethical standards of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB), the course includes readings and application of ethical standards for clinical and school settings, including the BACB Guidelines for Responsible Conduct and the Professional Disciplinary and Ethical Standards.

SPY 671: Physical Bases of Behavior
This course examines neural, endocrine, and response systems that are related to attention, motivation, emotion, memory, and psychological and/or learning disorders. It includes consideration of typical and
atypical patterns of development and neurological and health problems of children and adolescents.

**SPY 673: Social Foundations of Behavior**
This course provides knowledge and skills in the area of social psychology. The course includes an overview of basic social psychology methods and research findings as well as preparation of students to conduct assessment and intervention for social skills problems among school-age children. The course includes discussion of the importance of social skills and provides a rationale for promoting and teaching prosocial behavior. Students review and learn how to administer, score, and interpret both screening level and evaluation-level social skills assessment instruments. In addition, students review a variety of interventions and develop social skills interventions based on assessment information.

**Connections Between the BACB Standards and the MS-ABA Program of Study**
Table 1 illustrates which courses cover specific BACB Task List 4 standards.

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN</th>
<th>SPY 601</th>
<th>SPY 608</th>
<th>SPY 606</th>
<th>SPY 602</th>
<th>SPY 607</th>
<th>SPY 604</th>
<th>SPY 605</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45 Hours in Ethical and Professional Conduct</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>45 Hours in Concepts and Principles of Behavior Analysis</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 Hours in Measurement (including data analysis)</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Hours in Experimental Design</td>
<td>17.5</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 Hours in Identification of the Problem and Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.5</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td></td>
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<td>37.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>45 Hours in Fundamental Elements of Behavior Change, and Specific Behavior Change Procedure</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Hours in Behavior Change Systems</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Hours in Intervention and &amp; Behavior Change Consideration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
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<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Hours in Implementation Management &amp; Supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Hours in Discretionary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advising**
Each degree student will be assigned a faculty advisor upon admission to a program. Students are encouraged to maintain regular contact with their faculty advisor throughout their program of study. Students may request a change of advisor at any time. Advisor changes are at the discretion of program faculty, however, all requests will be carefully reviewed and every effort will be made to accommodate student advisor requests. MS-ABA students are expected to comply with the BCBA® & BMS-ABA® Behavior Analyst Task List Fourth Edition and the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® Guidelines for
Responsible Conduct for Behavior Analysts throughout all phases of program completion. MS-ABA students must sign and submit Appendix A: MS-ABA Ethics Compliance Statement no later than the second week of courses of the first semester of their enrollment.
IV. STUDENT APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

General Guidelines for Resolving Problems

The ethical guidelines of the Behavior Analysis Certification Board include specific guidance and procedures for how to resolve problems that arise in the course of ABA practice. These core steps are:

1. Meet with the individual(s) involved in the problem and discuss the issue candidly. If possible, come up with an action plan to resolve the problem.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved with a face-to-face meeting between the parties, contact the supervisor(s) of the person(s) involved. The supervisor would then assist with a solution.
3. If the problem persists after following the above steps, the problem should be reported to the appropriate person in leadership of the organization.

Students in the MS-ABA program are expected to learn and follow the BACB ethical guidelines and procedures during and after program completion; accordingly these are the basic methods used for addressing problems while enrolled in the MS-ABA program. Specifically, students should start by meeting with the individual(s) involved in the problem and try to find a solution. If such a solution is not found with a face-to-face meeting, students should contact the next person(s) up in governance at USM to access assistance. Except in circumstances listed below, this process should be followed on a step-wise basis such that the problem is addressed “locally” and individually as much as is possible.

Example

Here is an example of the procedures students should follow if they have a problem with a course instructor or any other person(s) working in the MS-ABA Program.

Lynn is a second year student. She just finished the first semester and looked online to view her grades for the term. She was shocked to see that she had earned a “B” in one of her classes. She thought her work was very strong and she expected an “A.” She reviewed the assignments she had received back from the instructor and all her work showed scores leading to an “A” grade. Lynn decided she would ask the instructor why she earned a “B” in the class.

Lynn contacted the instructor by e-mail the next day and requested a time to meet and review her grade. The instructor agreed and a meeting was set up for the next week. Lynn brought all her course work to the meeting and explained that she felt her work had earned an “A” instead of a “B.” The instructor said that most of Lynn’s work for the semester was “A” material, but her final paper (worth 30% of the grade) was of much lower quality than her other work. The instructor showed Lynn the paper and went over his concerns. Lynn said that she disagreed with the instructor and felt the work was on a par with her prior assignments. The instructor disagreed.

In this example, Lynn was not able to resolve the problem with a face-to-face meeting with the instructor.
Lynn's next step was to request a meeting with the Program Coordinator to discuss the situation.

Lynn met with the Program Coordinator and the instructor together and discussed the grade dispute. The Program Coordinator suggested that she read the final paper and use the instructor's scoring criteria to evaluate the paper. She suggested that she also read a selection of Lynn's other work so she could compare the quality of the writing. Lynn and the instructor agreed that this was a good idea. One week later the Coordinator met again with Lynn and the instructor and reported her review of the paper. She scored Lynn’s last paper higher than the instructor had, and the new score yielded a course grade of A-. Lynn and the instructor agreed to accept the new paper score and the instructor submitted a revised grade for the course.

In this case, Lynn’s problem was resolved by following steps 1 and 2 of the basic procedures for problem-solving. If Lynn or the instructor had not been willing to accept the Coordinator’s new score, the next step would have been to contact the department chair and ask for additional help with the problem. For this, and any other concern a student has, the “order” for addressing the problem will generally goes as follows:

1. Person(s) directly involved in the problem
2. Program Director: Mark Steege, 207-780-5309, msteege@usm.maine.edu
3. Department Chair: Robert Kuech, rkuech@usm.maine.edu
4. CMHS Associate Dean Jean Whitney, 207-780-5472, jeanw@usm.maine.edu
5. Provost: Joseph McDonnell, 207-780-4485, jmcconnell@usm.maine.edu
6. USM President: Harvey Kesselman, 207-780-4480, president@usm.maine.edu

Usually, most problems can be solved through meetings with the persons involved and the Program or Department leaders. If a student is not sure how to go about addressing the problem, the student should contact her or his advisor. If the Advisor, Program Coordinator, or Department Chair is involved in the problem itself, another faculty member in the Program or Department can serve as an objective participant in the problem solving process.

Situations Requiring Immediate Attention

In some cases, the nature of a student’s problem might be so severe that it is necessary to contact School or USM leadership immediately. Concerns related to discrimination or harassment should be directed to the EEOC office at the University at darylmc@usm.maine.edu or 207-780-5510. If a student has a concern relating to substance abuse, illegal activities, or the safety of themselves or others, the student should seek help immediately as the situation warrants. In circumstances of imminent danger, please call USM Police. As soon as it is practical to follow up, or for serious concerns of a non-emergency nature, the office students can contact for urgent assistance is the SEHD Director of Student Affairs.
Director is charged with helping students obtain assistance for a wide variety of concerns. If a student is not sure whom to contact about a concern, the SEHD Director of Student Affairs is the best person to contact first.

Non-Academic Complaints
To provide graduate students with assistance in resolving disagreements or complaints of a non-academic nature, the University has designated the Dean of Students to respond to student inquiries. The mission of the Dean's office is to provide impartial guidance to students in identifying the nature of their disagreement or complaint. The Dean's staff will guide students to the appropriate University policy or procedure to utilize in seeking resolution. The academic policies described below are not applicable to student complaints about unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment; however, a Dean's office representative can advise the student about the University policies and procedures to follow when student complaints of this nature arise. The most up-to-date policies concerning non-academic complaints is in the USM Graduate Catalog: http://usm.maine.edu/catalogs/2013-14/academic-policies-0

Academic Grades and Probation Policy
MS-ABA students are expected to obtain grades of B or better and to abide by all USM policies concerning academic integrity. Students are encouraged to read and become familiar with the USM Graduate Catalog policies as they apply to all USM graduate students (see: http://usm.maine.edu/catalogs/2013-14/academic-policies-0). When a MS-ABA student does not meet these expectations, the Program, Department, School, College, and University reserve the right to place the student on academic probation. Such probation involves notifying the student that her or his academic standing does not meet Program standards and must be rectified in a stated period of time. Academic probation is handled by the Office of Graduate Studies and students are notified in writing about probation decisions. If a student is not certain how to proceed with a concern, s/he is advised to contact his or her advisor first. If the concern is with the advisor s/he can contact Kim Warren in the SEHD Office of Student Affairs.
Appendix A:

MS-ABA Ethics Compliance Statement

I, ____________________________, have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® Guidelines for Responsible Conduct for Behavior Analysts during and after the completion of the USM Master of Science in Educational Psychology with Concentration in Applied Behavior Analysis program. I understand that it is my responsibility to keep abreast of changes and updates in the Guidelines and abide by any future versions. I understand that failure to abide by the Guidelines may result in disciplinary action (e.g., remedial instruction or dismissal from program) by USM’s Educational Psychology Program faculty.

____________________________________________
Student Printed Name

____________________________________________  ______________________
Student Signature                                            Date

____________________________________________
Program Faculty Member Signature                        Date
Appendix B:

MS-ABA Program Completion Form

Student: _________________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Phone number(s): __________________________________________________________

Email: _____________________________________________________________________

MS-ABA program faculty advisor: _____________________________________________

I have completed all of the classes required of the MS-ABA program and hereby request a
formal certificate and transcript documenting my completion of the program.

____________________________   ________________  _________
Student Name (print)      Signature        Date

Program verification of course completion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Semester Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDU 600</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SED 540</td>
<td>Nature and Needs of Exceptional Learners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SED 682</td>
<td>Special Education Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 601</td>
<td>Behavioral Principles of Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 602</td>
<td>Clinical Research Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 604</td>
<td>Functional Behavioral Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPY 605</td>
<td>Applied Behavior Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPY 606</td>
<td>Behavior Therapy</td>
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<td>SPY 607</td>
<td>Consultation in School Psychology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 608</td>
<td>Professional Ethics for Behavior Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 671</td>
<td>Physical Bases of Behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPY 673</td>
<td>Social Foundations of Behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

____________________________   ________________  _________
Program Faculty (print)      Signature        Date

Once completed, this form should be submitted to the MS-ABA Program Director.