


Memorandum

To: Faculty Senate
Seton Hall University

From: Karen E. Boroff, Ph.D.
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President 

Re: Approval of the MA in Applied Behavioral Analysis
2018-FS-20

Date: February 21, 2019

The Office of the Provost is in receipt of the Faculty Senate's approval of the MA in Applied Behavioral Analysis, which was passed on Oct. 22, 2018. This master's program is to be housed in the Department of Educational Studies within the College of Education and Human Services.

The proposal makes a case for the potential growth of the program based on the need for experienced professionals in the field of applied behavioral analysis. Graduates are expected to be able to sit for Board Certification Examination and to become a BACB (Behavior Analyst Certification Board) Analyst. The program requires students to complete 48 credits within a two-year period. Students must also complete 1500 experience hours under the direction of a certified Analyst.

Currently, the department runs a certificate program, which requires 27 credits and 750 experience hours. The BACB has increased the required hours to 1500-2000 hours, making it difficult for students to complete that program in one year. There would be some overlap of courses between the certificate and the master's programs. A comparison provided by the proposers of the MA program demonstrates some of the advantages of the MA program over the certificate program. Students may be admitted to the MA program without obtaining a prior master's degree. They are able to meet the experience hours required for certification within the two-year window. They also indicate that there are sufficient placement sites for students in both programs to complete the experience hours required. The MA program is more rigorous than the certificate program.

In terms of enrollment, the MA degree is expected to attract students in related fields such as psychology, education, social work, social and behavior sciences, and the allied health professions. The certificate program currently experiences 100% retention. The proposers have identified the following enrollment numbers over the next few years:

- By the end of the third year, it is projected that there will be a total of 16 active full-tuition students broken down as 9 in the first year plus 7 in the second.

- By the end of the fifth year of the program, they expect at least 23 active students.

If at the end of the third year, it is clear that enrollments will not reach projections, the program will then sunset and current students will be “taught out” by existing faculty. The certificate and the MA programs pull from different student populations; therefore, it is not expected that the MA program will deplete the certificate program.

The proposal includes admission requirements and the course sequence for the MA in ABA. It also includes a content validation grid of the necessary courses required by the certification standards. The program will track student pass rates on the BCBA examination with the objective of having an almost 100% pass rate on the first sitting for the examination. In addition, student and faculty research and presentations will be recorded each year with the goal of demonstrating increasing impact in the field. I would expect that the level of scholarly productivity of the faculty in the program will support this goal of increasing impact and that assessment of how well the program is meeting learning objective will take place. The students in the certificate program and the master’s program will take the same courses, therefore it is expected that there are no additional costs or resources to keep both programs running, and no additional faculty are needed. The Library reports that its collections are robust enough to support the master’s program. With the expectation of ongoing reviews of enrollment and assessment to confirm the viability of the program, and the quality of this program, I approve the offering of the MA in Applied Behavioral Analysis, contingent on the automatic sunset provisions.