



University
of Houston
Clear Lake

MASTER OF ARTS IN BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

Program Description and Admission Information

Revised July 2025

Application Deadline: January 15, 2026



WHAT IS APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS?

Applied behavior analysis is a science aimed at improving socially significant behavior through the application of learning principles, typically at the level of the behavior of the individual rather than of the group. The methods are empirically driven and focus on understanding, predicting, and changing behavior by examining interactions between directly observable behavior and the environment.

Research and practice in applied behavior analysis is wide-ranging, including work in developmental disabilities, behavioral medicine, and education. The effectiveness of behavior analytic interventions, along with the field's focus on accountability in service delivery, has generated a growing demand for professionals with expertise in applied behavior analysis.

Consumers of these services include public and private schools, state agencies, and various other non-profit and for-profit organizations. Most recently, the demand for applied behavior analysts who can provide school- or home-based services for individuals with disabilities, such as autism, has exploded both nationally and locally, as behavioral interventions are now considered the treatment of choice for this population. The demand for Master's level Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA's) is now growing at a rapid pace.

BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS AT UHCL

The mission of the Behavior Analysis M.A. Program is to prepare scientist-practitioners who will contribute to the community as competent applied behavior analysts or who will pursue doctoral degrees in behavior analysis or a related field. The program aims to provide students with a well-rounded foundation in applied behavior analysis through an integrated sequence of coursework, practicum, and research activities.

Students obtain competency in the basic principles of learning and the application of these principles with particular emphasis on interventions for individuals with developmental disabilities. Practicum and research experiences are provided in home, school, hospital, and clinic settings. All students complete a major research project prior to graduation.

The program, which is accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis-International® (ABAI) Accreditation Board, includes a course sequence that has been verified by ABAI. Students completing the coursework and practicum requirements of the program will be eligible to sit for the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) exam and to become Licensed Behavior Analysts in Texas. Furthermore, graduates will be prepared to pursue doctoral degrees in psychology or behavior analysis.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR M.A. IN BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

Prerequisites

Bachelor's Degree or higher, preferably in a related field such as psychology, education, or special education, with at least at 3.0 grade point average. In addition, applicants should identify coursework or practical experience associated with Behavior Analysis.

Required Courses (39 hours)

PSYC 5235 Learning Principles	3 hours
PSYC 6238 Applied Behavior Analysis	3 hours
PSYC 6338 Ethics and Professional Issues in Behavior Analysis	3 hours
PSYC 6339 Research Methods in Behavior Analysis	3 hours
PSYC 6031 Behavioral Assessment	3 hours
PSYC 6239/6331 Behavioral Intervention 1 and II	6 hours
PSYC 6430 Verbal Behavior	3 hours
PSYC 5435 Conceptual Issues in Behavior Analysis	3 hours
PSYC 5030 Experimental Analysis of Behavior: Special Topics	3 hours
PSYC 6530 Personnel Management and Supervision	3 hours
PSYC 6330 Research & Practicum in Applied Behavior Analysis**	6 hours

Select One From the Following Electives (3 hours):

PSYC 5736 Behavioral Medicine
PSYC 6235 Behavioral/Cognitive Therapies
PSYC 5961 Research Topics in Psychology (requires pre-approval)
PSYC 6134 Biological Bases of Behavior
PSYC 5031 Human Growth and Development
PSYC 5131 Psychopathology of Childhood
PSYC 5532 Advanced Social Psychology
PSYC 6832 Advanced Cognitive Psychology

**Research and field experience under the supervision of a BCBA/UHCL faculty member in home, school, or clinic settings. Requires completion of a research project, passage of a comprehensive exam, and at least 20 hours per week of field experience in home, school, or clinic settings for two semesters (3 credits per semester).

SAMPLE SCHEDULE (M.A. PROGRAM)

- **Fall Year 1:** Learning, Applied Behavior Analysis, Ethics
- **Spring Year 1:** Behavioral Assessment, Research Methods, Elective
- **Fall Year 2:** Behavioral Interventions I, Conceptual Issues
- **Spring Year 2:** Behavioral Interventions II, Verbal Behavior
- **Fall and Spring Year 3:** Personnel Management; Advanced Topics in EAB; Research & Practicum

ABA FACULTY

Full Time Faculty

Fritz, Jennifer N., Professor (Ph.D., BCBA-D; University of Florida -- 2008)

Assessment, treatment, and prevention of severe behavior disorders; autism and developmental disabilities; and caregiver training

Lechago, Sarah A., Associate Professor (Ph.D., BCBA-D Western Michigan University - 2009)

Verbal behavior, motivating operations, treatment of autism and other developmental disabilities, social skills training

Lerman, Dorothea C., Professor (Ph.D., BCBA-D, University of Florida - 1995)

Autism and developmental disabilities, functional analysis, treatment of severe behavior disorders, and parent and teacher training

APPLYING TO THE PROGRAM

Students wishing to enroll in the Behavior Analysis Program must formally apply. Applications are accepted for the **fall semester only**. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Program Director, Dorothea Lerman (281-283-3437; behavioranalysis@uhcl.edu). ***NOTE: The university application and transcripts should be submitted as early as possible before the admissions deadline to allow adequate time for the Office of Admissions to process the application and evaluate transcripts.***

Apply for admission to the University of Houston-Clear Lake

- a. Apply through the UHCL Graduate Application Portal by going to https://connect.uhcl.edu/portal/grad_app. Log in or create a new account if you are a first-time user. Select **2026-2027 Application Cycle** and Student Type (**Domestic or International**). Click “Create Application”. Select **Fall 2026 term**, “**College of Human Sciences and Humanities**” and “**Behavior Analysis M.A**” as the Major. Complete all remaining sections of the application.
- b. The following supporting documents must be uploaded to your account in the UHCL Graduate Application Portal (go to “College of Human Sciences and Humanities Supplemental Information”):
 - Curriculum Vita: An expanded résumé describing previous education; all work experience; relevant course work and relevant volunteer activities; any honors, presentations, papers, avocations or other relevant life experiences
 - Brief Essay: A statement of purpose and goals, not to exceed 1,000 words, describing your reasons for wanting this degree and how it fits into career goals.
 - References: Submit the names and contact information for two references who will submit letters of recommendation directly to the UHCL Graduate Application Portal. Once recommenders and contact information is submitted, recommenders receive an email to a link to submit the letter. No form is required. Recommendations from academic faculty and/or work supervisors who know you well are important.

- c. Submit official transcripts from all institutions attended. For admission purposes, UHCL will accept applicable credit listed on official transcripts from regionally accredited colleges and universities. UHCL will also consider credit from institutions recognized by The Council on Higher Education (CHEA) and The Department of Education (DOE). The Electronic Download method (EDI or SPEEDE download) is the fastest, and UHCL's preferred method of transcript delivery. Some other widely used electronic transcript services include National Clearinghouse, eScrip-Safe and Parchment services. Official transcripts may also be mailed directly from issuing institutions to the Office of Admissions, University of Houston-Clear Lake 2700 Bay Area Blvd. Houston, TX 77058.

Deadline for Application:

Review of applications for fall admission will begin on January 15 of each year.

Applications submitted after this date will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that his/her application for university admission and supporting transcripts are received by the UHCL Office of Admissions, that all additional supporting documents have been uploaded, and that letters of recommendation are submitted directly by the references. All applicants can check the status of their application by logging into their accounts.

Required Application Materials Checklist:

_____ **UHCL Graduate Application**

_____ **Transcripts**

_____ **Resume/Curriculum Vitae**

_____ **Brief Essay (maximum of 1,000 words)**

_____ **Two Letters of Recommendation (one from an academic source)**

NOTE: We no longer require the GRE

Additional information regarding applications:

Any evidence of tampering with recommendations or transcripts could result in disqualifying the applicant from admission. Applicants should note that admission to graduate status at the university is not equivalent to admission to the Behavior Analysis Program. Applicants are not admitted into the Behavior Analysis M.A. Program until they receive formal notice from the Behavior Analysis Admissions Committee that they have been accepted.