

Student demographics @ entry into program	Appropriate program	Required Coursework	Outcomes upon graduation	Credentialing and professional certification options
<p>- Master's level, Certified Teachers (Pa or otherwise)</p> <p>- **Students currently enrolled in the SPED Master's Program / Ed.D program</p>	<p>Certificate of Completion in Applied Behavior Analysis</p>	<p>Area II/IV (SPED 660, 661, 669, 663, 664, 665, 670)</p> <p>For Ed.D - Area II/IV (SPED 660, 661/861, 669/869, 663, 664, 665, 670)</p>	<p>- SRU Post Bacc. Certificate of Completion</p> <p>- Completion of Coursework Requirements to sit for BCBA exam (per BACB guidelines)</p> <p>** Please defer to primary degree program for add'l course requirements and outcomes</p>	<p>BCBA, pending passage of exam (thr. BACB). About the credential itself: <a href="https://www.bacb.com/bcba/">https://www.bacb.com/bcba/</a></p> <p>** Please defer to primary degree program for add'l course requirements and outcomes</p>
<p>- Non-SPED Certified Teachers (Pa or otherwise)</p> <p>- Bachelor Level Applicants</p>	<p>Master's Degree in SPED with a concentration in Applied Behavior Analysis</p>	<p>Area I (SPED 611, 617, 625)</p> <p>Area II (SPED 660, 661, 663, 664, 665, 669,)</p> <p>Area III (SPED 602 &amp; 643)</p> <p>Area IV (Minimum: 1 of 3 for Masters: 670, 668 or 648**)</p>	<p>- Master's Degree in Special Education, with a Concentration in ABA.</p> <p>- Completion of Coursework Requirements to sit for BCBA exam (per BACB guidelines)</p> <p>** For students seeking PA teaching Certification</p>	<p>BCBA credential, pending passage of exam (thr. BACB). About the credential itself: <a href="https://www.bacb.com/bcba/">https://www.bacb.com/bcba/</a></p>

				** Pa Teacher Certification in SPED B-8), pending passage of PECT exam (thr. PRAXIS)
<p>- Master's level professionals in associated human-service professions</p> <p>Including, but not limited to: Counseling, Social Work, Psychologists, LPCs, Behavior Therapist, Licensed Behavior Specialists (thr. PA), Student Affairs professionals, Therapists (Speech, Occupational, Music, Art, Recreational, Exercise), Non-profit, Community Service, Transition Specialists, Job Coaches.</p>	Certificate of Completion in Applied Behavior Analysis	Area I/IV (SPED 660, 661, 663, 664, 665 & 669, 670)	<p>- SRU Post Bacc. Certificate of Completion</p> <p>- Completion of Coursework Requirements to sit for BCBA exam (per BACB guidelines)</p> <p>*** Please defer to primary degree program for add'l course requirements and outcomes</p>	<p>BCBA credential, pending passage of exam (thr. BACB). About the credential itself: <a href="https://www.bacb.com/bcba/">https://www.bacb.com/bcba/</a></p> <p>*** Please defer to primary degree program for add'l course requirements and outcomes</p>

Navigating the four-part (BACB-approved) process for becoming a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)

<p><b>Degree:</b> Applicants must possess a minimum of a graduate degree (e.g., master's or doctoral) in an acceptable field of study from a <u>qualifying institution</u>. Acceptable fields of study are <u>behavior analysis</u>, <u>education</u>, or <u>psychology</u>. Degrees may also be accepted from <u>degree programs</u> in which the candidate completed a BACB verified course sequence. Applicants who are unsure of whether the field of study of their degree is acceptable may request a <u>preliminary review</u>.</p>	<p><b>Coursework:</b> Coursework must come from a <u>qualifying institution</u> and cover the required content outlined in the BACB <u>Sixth edition task list</u> and <u>Course Content</u> documents. Only graduate (i.e., master's or doctoral) courses where the applicant was formally enrolled and earned a passing grade ("C" or better for graded courses) are acceptable.</p>	<p><b>Experience:</b> Applicants must complete experience that fully complies with all of the current <u>Experience Standards</u>. Applicants must carefully review the experience standards with their supervisor(s) before beginning their experience. Please note that these standards stipulate training requirements for trainees and supervisors which must be completed before experience begins.</p> <p>See our Audit Process webpage for additional information about what to do in the event of an audit.</p>	<p><b>Exam:</b> Applicants must take and pass the BCBA examination. Authorization to take the examination is only provided to applicants who have submitted a complete application to the BACB, including all documentation necessary to demonstrate that they have met criteria. <u>More Information</u>  <u>Apply for the BCBA Examination</u></p>
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About the credential itself: <https://www.bacb.com/bcba/>

More about the process itself (thr. the Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB)): <https://www.bacb.com/bcba/bcba-option-1/>

\* If you complete your coursework through the SRU concentration/Masters in SPED/ABA you fall under “option 1” on the above link

## General FAQs

### What is Applied Behavior Analysis?

Applied Behavior Analysis is the systematic application of behavioral principles to improve socially significant behavior. We encourage prospective students to visit the [BACB](https://www.bacb.com/bcba/bcba-option-1/) website to learn more about becoming a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

### What is a BCBA

Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) are most often hired to work with individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental and intellectual disabilities. Frequently, they work to reduce instances of aggression, self-injury, interfering stereotypy, and non-compliance. BCBAs also teach a wide variety of academic, language, social, vocational, self-care, and leisure skills. BCBAs may work in public or private schools, agencies, corporations, or as independent consultants. They often consult on issues related to sleep problems, feeding disorders, education, organizational behavior management, behavioral health, and other areas.

BCBAs work as part of a team of professionals to improve human behavior. This begins with an initial assessment that takes into account the situational, environmental, and motivational factors that are unique to the individual client. This often involves interviewing the client’s family and caregivers (in addition to the client) as well as conducting direct observations in multiple settings. The BCBA will then use this information to create a program that teaches particular skills and/or reduces undesired behavior. The outcomes of the program are carefully and continuously monitored to ensure they are effective and meaningful to the client. The ultimate goal is to help the client make positive changes in his/her life in order to reduce the need for behavioral services.

### How will this program help me with my career?

The need for well-qualified people in this field is growing dramatically, and we believe that our courses will provide significant career enhancement for those already in the field, especially for those able to go on to become certified as Behavior Analysts or Assistant Behavior Analysts. However, entry-level requirements vary enormously from one state to another and from one employer to another, and these courses alone, in the absence of any other degree or license or experience, might not be enough to qualify you to begin working in this field.

### Will I be able to sit for the BCBA exam after I graduate?

We offer a BACB-verified course sequence, which meets the education and fieldwork requirements to sit for the BCBA exam. This includes 315 hours of graduate classroom instruction in specific BACB Sixth Edition Task List areas. The SRU Course Content Verification is available upon request. Applicants must also possess a master’s degree in behavior analysis, psychology, or education. You will still need to complete the practical experiences to be able to sit for the exam. This should be started at the start of your program and completed as you work through your courses. Specific supervisory arrangements, scheduling, etc., should negotiated independently of your coursework at SRU.

Because the BACB periodically changes requirements to sit for the BCBA exam, applicants are encouraged to apply to take the exam soon after graduation. SRU cannot guarantee that students who delay to apply to take the exam will be approved. Ultimately, it is the student’s responsibility to meet all the requirements to be approved for the exam. SRU cannot guarantee that students who are approved to take the exam will pass and become certified.

### Will I be a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) when I complete the program?

**No. It is important to understand that this program does not provide you with BCBA certification.** You must sit for and pass the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) exam in order to obtain BCBA certification. This program provides the necessary BACB Verified Course Sequence (VCS) necessary to apply to sit for the exam. The Behavior Analyst Certification Board, Inc.® has approved the

Slippery Rock University of Pa ABA course sequence as meeting the coursework requirements for eligibility to take the Board Certified Behavior Analyst Examination. You will still need to complete the practical experiences to be able to sit for the exam, this should be started at the start of your program and completed as you work through your courses. Specific supervisory arrangements, scheduling etc. should negotiated independent of your course work at SRU.

**Career options and outlook:**

Practitioners with masters-level education may work as mental health counselors, behavior analysts, behavior support specialists and organizational psychologists. Those who plan to become clinical, counseling, and research psychologists need a doctoral degree. According to

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the overall employment of psychologists is projected to grow by 19% from 2014 to 2024. The median annual wages for psychologists in May 2014 ranged from \$76,950 (industrial-organizational psychologists) to \$68,900 (Clinical, counseling, and school psychologists), and \$92,110(all other psychologists)<sup>[1]</sup> Mental Health counselors, a category that includes Behavior Analysts, will also continue to experience a high employment opportunity; BLS data projects 19% growth in employment during the same time period, with 2014 Median wage of \$40,850. (<https://www.gradschools.com/masters/psychology/applied-behavior-analysis?in=pennsylvania>)

What are the employment prospects for BCBA's?

Before BCBA	After BCBA
Behavior Specialist Consultant	Board Certified Behavior Analyst
General teaching, Teaching assistants	Consultancy, Supervisory opportunities within districts or specialized programs, Special Education Teacher* *pending state certification
Direct care work,	Program Supervision, Program Development, Administration
Supported Therapists, Supervised Service Delivery	Independent Consultation, Independent Practice (third party, insurance eligibility)

### What about licensure and third-party reimbursement?

That is a complicated question, because each state sets its own rules regarding licensure, and each third-party payer (government, insurance companies, etc.) has its own rules. The SRU certificate by itself does not provide for any form of licensure or reimbursement, but if you use it to help you gain certification as BCBA, you might qualify for licensure in many states and for reimbursement by many third-party payers. You will need to explore those possibilities on your own based on where you intend to practice.

## Degree Specific FAQs

### When are classes offered? Do I need to be there at a certain time?

The ABA Distance Education Program uses asynchronous online learning through an interactive web-based platform. Students will participate in captured lectures, discussion, small and large group activities—just as with traditional face-to-face learning.

### How long will it take to complete the required coursework and practicum?

Students can choose to take the ABA coursework over 1-2 two years (six semesters). Each class is asynchronous and available in an online format. Students wishing to complete the coursework in a less intensive manner can choose to do so over two years or more. In either case, students needing a Master's Degree will continue for an additional year of coursework or longer is desired.

### What is the difference between the concentration/certificate and certification?

The certificate is issued by SRU in recognition of a student successfully completing the required courses, and it is like a diploma. Certification as a behavior analyst is granted by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board to those who have completed all its educational and training requirements. The SRU certificate helps you to meet some of those educational requirements, but for certification you still need an appropriate degree and a certain number of hours of supervised experience, and you must pass a certification exam.

### Why are the experiential portions of this course important to consider?

This program offers the required coursework to sit for the BACB exam. However, the BACB also requires an experiential component (ranging from 1500-2000) to be eligible for examination. You will still need to complete the practical experiences to be able to sit for the exam; this should be started at the start of your program and completed as you work through your courses. Specific supervisory arrangements, scheduling, etc., should negotiated independently of your coursework at SRU. This means that students interested in acquiring their experiential requirements for the BCBA exam should pursue this independently while completing coursework at SRU.

**I've already taken some of the approved courses. Can I get credit for them?**

While we can accept some substitutions to meet the requirements of the master's degree in special education, we are not allowed to approve substitutions to the VCS-required coursework to sit for the BACB exam. The BACB has approved Slippery Rock University of PA to offer a specific set of courses, and applicants wishing to substitute different courses should petition the BACB directly if they want to pursue alternate courses to fulfill the requirements.

**I have a master's degree, but not in Education, Psychology, or Behavior Analysis. Do I need a new master's degree?**

The BACB has pre-approved master's Degrees in Psychology, Education, and Behavior Analysis. You must have a Master's Degree in one of these fields to apply to sit for the BCBA Certification Exam. If you already have your master's degree in one of these fields, you should enroll in the Certificate of Completion program in ABA.

## Application Process FAQs

### **What must I do to apply for the master's degree in special education with a concentration in ABA or Certificate of Completion in ABA?**

Application information can be retrieved at: <http://www.sru.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/requirements-by-program> . Please access the Special Education tab on this page.

### **How much does the Program cost?**

Fees for graduate tuition can be obtained at:

<http://www.sru.edu/academics/graduate-programs#showMinors=false&view=expanded&page=1>. Fees are subject to change.

### **What technology do I need to have to participate in coursework?**

Students must have access to reliable Internet connection, a computer or laptop with a preferably a video camera for web conferencing, a high-quality headset, and a quiet location.

### **Is financial aid available?**

Federal financial aid is available for students enrolled as master's degree candidates who need assistance with tuition and fees. Graduate Assistantship Information is available at: <http://www.sru.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/graduate-assistantships>

### **Can I begin coursework in any semester?**

Yes, students can complete foundation, core, and ABA-specific coursework throughout the spring, summer, fall, and winter sessions as courses are available. These classes are sequential and are offered once per program sequence, so students must begin coursework Fall quarter. Additionally, our program is designed to foster supportive cohorts of students, and we have found that this is best achieved when students start and end the program together.

### **Does my bachelor's degree need to be in a specific field?**

No, we do not have any degree requirements for undergraduate study. However, we value and expect some work experience in Applied Behavior Analysis or Behavioral Support.

### Proposed Course Sequence\*

Course Sequence for Master's in Special Education with Concentration in ABA.

Fall      SPED 660  
            SPED 665  
            SPED 869/669

Foundation and Core classes are available Fall, Winter, Summer and Spring on a rotational basis:

Winter/Summer   SPED 670  
                         SPED 665  
                         SPED 663  
                         SPED 664

Spring 1 SPED 661/861  
            SPED 663  
            SPED 664

SPED 611, SPED 617, SPED 625, SPED 602, SPED 643  
and one of the following (SPED 668 & 648)

SPED 668 offered based on student interest.

\*depending on enrollment, courses may or may not be offered for a given semester. In instances where this occurs, every effort will be made to accommodate student needs and keep them progressing through the program.

\*\* Practicum Courses (SPED 666 & 667) are not offered currently, as the SRU program provides the coursework requirements and NOT the practical requirements to sit for the BCBA exam.

### Summary for Graduate Programs Guide

**Special Education Masters, concentration in ABA (36 credits):** Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), a branch of psychology rooted in the application of science to the study of human behavior, is a specialized therapeutic approach that has been shown to be quite effective in reducing the impact of autism spectrum disorders as well as other mental health and developmental disabilities. The content of this particular program will focus upon the application of ABA in special education and clinical settings, supporting needs of learners having autism spectrum disorders, developmental disabilities and emotional or behavioral disorders. This course sequence has been specifically aligned with classroom and experiential requirements recommended by the international accrediting body for professionals providing ABA services, the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB), to develop, design, implement, and evaluate behavior analytic techniques that produce meaningful change for learners. At a minimum, upon completion, students participating in these courses will have fulfilled coursework requirements to sit for examination to be recognized as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

**ABA Certificate (18 credits):** ABA, a branch of psychology rooted in the application of science to the study of human behavior, is a specialized therapeutic approach that has been shown to be quite effective in reducing the impact of autism spectrum disorders as well as other mental health and developmental disabilities. The content of this particular program will focus upon the application of ABA in special education and pediatric clinical settings, supporting needs of learners having autism spectrum disorders, developmental disabilities and emotional or behavioral disorders. This course sequence has been specifically aligned with classroom and experiential requirements recommended by the international accrediting body for professionals providing ABA services, the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB), to develop, design, implement, and evaluate behavior analytic techniques that produce meaningful change for learners. At a minimum, upon completion, students participating in these courses will have fulfilled coursework requirements to sit for examination to be recognized as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

Keyword Search terms:

Applied Behavior Analysis  
Behavior Therapists  
ABA Therapists  
Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)  
Behavior Specialist  
Behavior Specialist Consultant  
Licensed Behavior Specialist



Version 7.0 – 1/2025

BSC  
Autism therapist  
Behavior Counselor

Listserves/ options for advertising

BACB	Behavior Analysis Certification Board
APBA	Assoc. for Professional Behavior Analysts
ABAI	Association for Behavior Analysis International
APA Div. 6	American Psychological Association, Division 6
CEC - CCBBD	Council for Exceptional Children – Council for Children with Behavior Disorders
CEC - DADD	Council for Exceptional Children – Division of Autism and Developmental Disabilities
CEC –TED	Council for Exceptional Children – Teacher Education Division
PennABA	Pennsylvania Association for Behavior Analysis
PSEA	Pennsylvania State Education Association
PaCEC	Pennsylvania Council for Exceptional Children

On Fact Sheet –

1. Change SPED 642 to SPED 643
2. Add bullet under highlights
  - a. As noted on the website *appliedbehavioranalysisedu.org* website, the SRU Concentration in ABA is one of three programs state wide and one of two public universities to offer Verified Course Sequence (VCS) with Experience. Meaning that students interested in acquiring their experiential requirements for the BCBA exam can do this while completing coursework at SRU. (<https://www.appliedbehavioranalysisedu.org/graduate-programs-with-pre-approved-course-sequence/#pennsylvania>).
3. In Curriculum guide section – change “Core Courses” to “Core/Foundation Courses”
4. Change titles in “Curriculum Section”
  - a. Applied Behavior Analysis Courses (18 credits, offered Fall and Spring)
  - b. Core/Foundation Courses (15 credits, offered Fall, Spring, Winter and Summer)
  - c. Practicum (3 credit minimum- optional 3-12 credits, offered Fall and Spring)