

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
NEW DOCTORAL DEGREE PROPOSAL STAFF ANALYSIS**

Program: Ph.D. in Applied Behavior Analysis

CIP Code: 42.2814

Institution: University of South Florida

Proposed Implementation Date: Fall 2013

Staffed By: Marion Merzer, Ph.D.

Initial Review Date: 4/23/2012 **Last Update:** 5/11/2012

Projected program costs:

	Total	% & \$ Current Reallocated	% & \$ New Recurring	% & \$ New Non- Recurring	% & \$ C&G	Cost per FTE	Auxiliary Funds	SUS 2010-11 Average Cost per FTE
Year 1	\$162,000	50% \$82,000	30% \$50,000	0% \$0	20% \$30,000	\$28,085	\$0	\$27,422 (CIP 42)
Year 5	\$337,000	60% \$197,000	0% \$0	< 1% \$5,000	40% \$135,000	\$23,905	\$0	

Projected FTE and Headcount are:

	Student Headcount	Student FTE
First Year	5	4.7
Second Year	10	7.05
Third Year	15	8.45
Fourth Year	15	8.45
Fifth Year	15	8.45

On March 29, 2007, the Florida Board of Governors approved BOG Regulation 8.011, which sets forth criteria for implementation and authorization of new doctorates by the Board of Governors, as well as criteria for implementation and authorization of Bachelor's, Master's and Specialist degrees by Boards of Trustees. The following staff analysis is an assessment of how well the university meets BOG Accountability and Readiness criteria for implementation of this degree program.

Proposal Page Numbers:

INTRODUCTION		ACCOUNTABILITY		READINESS				
Program Description	System Analysis	Overall	Budget	Mission and Strength	Program Quality	Curriculum	Faculty	Resources
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A. Program Description:

The University of South Florida (USF) is proposing to offer a PhD degree program in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) located within the Department of Child and Family Studies (CFS) in the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences at the University of South Florida Tampa campus.

The USF proposal explains that the emphasis of the ABA program will be on the development of behavior analysts who are scientist-practitioners. There will be a strong focus on community engagement. Doctoral students will engage in research and practice in community settings, such as: schools, child welfare settings, clinics, residential settings, and individual family homes. Future research opportunities are available in topic areas such as, early childhood, sports and fitness, organizational behavior management, developmental disabilities, safety, and aging. The proposal indicates that graduates of this program will be prepared to be expert practitioners, community leaders, and accomplished researchers in the field of ABA. They will be the future leaders in school settings, community-based human service settings, or in companies that provide services and research in areas such as: autism, developmental disabilities, child welfare, and aging. Additionally, this degree will enable graduates to obtain academic positions in the ABA discipline, where they can train others.

The doctoral program will require 54 credit hours (7 didactic courses - 21 credits; dissertation - 18 credits; independent research - 15 credits.) The program will only accept students with a master's degree in applied behavior analysis or related field with strong behavior analysis content.

B. System-Level Analysis and Evaluation in accordance with BOG Regulation 8.011:

The proposed ABA doctoral program directly supports three State University System Strategic Planning Goals - Teaching and Learning; Research Scholarship and Innovation; and Community and Business Engagement. The proposal describes how each goal meets the needs in the areas of: Excellence, Productivity and Strategic Priorities for a Knowledge Economy.

Teaching and Learning: The new program will provide a high quality curriculum with faculty who are experts in the field. The new doctoral program will build on the successful ABA master's degree offered at USF. Although not considered a STEM program, the proposal explains that ABA is a growing field with a high demand for graduates.

Scholarship, Research and Innovation: Research productivity will be a priority for faculty and students in the new program. The new ABA program will facilitate increased collaboration as faculty and students pursue and acquire external funding for research, most often with private and public agencies in the communities.

Community and Business Engagement: The program will work with community partners who provide training opportunities for students, and in return receive quality services and a highly trained workforce. Doctoral students will conduct training and research activities with community partners to improve services for the public. The new ABA Doctoral Program graduates will be trained to be competent practitioners and leaders for the community agencies and businesses, locally and nationally.

Addressing need, the proposal highlights correspondence from representatives of other doctoral programs in behavior analysis, along with professional organizations. They have all said that the need for doctoral level practitioners is great. Letters of support are included from the representatives of: the University of Kansas, the Psychology Department at Western Michigan University, The Behavior Analyst Certification Board and the Hillsborough School District. All attest to the need for professionals to work with children with autism and other developmental disabilities in private and public agencies (see Appendix D.) The external consultant, Dr. William Heward of Ohio State University, declared that “the very purpose of ABA makes it a natural tool for helping USF meet its commitment of goal 3, “to strengthen and sustain healthy communities and to improve the quality of life.” He declared the USF program beneficial to the university, the community, and the field (see Appendix C.)

Writing in support of the program, Dr. Maria Malott, CEO of the Association for Behavior Analysis International, states that there is a great need for more doctoral level behavior analysts now and in the future (see Appendix D.) Board staff confirmed this with a review of data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH), 2012-2013 edition. According to the handbook, “employment of psychologists is expected to grow 22 percent from 2010 to 2020, faster than the average for all occupations. Job prospects should be best for those who have a doctoral degree in an applied specialty and those with a specialist or doctoral degree in school psychology.” The OOH adds that an increasing “demand for psychological services in schools, hospitals, mental health centers, and social services agencies should drive employment growth.” With the increased need for hiring experts in ABA, the need for a program with the focus of the USF proposed program is two-fold. This type of doctoral degree program will provide the practitioner with the expertise to be a better clinician, a leader in school and community settings, and an accomplished researcher. Secondly, the scientist-practitioner focus of the USF PhD in ABA will enable graduates to obtain positions in academia, training others to be experts in the field and to be more desirable hires.

According to the OOH, the median annual wages in May 2010, for clinical, counseling, and school psychologists was \$66,810. In her support letter, Dr. Malott stated that a search of job openings in the U.S. revealed approximately 170 open positions for doctoral level ABA candidates. A search by board staff found 315 job openings nationally posted on JobsinPsychology.com, with 181 listed for Florida. Another 188 positions (mostly for the military) were listed on USAJobs.gov.

Looking at demand, both nationally and state-wide, the USF proposal tells us that nationally there are six well established ABA doctoral programs (Western Michigan University, University of Florida, University of Kansas, University of Nevada Reno, Ohio State University, West Virginia University) and six newly established programs (Florida Institute of Technology, Western New England college, Simmons College, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, University of Nebraska Omaha, and Queens College of New York). Over 350 students apply to the 12 current programs. Only 35-40 are enrolled each year. Five of the six well established programs only enroll less than 20% of their applicants. USF reports that in 2009-2010, UF received 40-50 applications and enrolled 4-5 students (only 10%), while FIT receives approximately 10 applications per year and enrolled only 3. This data would support the assumption that there is a student access need for a third ABA doctoral program in Florida.

There are 8 Florida public institutions with a master's degree in general psychology, 4 with a master's degree (grad I) in school psychology, and 1 (USF) with a master's in ABA. There are 5 institutions that offer PhDs (grad II) in general psychology, and 3 offer doctoral degrees in school psychology. The chart below details the 2010 enrollment for each of these programs in the State University System of Florida (SUS) institutions. Florida Gulf Coast University and New College of Florida do not offer any of these programs. At the University of Florida, students focusing on behavior analysis are enrolled in the PhD in Psychology and are represented below in the total number enrolled in general psychology. Data was retrieved from the Board of Governors enrollment database, May 2012.

2010 SUS Graduate Enrollment in Psychology

	FAMU	FAU	FIU	FSU	UCF	UF	UNF	USF	UWF	Total
Master's										
General Psychology 42.0101	0	39	57	60	25	58	34	1	106	380
School Psychology 42.2805	19	0	42	0	15	10	0	0	0	86
ABA 42.999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	0	54
Doctoral										
General Psychology 42.0101	0	0	84	81	101	98	0	124	0	488
School Psychology 42.2805	0	0	0	0	27	53	0	38	0	118

To assess interest and demand, USF surveyed current and former students from the ABA master's program in 2006-2009. Over 77% are tentatively or definitely planning on seeking a PhD in ABA. Over 50% of those surveyed said they would definitely apply, and over 85% indicated a need for the program at USF. The proposal provides details of the data findings on pages 6 and 7.

Addressing duplication, the USF proposal discusses the UF program and the FIT program. UF has a PhD in Psychology with a concentration in Behavior Analysis, and FIT has a PhD in Behavior Analysis. According to the proposal, behavior analysis is a broad area encompassing the experimental analysis of behavior and applied behavior analysis. The proposed PhD at USF is the only program offering a specialized focus on applied behavior analysis, with an emphasis on community engaged research and practice. According to USF correspondence with Dr. Brian Iwata of UF, most UF graduates take positions in academia. The graduates of the proposed USF ABA PhD will be "trained to be scientist-practitioners with a focus on application in community settings" (see proposal, p. 8.) An important difference between the two programs is the UF program has a greater focus on creating graduates to be faculty, while the proposed USF program's primary focus is on creating practitioners to work with clients in community settings. According to staff review of information on the ABA profession, in comparison to general clinical psychology, ABA practitioners are trained to work with a specific demographic, most usually children with autism or seniors with Alzheimer's or dementia. This focus on a specialty area makes it a desirable credential for hiring.

Other SUS institutions offering some ABA coursework within general psychology programs include FAU and FIU. USF communicated with UF and the UF letter of support is provided in appendix D. Dr. Joseph Glover, Provost of the University of Florida confirmed that UF endorses the establishment of this degree program at USF.

According to the proposal, admission requirements for the PhD in Applied Behavior Analysis include completion of a master's degree in ABA. Students entering the doctoral program are expected to have 18 credit hours of master's level coursework; an accepted master's thesis; and 10 hours of practicum seminar. The master's in Applied Behavior Analysis at USF includes: 44 credits of coursework (38 major courses, 6 electives); 5 semesters of practicum seminar, 1,000 hours of supervised practicum experience, and a research thesis. Along with the master's program, the proposed PhD in ABA will be located in the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences. There are currently six other PhD programs located in this college. They are: Aging Studies; Audiology; Behavioral Health; Communication Sciences and Disorders; Criminology; and Social Work.

In describing the curriculum requirements, the proposal states that doctoral students will have to pass the certification exam by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) to be admitted to candidacy. As the professional organization for the field of Behavior Analysis, the BACB grants professional credentials to practicing behavior analysts. According to the BACB, the BACB program is based on the successful Behavior Analysis Certification Program developed by the State of Florida. Similar programs were established in California, Texas, Pennsylvania, New York and Oklahoma. All of these programs transferred their certificants and credentialing responsibilities to the BACB and closed.

A Board staff search found the following Florida rule:

a. 65G-4.0011 Recognized Certification Organizations for Certified Behavior Analysts.

All providers of behavior analysis services must either be licensed to practice in accordance with Chapter 490 or 491, F.S., or certified under a nonprofit corporation meeting the qualifications under Section 393.17(2), F.S. All providers of behavior analysis services must submit to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities proof of their active licensure or certification in order to provide behavior analysis services. Pursuant to Rule 65G-4.001, F.A.C., and as required by Section 393.17(2), F.S., the Agency recognizes the certification for behavior analysts awarded by the following organizations: Behavior Analyst Certification Board, Inc., 1929 Buford Boulevard, Tallahassee, FL 32308.

Rulemaking Authority 393.17(2) FS. Law Implemented 393.17(2) FS. History—New 4-4-12.

Additionally, BACB has now added an additional doctoral level certification for graduates of doctoral programs.

C. Assessment of the University Review Process in accordance with BOG Regulation 8.011:

Due to the system of stair step accountability set in place by the Board of Governors in Regulation 8.011, it is now incumbent upon University Board of Trustees to verify that all doctoral programs coming before the Board of Governors have met the requirements of the regulation. The following is an assessment of the university review process to ensure that all criteria set forth have been considered by the university prior to submission to the Board of Governors office.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Check 'yes' or 'no' box, and make comments beneath criterion as appropriate.

1. Overall – *The proposal is in the correct format, includes all necessary signatures, and contains complete and accurate tables for enrollment projections, faculty effort, and the proposed budget.*

YES NO

 The proposal has been approved by the university board of trustees and includes all required signatures.

University of South Florida Board of Trustees approved the program on December 8, 2011.

 The university has provided a proposal written in the standard SUS format which addresses new academic program approval criteria outlined in BOG Regulation 8.011.

The Board of Governors new degree program proposal format was used, as expressed in Board of Governors Regulation 8.011.

 The university has provided data that supports the need for an additional program in the State University System as well as letters of support or concern from the provosts of other state universities with substantially similar programs.

The USF proposal provides appropriate data to support the need for an additional program in section II.B. and letters of support from other state universities with similar programs are attached in Appendix D.

 The university has provided complete and accurate projected enrollment, faculty effort, and budget tables that are in alignment with each other.

The proposal provides information on each of these areas. Detailed tables are provided on projected enrollment (Table 1-B); on faculty effort (Table 4); and on budget (Tables 2 & 3).

- The university has included a statement in the proposal signed by the equity officer as to how this proposal will meet the goals of the university's equity accountability plan.**

The program plan for achieving diversity was reviewed and signed by the USF Equity Officer on March 26, 2012.

- The program does not substantially duplicate programs at FAMU or FIU or, if it does, evidence was provided that consultations have occurred with the affected university on the impact of the new program on existing programs.**

FAMU does not have a similar program. The FIU has an ABA program at the undergraduate and master's degree levels and not a doctoral degree.

2. Budget - The proposal presents a complete and realistic budget for the program consistent with university and BOG policy, and shows that any redirection of funding will not have an unjustified negative impact on other needed programs.

YES NO

- The University Board of Trustees has approved the most recent budget for this proposal.**

The current budget proposal has been approved by the USF Board of Trustees on December 8, 2011.

- The university has reviewed the budget for the program to ensure that it is complete and reasonable, and the budget appears in alignment with expenditures by similar programs at other SUS institutions.**

Total system expenditures per student credit hour for doctoral level CIP 42 is \$856.95, for a total of \$27,422.40 per student FTE. USF is proposing that by the fifth year of operation the total cost per student FTE will be \$23,905. In contrast, currently UF is spending \$1,484.67 per student credit hour for the doctoral program in CIP 42, for a total of \$47,509.44 cost per student FTE. (Source: 2010-11 Expenditure Analysis, Report IV – Cost per Credit Hour by Discipline).

According to Table 2, in the first year of operation, the majority of the projected cost of \$82,000 will be used for faculty salaries and benefits for 10-25% of time for three existing faculty and 25% of time for an associate professor to be hired into a vacant faculty line. Funds will also cover ten percent of one support staff's time. Five graduate students will receive fellowships – 3 from E&G, and two from contracts and grants.

In year 5, the proposal requires additional funding for fellowships for the expected 15 students. The proposal explains that 9 students will receive research assistantships funded through contracts and grants, and 6 students will have fellowships funded through E&G funds.

- In the event that resources within the institution are redirected to support the new program, the university has identified this redirection and determined that it will not have a negative impact on undergraduate education, or the university has provided a reasonable explanation for any impact of this redirection.**

According to the proposal, the ABA doctoral program should not have any negative impact on the current ABA programs or courses. Most of the masters' courses will be required as pre-requisites for admissions purposes for the doctoral program. These courses are already in place and active. The hire of two new faculty members will give the program ample faculty for teaching courses, mentoring and supervising. Doctoral students may also teach the ABA undergraduate courses; assist in teaching the masters' courses, and assist in mentoring the masters' level students. This will free up the doctoral faculty's time to devote to the PhD courses and students. Additionally, the two new faculty members will provide more opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students to participate in research activities alongside faculty.

READINESS

Check 'yes' or 'no' box, and make comments beneath criterion as appropriate.

3. Program Quality – *The proposal provides evidence that the university planning activities have been sufficient and responses to any recommendations to program reviews or accreditation activities in the discipline pertinent to the proposed program have been addressed.*

YES NO

- The university has followed a collaborative planning process for the proposed program in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the University Board of Trustees.**

As described in the proposal, the planning process began with email correspondence with Dr. Brian Iwata of UF on September 14, 2002 (see tables on pp. 15-17, Planning Process.) A collaborative process is described, including communication with USF Department of Child & Family Studies, the USF Graduate Council Curriculum Committee, representatives from UF, and outside agencies including the University of Kentucky, University of Nevada, Reno, University of Kansas, Hillsborough County Public Schools, Association for Behavior Analysts International, and the Behavior Analyst Certification Board Inc.

- An external consultant has reviewed the proposal and supports the department's capability of successfully implementing this new program.**

At the request of USF, an external consultant review was made on August 22, 2011 by Dr. William L. Heward, Ed.D., BCBA-D, Professor Emeritus, The Ohio State University. Dr. Heward's findings and comments about the program were very favorable and he highly recommended that USF establish the program. He confirmed the need for such a program when he stated, "broadly trained scientist-practitioners in ABA are needed not only to teach and supervise the next generation of ABA practitioners, but to create new knowledge needed to take full advantage of the great potential of ABA to help society solve many of its (our) problems." Additionally, Dr. Heward predicted that highly qualified applicants would come from throughout Florida, nationally and internationally. A copy of the consultant's report can be found in the proposal in Appendix C.

- The university has found the level of progress that the department has made in implementing the recommendations from program reviews or accreditation activities in the discipline pertinent to the proposed program to be satisfactory.**

The USF ABA master's degree program was reviewed in 2007 and received certification by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). The ABA master's program applied for accreditation by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) in Fall 2010, received an on-site visit by the accreditation board in April 2011 and was granted accreditation in May 2011. The ABAI representatives commented that the master's program was a strong foundation for building a successful and high quality doctoral program. Additionally, they believed that there would be high demand for the doctoral program. Supporting letters and on-site review report are attached to the proposal in Appendices C & D.

- The university has analyzed the feasibility of providing all or a portion of the proposed program through distance learning.**

The proposal states that the proposed ABA doctoral program will utilize a traditional delivery system on the main campus of USF in Tampa.

- If necessary, the university has made allowances for licensure and legislative approval to be obtained in a timely manner.**

Not applicable at the doctoral level.

4. Curriculum - *The proposal provides evidence that the university has evaluated the proposed curriculum and found that it describes an appropriate and sequenced course of study, and that the university has evaluated the appropriateness of specialized accreditation for the program.*

YES NO

- The university has reviewed the curriculum and found that the course of study presented is appropriate to meet specific learning outcomes and industry driven competencies discussed in the proposal.**

As presented in the proposal, the curriculum has been designed to enable students to graduate prepared to be scientist-practitioners in the area of Applied Behavior Analysis. The curriculum is based on the accreditation standards of the ABAI and included 15 credits of core courses, 6 credits of electives, 18 hours of dissertation work and 15 hours of independent research. A wide range of electives is available to students, allowing them to obtain additional skills and knowledge in other areas, such as business administration, policy development, educational leadership, etc.

- The university anticipates seeking accreditation for the proposed doctoral program, or provides a reasonable explanation as to why accreditation is not being sought.**

As stated in the USF proposal, the doctoral program in ABA will seek accreditation from the Accreditation Board of the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) after operating for 5 years, as per the ABAI requirements.

5. Faculty - *The proposal provides evidence that the university is prepared to ensure a critical mass of faculty will be available to initiate the program based on estimated enrollments, and that faculty in the aggregate have the necessary experience and research activity to sustain a doctoral program.*

YES NO

- The university has reviewed the evidence provided and found that there is a critical mass of faculty available to initiate the program based on estimated enrollments.**

There are 3 current faculty members (see Table 4) who will take on primary responsibility for program delivery. One more associate professor from a current faculty line will be added in the first year, and one new associate professor will be hired in an open faculty line in the second year (2014).

- The university has reviewed the evidence provided and found that the faculty in aggregate has the necessary experience and research activity to sustain the program.**

As described in Table 4, all of the current professors hold terminal degrees in their fields. Two have tenure, one is a full Professor, one is an Assistant Professor and one is non-ranked. The two additional faculty members will have terminal degrees, one will be an Associate Professor, one will be an Assistant Professor, and both will have tenure. According to the proposal, this will provide ample faculty and resources for mentoring, research and teaching.

- The university has reviewed the evidence provided and found the academic unit(s) associated with this new degree to be productive in teaching, research, and service.**

The proposal provides evidence of faculty productivity (see faculty vitae in Appendix A.) All combined, ABA masters' faculty have taught 6 core classes each year, 2 elective courses each year, 5 practicum seminars each year and supervised 20 theses each year, in addition to 5 undergraduate classes. The ABA master's program has graduated 12 students in 2008, 15 students in 2009, 12 students in 2010 and 13 students in 2011. As evidenced in the attached curriculum vitae, faculty has substantial numbers of peer reviewed publications and faculty members in the Department of Child and Family Studies (the home department for the ABA) have secured external funding in excess of \$14 million in FY 2009 and \$11 million in FY 2010.

- If appropriate, the university has committed to hiring additional faculty in later years, based on estimated enrollments.**

As evidenced in Table 4, the ABA doctoral program is committed to bringing in one more faculty member from an existing faculty line in the first year and hiring an additional faculty member from an open faculty line in the second year.

6. Resources – The proposal provides evidence that the university has ensured the available library volumes and serials; classroom, teaching laboratory, research laboratory, office space, equipment, clinical and internship sites, fellowships, scholarships, and graduate assistantships will be sufficient to initiate the program, and that if applicable, funding has been secured to make more resources available as students proceed through the program..

YES NO

- The university has provided a signed statement from the Library Director verifying that the library volumes and serials available are sufficient to**

initiate the program.

The proposal provides evidence that sufficient library resources are available to implement the program. A statement was signed by the library director on March 25, 2012.

- The university has ensured that the physical space necessary for the proposed program, including classrooms, laboratories and office space, is sufficient to initiate the program.**

The proposal states that the program will need office and meeting space for two new faculty members and 15 new doctoral students. This space is expected to be provided by Child and Family Studies. Current faculty office and meeting space are adequate. Although there are currently two rooms with observation windows available, there may be need for additional two-way observation research rooms in the future. The proposal states that current classroom space is adequate.

- The university has ensured that necessary equipment is available to initiate the program.**

The proposal states that no specialized equipment is necessary at this time.

- The university has ensured that fellowships, scholarships, and graduate assistantships are sufficient to initiate the program.**

To be competitive with other programs, USF proposes they need additional funds to support graduate assistantships. New E&G funding of \$45,000 will be needed for the first year to fund fellowships for 3 doctoral students. The other 2 of the first five students can be funded with contracts and grants. By the 5th year, they anticipate funding 6 graduate fellowships through E&G funds (\$90,000) and 9 graduate assistantships through contracts and grants (\$135,000.)

- If applicable, the university has ensured that the department has arranged a suitable number of clinical and internship sites.**

The proposal provides a list of the 11 established practicum sites with 25 different BACB supervisors affiliated with the ABA Master's program. Doctoral students will engage in research and practice with the populations served by these sites.