MA in Psychology with a Concentration in Applied Behavior Analysis

(On-Campus)

Accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International Accreditation Board (ABAI)

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MA in Psychology with a Concentration in Applied Behavior Analysis

(Online-Only)

An Academic Program Partner of the Behavioral Health Centers of Excellence (BHCOE)

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ABA

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McNeese
STATE UNIVERSITY™
Lake Charles, Louisiana

ABA STUDENT HANDBOOK

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING

McNeese State University

The *Department of Psychology and Counseling* offers two pathways to earning Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork hours towards the requirements for applying for the Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA) exam. We strive to train competent scientist-practitioners in evidence-based best practice behavior analytic procedures.

The information specified here regarding program requirements, curricula, and expectations, is considered binding for students enrolled in either of the degree programs in Applied Behavior Analysis at McNeese State University during the 2024-2025 academic year.

HANDBOOK

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APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS AT McNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY

We offer two distinct programs at McNeese with verified course sequence (VCS) approval by the Association for Behavior Analysis International® (ABAI) that include BACB approved Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork Experience. The MA degrees are (1) on-campus, here at MSU, and fully accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International Accreditation Board (ABAI); (2) online-only. Following the successful completion of the Pathway 1, fully accredited BACB approved on-campus program, students are immediately eligible to submit their application materials to sit for the Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA) Examination. The online-only program is a Pathway 2 program. Students may demonstrate that they meet eligibility requirements by submitting official transcripts and/or syllabi to the Behavior Analysis Certification Board. See "Eligibility Requirements" in the BACB Handbook linked here. Our VCS approvals are active in the 5th Edition Task List through the field-wide VCS system sunset on December 31, 2025. For more information about the VCS sunset, click here.

Program Objectives:

First and foremost, we strive to provide our students with a well-rounded educational experience that provides them with a firm foundation in behavior analysis. To accomplish this, we:

1) Ensure that all courses are taught by professors who are ABAI approved instructors.
2) Ensure that our course requirements and content are aligned with the most recent BACB task list, as well as those specified by the BACB and ABAI ®.
3) Require stringent mastery criteria (i.e., B or above) for coursework, practica, exit examinations, and thesis project (and formal, oral proposal and defense meetings for on-campus students only).
4) Ensure supervision of the practica experiences meets the standards set forth by the BACB and ABAI ®.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines:

Students are accepted into the ABA program each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer).

Application materials, which include a copy of your undergraduate transcript and GRE scores should be submitted to the William J. Dore' School of Graduate Studies online via their website at http://www.mcneese.edu/dore and deadlines vary based on semester of application.
See website for more details.
Undergraduate GPA requirement is 2.5 or higher.
Combined verbal and quantitative GRE scores must total 285 or higher.
Three hours of statistics plus a minimum of 18 hours in psychology, including 3 hours in each of the following: experimental psychology, abnormal psychology, and social psychology are required in addition to the general requirements for admission to the graduate school.

Students who live within the 5-parish area (Calcasieu, Cameron, Jeff Davis, Allen, Beauregard) or 50-miles of campus will receive a site-placement for their internship at the McNeese Autism Program. We have partnered with the Behavioral Health Centers of Excellence (BHCOE) as of Fall 2023 for the online program site-placements as an Academic Program Partner for students outside of the 50-mile radius.

Graduate Assistantships:

Our on campus ABAI accredited program offers opportunities for merit-based applications for graduate assistantships (GAs) for ABA graduate students in the 5-parish area who have a site placement contract with the McNeese Autism Program (MAP). Applications are reviewed by ABA Faculty and MAP Clinical Staff. Typically, our GAs are given the opportunity to accrue paid hours at MAP.

Graduate Assistantships for Pay: Graduate Assistantships include a job description along with duties associated with the assistantship. GA roles and responsibilities at MAP are similar to those required during the 5-course internship; however, GAs also receive a stipend based on the number of paid hours earned per month along with a 50% partial tuition reduction for in-state graduate students. Historically, over 80% of ABA graduate students have the opportunity to serve as GAs during their first year in the program. For more information regarding this opportunity, please reach out to our On-Campus Program Coordinator at jthompson2@mcneese.edu or inquire about opportunities during your initial academic advising session.

Internships for Course Credit: The 5-course Internship on the other hand has training and supervised experience as the focus even though the activities undertaken in the internship may overlap and be similar to activities in the Graduate Assistantship (e.g., in-session activities). The supervision, direction, and professional development commitment are different.

Our online-only program is not accredited by ABAI. Students in this program outside of the 5-parish area/50-mile radius of campus typically seek placement for supervision in ABA agencies that allow them to accrue requisite supervised hours. These agencies are approved by McNeese ABA Faculty and agency agreements and site-supervision agreements are in place for all student interns.

Students who reside within the five-parish area, or within 50 miles of the McNeese Autism Program are placed at the McNeese Autism Program as part of their degree plan requirements. If you are unable to secure immediate placement for supervision, you have the flexibility to postpone the start of your internship sequence.

ABA Faculty:

Joanna B. Thompson, Ph.D., BCBA-D – Director and Coordinator of Graduate Programs

Dr. Thompson is a full-time Assistant Professor at McNeese State University, who teaches online and face-to-face courses in the ABA program. She earned her Bachelor's and her first Master's Degree in Psychology with a dual concentration in Experimental Psychology and Applied Behavior Analysis from McNeese State University. She then worked on an additional Master of Science Degree in Experimental Psychology from Texas Christian University before earning her Doctoral Degree in Experimental Psychology under the advisement of Dr. Mauricio R. Papini. She has been a Board Certified Behavior Analyst since 2015. Her clinical experience includes early intensive behavioral intervention, verbal behavior, self-injurious behavior, and working with adolescents. She is a past-President of the Texas Association for Behavior Analysis Pediatric Feeding Disorder's Special Interest Group. Dr. Thompson is a Behavioral Neuroscientist who studies the neurobiological basis of addictive behavior as it relates to reward. More specifically, her research interests include, but are not limited to identifying the precursors to addiction – before the behavior becomes habitual; understanding the behavioral and brain processes that underly the

initiation into substance use, abuse, and other addictive behaviors; and pharmacological manipulations involving alcohol, benzodiazepine anxiolytics, cannabinoids, and opioids. She currently serves as the principal investigator of the Thompson Animal Laboratory.

Sadie Lovett, Ph.D., BCBA-D – Assistant Professor

Dr. Lovett is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology and Counseling at McNeese State University. Dr. Lovett earned her Ph.D. in Rehabilitation with a specialization in Behavior Analysis and a M.S in Behavior Analysis and Therapy from Southern Illinois University, and she earned her B.S. in Psychology at Western Michigan University. Dr. Lovett has been a Board Certified Behavior Analyst since 2010 and has over 15 years experience working in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis. Much of her clinical work is devoted to teaching language and social skills to children, adolescents, and adults with autism. Dr. Lovett's main research interests involve investigations of verbal behavior including: 1) interventions to teach advanced verbal and social skills, such as perspective-taking, 2) factors that promote generalization of advanced verbal behaviors, and 3) educational interventions that use a verbal behavior foundation to teach advanced learners, such as college students. Her work incorporates aspects of several behavior analytic theories of verbal behavior including Skinner's verbal behavior, stimulus equivalence, and Relational Frame Theory. Dr. Lovett serves as the director of the Verbal Behavior Laboratory at McNeese State University.

James Nuse, PhD., BCBA-D – Assistant Professor

Dr. James Nuse, Ph.D., BCBA-D, joined the Department of Psychology at McNeese State University in August 2023 as an Assistant Professor. James Nuse earned his Ph.D. in special education from University of Northern Colorado and completed his Ed.S in administration and supervision from Wayne State University, M.Ed. in special education with a concentration in applied behavior analysis (ABA) from Oakland University, and B.S. in Education from Central Michigan University. He is also a board certified behavior analyst at the doctoral level (BCBA-D) and has practiced clinically in addition to supervising behavior analysts in training. James has particular research interests related to the intersection of ABA and special education, pediatric feeding disorders, special education litigation (e.g., FAPE and ABA) and the use of emergency intervention procedures such as restraint and seclusion. He is a member of the council for exceptional children and serves as co-chair for the Honors Committee. He is also actively involved in various Michigan professional associations serving children with disabilities in school systems.

Nidal Daou, PhD., BCBA-D – Visiting Lecturer and Graduate Faculty

Dr. Daou joined the Department of Psychology at McNeese State University in August 2017 as an Assistant Professor. She was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in August 2020 and served in this role through July 2021. Dr. Daou also served as the VCS coordinator for the Department, Online Program coordinator, academic adviser, and faculty adviser to the McNeese Autism Program. She received her Bachelor's degree from the American University of Beirut (AUB) and Master's from Queens College of the City University of New York (CUNY). She received her Ph.D. in Psychology from the Learning Processes and Behavior Analysis subprogram at the Graduate Center, CUNY. Her research is concerned with social interaction and independent engagement among children on the autism spectrum, and cross-cultural conceptions of autism. Her clinical experience started at the New York Child Learning Institute, which is a dissemination site of the Princeton Child Development Institute. There, she administered and supervised service provision for children and youths on the spectrum, and developed and implemented individualized educational programs. Upon completion of her Ph.D., she returned to her hometown of Beirut, Lebanon, where she introduced Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to her students at AUB, developed and coordinated

the first VCS in Lebanon, and published the first ABA research paper concerned with autism in Lebanon before returning to the United States in 2017. Dr. Daou is now a part-time graduate faculty member.

Course Sequences:

Students complete 18 credit hours of core psychology classes and 40 credit hours of ABA concentration classes for a total of 58 credit hours in addition to any prerequisite courses required upon admission into the program. Students work closely with ABA faculty to complete publication quality research as part of their course sequence. At least one-half of the total number of credit hours required for a graduate degree, excluding credit for thesis, must be at the 600-level. Credits applied must be earned within 6 calendar years from the time the student first enrolled in the program.

All students who live within the 5-parish area (Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Allen, Beauregard) or 50-mile radius of campus will be assigned a site-placement on-campus at the McNeese Autism Program regardless of enrollment in the on-campus or online-only program.

Our online-only program is an Academic Program Partner of the Behavioral Health Centers of Excellence (BHCOE). Students who live outside of the 5-parish area (50-mile radius of campus) will be placed at BHCOE accredited training sites and gain ABA Faculty approval prior to initiating hours accrual at that site placement.

Campus and Online Course Sequence:

The exact order in which courses are taken will be clearly outlined by your academic advisor upon admission. Upon acceptance into the graduate program, contact your academic advisor to schedule your initial advising appointment. Median time to degree completion is 2.5 years.

Fall 1

- PSYC 603 – Principles of Learning and Behavior
- PSYC 605 – Practicum in ABA (1 credit hour)
- PSYC 620 – Single-Subject Methodology [PART 1 of 3 in Research Sequence]
- PSYC 647 – Intro to ABA
- PSYC 660 – ABA Internship I

Fall 2

- PSYC 600 – Advanced Topics in Behavior Analysis
- PSYC 615 – Verbal Behavior
- PSYC 658 – Experimental Analysis of Behavior
- PSYC 663 – ABA Internship IV

Spring 1

- PSYC 612 – Conceptual Foundations of Behavior Analysis
- PSYC 617 – Behavioral Assessment
- PSYC 627 – Applied Research Methods in ABA [PART 2 of 3 in Research Sequence]
- PSYC 661 – ABA Internship II

Spring 2

- PSYC 628 – Applied Behavior Analysis Interventions
- PSYC 684 – Professional Standards for Behavior Analysts
- PSYC 664 – ABA Internship V

Summer 1

- PSYC 625 – Ethics for Behavior Analysts
- PSYC 639 – Human Growth and Development
- PSYC 662 – ABA Internship III
- PSYC 699 – Thesis [PART 3 of 3 in Research Sequence]

Course Descriptions:

PSYC 600 - Advanced Topics in Behavior Analysis
An examination of current research in applied behavior analysis, experimental evaluation of interventions.

PSYC 603 - Principles of Learning
Analysis of the major theories and research results relevant to learning, an examination of the basic principles of respondent and operant learning in the context of behavior change. Basic and applied research will be considered.

PSYC 605 - Practicum in ABA – *1 credit hour*
Initial supervised experience in the practice of applied behavior analysis. Students will participate in introductory clinical training and conduct direct observations of behavior under supervision. *Enrollment in PSYC 605 is concurrent with PSYC 660.*

PSYC 612 - Conceptual Foundations of Behavior Analysis
An examination of the conceptual, philosophical, and theoretical foundations of modern behavior analysis.

PSYC 615 - Verbal Behavior
Course introduces the student to a natural science/operant conditioning/behavior analytic approach to verbal behavior and language. Consideration to include the historical foundations as and current applications to teaching language to learners with developmental disabilities

PSYC 617 - Behavioral Assessment
This course provides information on the general principles of psychological measurement and behavioral assessment including validity, reliability, correlation techniques, errors of measurement. Item analysis, test weights, scaling procedures, development and use of norms. Indirect, direct, and functional analysis of behavior, treatment integrity. Discussion of various psychological and educational instruments.

PSYC 620 - Single-Subject Methodology – Part 1 of 3 | Research
This course is the first of the three core research requirements for graduate students in the ABA program. The research proposal will include a thorough review of the relevant literature, experimental methodology that corresponds to the research question, expected results, and references, as well as submit an application based on the proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) if applicable to your research. An overview of strategies and tactics of experimental design in behavior analysis. Includes strengths and weaknesses of single organism methodology in basic and applied research. Topics include issues of experimental logic, experimental control, selecting and measuring target behaviors, assessing reliability and social validity, variability, graphing data, data analysis and display, interpretation of experimental findings, and program monitoring and evaluation. The complement to this course is PSYC 627.

PSYC 625 - Ethics for Behavior Analysts
This course is designed to provide students with knowledge pertaining to the ethical and legal concerns of behavior analysts as they apply to various professional activities and settings.

PSYC 627 – Applied Research Methods in ABA – Part 2 of 3 | Research
This course is the second of the three core research requirements for graduate students in the ABA program. It will focus on the application of a single-subject research project. Students will develop and write a proposal in the format consistent with the Style Manual of the American Psychological Association. The complement to this course is PSYC 699 – Thesis. Your Thesis Chair remains the same throughout both courses. Defense required for all students.

PSYC 628 – ABA Interventions
This course is designed to give students an overview of applied behavior analytic interventions conducted with various populations and implemented across different settings. More specifically, this course will focus on ABA interventions for individuals with autism, traumatic brain injury, and dementia, as well as, interventions for typically developing individuals in the home, school, and workplace.

PSYC 639 - Human Growth & Development

Comprehensive course dealing with the characteristics of normal growth and development throughout the life cycle. Emphasis is placed upon the respective roles of maturation and learning. Consideration is given to emotional, social, mental, and physical development.

PSYC 647 - Introduction to Applied Behavior Analysis

This course is design to provide a foundation for beginning graduate students in the experimentally derived principles of Applied Behavior Analysis.

PSYC 658 - Experimental Analysis of Behavior

Introduction to the basic assumptions, techniques, practices, and findings associated with the experimental analysis of behavior.

PSYC 684 – Professional Standards for Behavior Analysts

Designed to teach students of applied behavior analysis about the use of behavioral principles as they pertain to professional development as well as the supervision of supervisees and staff. Topics covered will include: defining clear objectives, risks involved with ineffective supervision, the use of assessment tools for supervisees, feedback delivery, reinforcement, the use of other behavior analytic concepts and principles to train supervisees, and how to evaluate the effects of supervision.

PSYC 660 – ABA Internship I

This course is part of a five-course sequence conducted over five academic terms. During these courses, students will obtain the required supervised experience hours to sit for the certification exam for behavior analysts. Students in the five-course internship sequence will work semi-independently with both an onsite (BCBA) and university supervisor providing a minimum of two hours of supervision per week. Failure to achieve the required clock hours over the semester will result in a NCE grade; student must enroll for second term.

PSYC 661 – ABA Internship II

See description for PSYC 660.

PSYC 662 – ABA Internship III

See description for PSYC 660.

PSYC 663 – ABA Internship IV

See description for PSYC 660.

PSYC 664 – ABA Internship V

See description for PSYC 660.

PSYC 699 – Thesis – Part 3 of 3 | Research

Student must register for the thesis course during each regular semester the thesis is in progress. A minimum of 3 credit hours must be accrued. Student must be enrolled in Thesis the semester the thesis is completed and, the formal, oral proposal and defense meetings with accompanying document are approved by the permanent 3-member committee comprised of graduate faculty. Defense required for all students. Binding requirements exist within the University, and formatting differs from APA Format 7th Edition. https://www.mcneese.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Thesis-Manual-Guidelines.pdf

Dore Requirements/Fees Last Updated 6/2022

Applied Experiences:

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with professional ethical standards. Students will be discussing sensitive material at their site placement and during university supervision meetings. The rules of confidentiality apply to the content discussed in these meetings. Uphold the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) to protect all sensitive information.

Students complete five practica experiences (PSYC 660, 661, PSYC 662, PSYC 663, and PSYC 664). These practica are offered through the McNeese Autism Program for on-campus students and online-students who live within the five-parish area (or within 50 miles) and are supervised by licensed Board Certified Behavior

Analysts (BCBAs). See McNeese Autism Program Handbook for more information related to policies and procedures involved with the practica.

For online-students who live outside of the specified geographic range, supervision is provided by an approved BCBA near your location. Contracts must be in place prior to the inception of supervision for all MSU graduate students.

Thesis Project:

The Thesis project involving publication quality research supervised by a core ABA Faculty member is *a degree plan requirement* for <u>all</u> MA in ABA students. The Thesis requires a 3 member committee of full-time graduate faculty and involves a formal proposal meeting and oral defense meeting. There is a written product in the thesis project. Rather than the traditional chapter format, the completed thesis for the MA-ABA program should be written in the form of a peer-reviewed journal submission ready manuscript (i.e., APA 7th edition, scientific-writing style).

Binding in accordance with McNeese State University Dore School of Graduate Studies guidelines is also required, and this formatting is separate to APA Format 7th edition. Your Thesis Chair will provide you with these details. *Three* copies are required, and students are welcome to order additional copies to keep for themselves.

Comprehensive Exit Examination:

Purpose: To prepare our students for their credentialing exam as future Board Certified Behavior Analysts® from their first semester in the program through a series of two Mock Exams (Intern 1 semester and Intern 4 semester) and a final, comprehensive exit examination (last semester in graduate program).

Repeated contact with content provides spaced, rather than massed practice.

The comprehensive exit exam (COMPS) is a standardized mock exam designed to prepare the students for the subject matter and format of the BACB credentialing exam. Students typically sit for this exam during their Internship 5 semester (usually the semester in which they are graduating), unless otherwise advised by their faculty advisor.
For students joining in AY 24-25, there are 185 questions on the test across various topics outlined on the current BCBA Test Content Outline 6th Edition (TCO). The exam is timed – maximum time allowed on the exam is 4 hours.

Local students will be proctored on campus McNeese State University. Students outside of the five-parish area will need to arrange for approved proctoring services in advance of the scheduled COMPS date. All students, however, are welcome to travel to Lake Charles to test on campus if they desire.

The passing score for the COMPS Exam is 70%. If a student fails the test, they may be allowed one retest opportunity within the guidelines of the Graduate School to be scheduled in the *following academic semester* to be administered by BAS testing service which covers the Test Content Outline 6th Edition. The passing score for that second exam is also 70% correct. Per the Graduate School Regulations, the student must wait until the following academic semester and pay all associated fees for a retest opportunity with the BAS testing service. <u>Failure to pass COMPS may result in delayed graduation.</u> Only one such re-examination will be permitted.

Academic Expectations and Quality of Work Standards:

A 3.0 average (on a 4.0) scale must be maintained in all graduate work taken as a part of the degree program. No grade below C and not more than 6 credit hours (equivalent to 2 courses) of C work can be applied toward the degree. Only transfer credits with a grade of B or better may be applied toward the degree.

A grade of "Pass" must be earned on the Thesis requirement to earn credit towards the terminal degree. All BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts, American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles, McNeese State University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee if applicable) requirements must be followed. Students are expected to comply with the MSU Student Handbook and Academic Integrity Policy—all University Policies can be found below.

Communication Expectations:

Faculty and Staff will communicate with you regularly via your McNeese.edu e-mail accounts and Moodle LMS pages. All graduate students are expected to maintain regular access to their McNeese.edu accounts. Monitor your messages, syllabi, and communications to ensure that you are not missing important deadlines.

Students are expected to engage in professional communication with others. Professional behavior and conduct are pivotal aspects of not only your academic development, but your development as a well-rounded scientist-practitioner. Student's professional and ethical conduct may be subject to administrative review at any time if matters of concern are brought to the attention of the Director of the Program, the Department Head, the Clinical Department Head, or any administrative entity at McNeese. All University Policies and Procedures will be followed for allegations of inappropriate conduct.

Departmental and Community Service Policy:

The purpose of community volunteer requirements throughout the curriculum is to promote the concept of community service as a behavioral health professional. Voluntary service is a non-reimbursed contribution to the welfare of others in behavioral health, the University, and the community. Three (3) contact hours are required per semester (Fall and Spring only) for each student enrolled in our program. Use the "PSYC SERVICE HOUR FORM" contained in the ABA Sharepoint and also the ABA Orientation Materials to report your contact hours each semester to your Program Coordinator (Dr. Thompson) via the Microsoft Form linked here: https://forms.office.com/r/76E2NP49vW

University Policies:

Persons needing academic adjustments, accommodations, or reasonable accommodations as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as Amended, should contact Tim Delaney, Director of The **Office of Accessibility Services**, Frazar Memorial Library Room 102, (337) 475-5916; TDD/TTY, hearing impaired (337) 562-4227 or ssd@mcneese.edu or tdelaney@mcneese.edu. Tim Delaney is the contact person for academic adjustments for students and student concerns.

Students should visit the MSU web page at https://www.mcneese.edu/policy/power-based-violence-and-sexual-misconduct/ for information about **diversity awareness and sexual harassment policies and procedures.**

Students should visit the MSU web page at http://www.mcneese.edu/policy/academic-integrity-policy for a detailed explanation of the **University Academic Integrity Policy**.

Students should visit the MSU web pages https://www.mcneese.edu/policy/withdrawal-from-courses-for-non-attendance-policy/ and https://www.mcneese.edu/policy/credit-hour-policy/for a detailed explanation of the **University Attendance Policies and Credit Hour Guidelines.**

Students should visit the MSU web page at https://www.mcneese.edu/policy/student-handbook/ for a detailed explanation of student rights and responsibilities. m

Students should visit the **Write to Excellence Center**, located in Kaufman Hall, Room 115, for individual and group tutoring for writing assignments of any kind. Appointments can be made at mcneese.mywconline.com. You may also visit without an appointment, or call 562-4205 or 4206. Center hours are Mon-Thurs., 9am to 4:30pm, and Fridays, 9am to 12pm. Appointments are available digitally for online-only students.

Technology Policy: While McNeese strives to provide access to computer labs and other technology, it is the student's responsibility to ensure adequate access to the technology required for a course. This may include access to a computer (not Chromebooks, iPads, etc.), webcam, internet, adequate bandwidth, etc. This requirement is a standard expectation for all courses regardless of initial course delivery format.

Course Delivery Format: For courses initially being delivered in a face-to-face or hybrid format, the instructor may modify the course delivery method to ensure safety and to respond to constraints that may continue to change throughout the term. Courses beginning in a fully online format will remain online throughout the term.

ABA Program Statement on Generative Artificial Intelligence:

In-line with the University Academic Integrity Policy and to best support student learning, it is the expectation of faculty in the ABA Program that all work our students submit be completed without the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI). Please refrain from using AI tools to create content (written, video, graphical, digital, etc.) for your courses. The expectations for plagiarism, cheating, and academic misconduct further apply to generative AI.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What should I do if I'm interested in applying to your program?

A: The first step is to apply to the Dore School of Graduate Studies. The application will request that you submit your undergraduate transcripts with a minimum GPA of 2.5 and your GRE combined (Verbal + Quantitative) score of at least 285.

Q: When is the application deadline?

A: There are three start dates per year: Fall, Spring, and Summer. Applications are due by August 1, December 1, and May 15. Once the Graduate School has your completed application you will be notified of the admission's decision. The sooner you apply the better. https://www.mcneese.edu/admissions/#graduate

Q: Could I get some form of financial assistance as a graduate student in your program?

A: Successful applicants are admitted to the Graduate School, at which point prospective graduate student may apply for a merit based Graduate Assistantship via the Department of Psychology and Counseling at

the McNeese Autism Program (http://www.mcneese.edu/autism). Graduate Assistantships provide a monthly stipend along with a tuition reduction to eligible students enrolled in either the on-campus or online-only program who have a site placement contract with the McNeese Autism Program. This is true even you will be taking courses online, but as long as you can come to campus to work at the McNeese Autism Program. In fact, if you live in or close to Lake Charles (within the 5-parish area/50-mile radius), you will be required to complete your internship at the McNeese Autism Program even if you are an online student otherwise. The paid GA positions are unavailable for students with off-site internship placements.

Q: Where can I complete my internship if I cannot commute to campus?

A: If you live further away from the 5-parish area/50-mile radius, you will be able to complete your internship (accruing fieldwork hours toward BACB certification eligibility) at an ABA institute approved by MSU Faculty, as long as the BCBAs there are able to supervise you and the appropriate supervision contracts are in place. We have partnered with the Behavioral Health Centers of Excellence (BHCOE) as of Fall 2023 for online program site-placements as an Academic Program Partner for students outside of the 50-mile radius. Please note that only our on-campus program is accredited by ABAI. The online-only MA program is not currently accredited by ABAI.

Q: Are there any undergraduate prerequisite courses that I need to take?

A: If you are pursuing the Master's degree and have not completed your Bachelor's in Psychology. In that case, the undergraduate prerequisites include the following courses: Social Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, Experimental Methods, Statistics, and any 3 additional psychology electives.

Q: Can you tell me about tuition and fees?

A: The Admissions Office would be able to offer you current information about tuition and fees. https://www.mcneese.edu/admissions/ and a general calculator exists for estimating costs: https://www.mcneese.edu/admissions/estimated-costs/

Q: How much will my monthly stipend be if I earn a GA position?

A: The monthly stipend depends on the number of hours you accrue per month and is capped at 20 hours per week due to University payroll restrictions. Your tuition exemption of 50% is standard across the board.

Q: How do I apply for the merit-based GA position?

A: We accept applications each semester, and positions are not guaranteed. To apply, submit a one-page cover letter indicating why you are qualified and why you want to work in this field. Submit your CV viathis direct link: https://forms.office.com/r/fpvEAZZ38W . The MAP business office and ABA Faculty will review your application.

Q: I've been accepted into the program! How do I register for courses?

A: Welcome! Please use the information in your acceptance letter to contact your academic advisor, Dr. Thompson, to set up an initial advising appointment. You'll receive information about the graduate program, your site-placement details, and your Alternate PIN for registering for courses using Banner Self Service.

Q: I've been accepted into the program! How do I access Banner Self Service?

A: Your User ID is a 9 digit number that was provided to you when you were accepted into the program. When you log in for the first time, you'll use that number, your PIN will be your 6-digit birthday in the mmddyy format. Upon first login, you'll change your PIN and establish security questions. From there, you can access the full Banner suite. https://mcneeseonline.knowledgeowl.com/help/login-banner-self-service

Q: What happens if I do not accrue the requisite 300 hours within a given semester of Internship?

A: You could be eligible for an incomplete grade and allowed more time to finish accruing these hours before enrolling in the next Internship course in sequence. Competencies must also be met each semester.

Q: Where can I find the latest Internship-specific forms?

A: Check your course Moodle page OR the ABA Sharepoint Page (Sharepoint.com/sites/AppliedBehaviorAnalysis) when you're logged on to your McNeese.edu account.