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Association for Behavior Analysis International

VCS Handbook

This handbook contains all of the policies and procedures regarding Verified Course Sequences

Association for Behavior Analysis International

Verified Course Sequence Handbook

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Introduction

This handbook provides an overview of the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) Verified Course Sequence (VCS) system. It includes standards and rules for verification of university coursework and is intended as a guide for programs that currently offer or are developing behavior analytic training.

ABAI's mission is to contribute to the well-being of society by developing, enhancing, and supporting the growth and vitality of the science of behavior analysis through research, education, and practice. ABAI's primary objective in education is to recruit, train, and professionally develop behavior analysts. Professional associations customarily oversee training programs in their discipline, and ABAI will manage the verification of course sequences as part of its objective to foster high-quality education in behavior analysis.

Verified Course Sequence (VCS)

A VCS is a sequence of courses verified by ABAI as meeting particular instructor and coursework standards in a college or university program offering behavior analytic instruction. A VCS may be part of a defined academic program, or it may be offered as a stand-alone educational experience.

VCS status is not the same as accreditation, which is a comprehensive approach to assessing the quality of all aspects of a degree-granting program (e.g., coursework, rigor, faculty, outcomes assessment). Programs interested in accreditation should refer to the [ABAI accreditation criteria](#). Individuals interested in ABAI-accredited academic programs should refer to the [list](#) on the ABAI accreditation website. A program is not required to be ABAI accredited to have an ABAI VCS. For more information regarding this distinction please see our [website](#).

ABAI will review and verify only course sequence applications for ABAI VCS status. ABAI is not responsible for the application requirements of credentialing agencies. Completion of a VCS does not guarantee an application will be accepted nor an examination passed. Coursework determinations made outside of a VCS are up to the discretion of the credentialing agency.

Completion of a VCS currently satisfies either the Behavior Analyst Certification Board's (BACB's) Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) Option 1 or Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA) coursework requirements for examination applications. Beginning in 2022, completion of a VCS will satisfy Pathway 2 for BCBA and BCaBA coursework requirements for examination applications.

Expectations of VCSs

ABAI verifies programs whose coursework meets entry-level requirements. However, we strongly encourage all programs to provide the most comprehensive, highest quality education and training they can offer. In any training program, students should learn about behavior analysis as a whole—including its applied, basic, and theoretical foundations—rather than simply as a set of techniques. Such an approach to training is beneficial to students, programs, clients, and the discipline.

Similar to credentialing for many other professions, BACB standards are determined based on the entry level of competence to practice, as opposed the level of competence expected of an expert. Newly certified behavior

analysts should have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their roles when they first start as practitioners.

It is incumbent upon all VCS Coordinators to provide students with realistic expectations of their competencies upon VCS completion. Instructors must convey to their students the importance of practicing only within the scope of their training, consulting with mentors or colleagues when problems arise, and continuing their professional development beyond graduation.

ABAI requires VCS curricula to remain relatively stable over time because, during the initial VCS application review, courses are identified as meeting certain content-hour requirements. Substantial deviations that result in students not receiving the initially verified training may jeopardize VCS status. Though, including additional content beyond the requirements is acceptable.

Terms Used in This Document

Content Area	A defined domain of knowledge and skills (e.g., a category of the BACB task list). Course hours must meet content area requirements.
Course/Module	A unit of teaching that typically lasts one academic term/period. It may be known as a “unit” or “module” of an individual subject made up of sessions.
Course Objectives	Concise statements that describe what students should learn by the end of the course.
Course Sequence	The collection of courses verified by ABAI as meeting the requirements for examination/certification applications.
Experience/ Fieldwork	Practical work completed in an applied setting (rather than in a laboratory or office). <i>Note: ABAI does not manage or verify fieldwork/experience or its standards.</i>
Student Learning Outcomes	Items covered in a course (e.g., individual BACB task list items).
Task List	A list of items as a resource for instructors and a study tool for candidates comprising information on knowledge and competencies. (e.g., the BACB task list).
VCS Coordinator	A full-time faculty member responsible for the communication, including accurate reporting of course information, between ABAI and the institution in which the VCS is housed.
VCS Instructor	An instructor who meets criteria to teach courses in a VCS.

General Requirements

Institution

Course sequences must be offered in an accredited¹ higher education institution meeting one of the following criteria:

- A United States institution of higher education listed in the Council for Higher Education Accreditation database of institutions and programs accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting organizations.
- An institution of higher education located outside the United States that maintains a standard of training equivalent to the standards of training of those institutions accredited in the United States, as determined by a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services. Under certain circumstances, alternative pathways for non-North American course sequences may be granted a time-limited waiver for non-coursework requirements.

The course sequence may be a part of a degree-granting program or offered as a stand-alone program. Please see the [BACB's website](#) for acceptable field of study and degree requirements for examination applications.

VCS Coordinator

Each VCS must designate one individual as VCS Coordinator. The VCS Coordinator is the single point of contact between the VCS and ABAI and communicates coursework requirements to students.

Coordinator Requirements

The VCS Coordinator must do the following:

- Meet one of the instructor qualifications described below.
- Hold full-time faculty status (e.g., professor, program chair, department head) at the institution in which the VCS is housed.
- Hold a doctoral degree from an accredited¹ higher education institution (VCS Coordinators for standalone BCaBA sequences may hold a master's degree or higher).
- Be authorized by the academic or administrative head of the institutional unit (e.g., department, college) to make decisions, including payment of application fees, on behalf of the proposed course sequence and all its students, instructors, and supervisors. A letter of verification will be required (a template is available).

The VCS Coordinator need not be a faculty member in the same department as the VCS, but the expectation is that, at a minimum, the VCS Coordinator will meet the qualifications for the sequence and have a strong working relationship with the department where it is housed. For example, a faculty member of a psychology department may also be the VCS Coordinator for a sequence in the special education department; provided there is a strong working relationship with faculty in both departments.

¹ Accredited higher education institution refers to a university or institution that is nationally or regionally accredited.

Coordinator Communication

VCS Coordinators' email addresses will be added to the ABAI VCS listserv. The listserv allows ABAI to communicate with coordinators, and coordinators may also use the listserv to communicate with one another. The listserv should not be used to correspond with ABAI about matters pertaining to an individual VCS (e.g., updating courses, changing instructors). ABAI will share all pertinent messages with VCS Coordinators in a timely manner; but, we may screen incoming messages or filter to manage duplicates.

Coordinators' names will be listed with their sequence information in the ABAI VCS directory. Email addresses will not be publicly displayed; instead, a secure contact form will be accessible. Any correspondence received by ABAI from university staff or faculty will be forwarded or copied to the VCS Coordinator to ensure consistency of communication.

Responsibilities to ABAI

A VCS Coordinator must report to ABAI within 30 days any changes in information provided in the course sequence application. This includes, changes in instructors, syllabi affecting verified content hours, course names or numbers, coordinator, or program administration that could affect VCS status. All changes may be submitted by the VCS Coordinator via the online VCS system. If the change cannot be accommodated by the online system, please email us (VCS@abainternational.org) for instructions.

Resigning VCS Coordinators are responsible for helping to find qualified replacement and for updating the VCS online system with new contact information within 30 days. If a suitable replacement cannot be found, the VCS Coordinator must provide ABAI with contact information of someone in a leadership position in the department, even if that person does not meet VCS Coordinator qualifications. This individual will then have 30 days from the departure of the VCS Coordinator to inform ABAI of a replacement who meets all criteria, or the course sequence will lose its VCS status.

Responsibilities to Students and University

Communicate requirements. All VCS Coordinators, especially those whose sequences are not part of degree programs, must be current on degree requirements and certification eligibility standards prior to admission to the VCS. For example, course substitutions or waivers allowed by an institution will not supersede verified content hours. Neither will conferral of a degree or certificate from the department housing a VCS.

Current [degree requirements](#) for BCBA examination eligibility are limited to certain fields of study (i.e., behavior analysis, education, psychology). Beginning January 1, 2022, changes to BCBA and BCaBA degree and coursework requirements will go into effect.

Hold orientation meetings. All VCS Coordinators are required to hold orientation meetings with incoming students in their first term. During orientation meetings, the VCS Coordinator must provide a written list of verified courses and the content hours for each. The coordinator must also confirm each student's degree eligibility and review certification requirements. It is also critical that coordinators update students when edition and other requirements change.

Communicate qualifications. Some institutions offer programs in behavior analysis in which a certificate is awarded for completion. Although all VCS Coordinators must educate their students and graduates about how best to describe their qualifications, certificate programs should take extra precautions to ensure students and graduates do not misrepresent that they are certified. Confusion may arise among students and members of the public in distinguishing between certificates of completion and BACB certification. VCS Coordinators should ensure that students receive information on why they must not represent themselves as “certified in behavior analysis,” “BCBA Candidates,” “Board Certified Behavior Analyst Pending,” etc.

VCS Coordinator Processing Agreement

VCS Coordinators are required to complete this attestation at the time of application and at each annual renewal, via the online ABAI VCS application.

The Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) agrees to review and process the Verified Course Sequence (VCS) application for the program offering coursework for the BACB examination application, subject to the VCS Coordinator’s agreement on behalf of the applicant to the following terms and conditions:

1. To read, remain current on, be bound by, and comply with all ABAI VCS rules relating to verification of university coursework, including, but not limited to agreement by you and your program to do the following:
 - a. Provide only truthful and accurate information and supporting documentation in this application and subsequent communications with ABAI.
 - b. Comply with all ABAI VCS requirements outlined in the VCS application, VCS handbook, and information at www.ABAInternational.org/vcs, which may be revised from time to time.
 - c. Ensure compliance with the ABAI VCS handbook and the appropriate ethics code for VCS instructors.
 - d. Report any changes (e.g., in curriculum, approved instructors, course names, course prefixes, grading conventions) to the VCS within 30 days via the online ABAI VCS portal (application/renewal).
2. To authorize ABAI VCS to publish and/or release your applicant’s VCS status, including any probationary or sanctioned status; institution name; number of verified courses; verified content hours per course; number of faculty (full and part time) and their instructor qualifications; mode of instruction; pass-rate data, if applicable; and identity of the VCS Coordinator (via secure contact form).
3. To provide ABAI VCS with any syllabi, lesson plans or course materials/information for any courses taught in conjunction with the VCS program, and to authorize ABAI VCS to copy, release or disseminate any materials that may, in ABAI VCS’s sole discretion, be deemed pertinent to an applicant’s review, VCS review, or ABAI VCS disciplinary review, or as may be necessary to comply with a subpoena or request from a regulatory agency or official.

Furthermore, ABAI will use course information as data to evaluate programs. ABAI may also release or disseminate course information in a manner aligning with its mission. Information publicly disseminated will be done with ethical integrity.

4. To hold ABAI VCS harmless and to waive, release, and exonerate ABAI VCS and its officers, directors, employees, committee members, panel members and agents from any claims that the VCS applicant or students of applicant may have against ABAI VCS arising out of the review of this application, course

materials, or any future applications the VCS Coordinator submits to ABAI VCS. In the event that you (i) provide misleading or inaccurate information, (ii) fail to update information provided in this application timely, (iii) fail to properly apply ABAI VCS standards in your VCS, or (iv) fail to provide course materials upon the request of ABAI VCS, you agree to indemnify and defend ABAI VCS from and against any liability arising out of this application, or the certification/credentialing agency's review and determination of an applicant's coursework based on the representation(s) made herein or your failure to abide by the standards for VCS approval.

5. To act as the single point of contact between VCS students and faculty and ABAI VCS. To facilitate the transition to a new VCS Coordinator if needed. This includes, but is not limited to, notifying ABAI VCS of the change, providing ABAI VCS with information regarding a new VCS Coordinator prior to the change, and providing the new VCS Coordinator with detailed and comprehensive information about your program's verification and both ABAI VCS and the certification/credentialing agency's requirements, including a copy of the VCS handbook.
6. To agree to denial, suspension, revocation, or other limitation of VCS status, if granted, should any statement made on this application or hereafter supplied to ABAI VCS be found to be false; if the VCS is not in compliance with any of the rules or regulations of ABAI VCS, or if you should fail to notify ABAI VCS of any changes in institution status, coursework, faculty, or supervisor information contained in this application or your sequence's ongoing VCS applications and updates.
7. To represent VCS status, if granted, only as course sequence verification, and to refrain from misrepresenting an ABAI VCS verification as being "approved by ABAI" or "ABAI accredited."
8. To comply with the ABAI [terms of use](#) as they appear on the ABAI website, including the VCS section, and to ensure that your sequence does not facilitate, condone, or permit misrepresentation of ABAI VCS or the certification/credentialing agency's intellectual property by participants in the VCS. You expressly agree to inform students that they are not certified in behavior analysis based on completion of your VCS.
9. To represent the term "VCS Coordinator" accurately, as a term used only to describe a role, solely within the context of the application for course sequence verification. "VCS Coordinator" is not a credential granted by ABAI VCS nor the certification/credentialing agency and may not be represented as such.

By submitting this VCS application, you confirm that the information provided is true and accurate and that you have the authority to submit on behalf of the VCS applicant program.

Instructor Qualifications and Verification

Instructor qualifications must be submitted during the VCS application process, via the ABAI portal, and prior to delivering any instruction. During the application process the VCS Coordinator will enter basic instructor information and invite instructors to submit complete information about their qualifications, plus supporting documentation, via their ABAI portals. The VCS Coordinator is responsible for ensuring all instructors submit the necessary documentation before completing the VCS application.

VCS instructors must meet **one** of the following criteria to teach in the VCS:

1. Hold BCBA or BCBA-D certification.

Documentation:

- a. An updated curriculum vitae.

2. Hold a doctoral degree and have completed coursework requirements for [BCBA Option 1](#) applications.
Documentation:
 - a. Official transcript showing the degree and coursework;
 - b. an updated curriculum vitae;
 - c. and a letter attesting that the coursework meets Option 1 requirements.
3. Have completed at least three years (cumulative) of full-time work as a faculty member at an accredited higher education institution within a five-year period and meet the current requirements for [BCBA Option 2](#) applications.
Documentation:
 - a. Official transcript showing the degree and coursework;
 - b. an updated curriculum vitae;
 - c. and a letter from an official at the applying institution attesting to the individual's cumulative work as a faculty member.
 - d. Including BACB's Option 2 Faculty and Research Criteria – the letter from the department head and course syllabi indicating the following:
 - i. Must have taught at least five sections/iterations of behavior-analytic coursework;
 - ii. Must have taught at least two of the following behavior-analytic content areas in separate courses: concepts & principles, single-subject research methods, applied behavior analysis, and ethics in behavior analysis;
 - iii. Each course must have been exclusively or primarily devoted to behavior-analytic content;
 - iv. Coursework must have been taught at the graduate level
 - v. Must have published one article with the following characteristics: i. Behavior analytic in nature; ii. At least one experimental evaluation; iii. Published in a high-quality, peer-reviewed journal; iv. First, second, or corresponding author; v. published at any time in their career.
 - e. The instructor is not required to meet the supervised experience/fieldwork requirement.
4. Be enrolled in a behavior-analytic doctoral program (e.g., an ABAI-accredited doctoral program) at the applying university or at another university with a BCBA-level VCS, with all coursework requirements complete.
Documentation:
 - a. Official transcript showing coursework;
 - b. a letter from an official at the applying institution attesting to the individual's academic status within the doctoral program (all coursework requirements complete);
 - c. and, unless the program is ABAI-accredited, institutional materials (e.g., official program description, graduate catalog) showing that the program is behavior-analytic.
5. Hold a doctoral degree from a program accredited by ABAI.
Documentation:
 - a. Official transcript showing degree and coursework;
 - b. And, an updated curriculum vitae.
6. Hold a doctoral degree, in a relevant discipline, from an accredited higher education institution and hold a faculty position in a program accredited by ABAI.

Documentation:

- a. Official transcript showing the degree and coursework;
 - b. And, an updated curriculum vitae.
7. Hold a doctoral degree from an accredited higher education institution and have established, over a period of at least five years after receipt of the degree, a track record of meritorious contributions in behavior analysis.

Documentation:

- a. Official transcript showing degree and coursework;
- b. An updated curriculum vitae;
- c. And, evidence of appropriate meritorious contributions.
 - i. The evidence must include a narrative indicating how the individual's contributions qualify the individual to teach course(s) in the VCS and documentation that the contributions are meritorious.
 - ii. Merit could be established by professional recognitions such as: Fellow status in ABAI; employment or appointments generally understood to recognize high achievement (e.g., professorships, editorial positions, executive positions within organizations that provide behavior-analytic services); or, if the contributions consist of a body of published work, an indication of the quality of the publications (e.g., journal impact factors, book reviews) (this list is not exhaustive).

By serving both U.S. and non-U.S. programs, our role is to establish the minimum qualifications for instructors. Instructors must also meet requirements of their institution's regional/national accrediting agency.

Instructors wishing to teach in multiple VCSs need separate approval by ABAI for each. ABAI does not grant or recognize a title or credential for being an instructor in an ABAI VCS. Thus, an instructor may not give the appearance that "Verified Course Sequence Instructor" is an official designation of ABAI. VCS Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that instructors do not misrepresent themselves.

VCS Instructor Processing Agreement

This attestation is completed online via the ABAI portal.

I understand that I am being considered for approval by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) as an instructor in a Verified Course Sequence (VCS). I hereby confirm the following:

1. The VCS Coordinator personally reviewed the ABAI VCS handbook, coursework, and code of ethics policy, and diversity policy with me.
2. By submitting this request for approval as an instructor in the VCS, I hereby agree to offer my instruction in the VCS in compliance with the VCS handbook, applicable coursework standards, diversity and ethical standards.
3. I understand that ABAI may deny my instructor status in the VCS, for any reason, without explanation or initiation of formal review proceedings.
4. Should I hold a license or credential that is sanctioned or under investigation, I agree to notify the ABAI VCS system immediately of such action.

5. Upon request, I agree to provide ABAI VCS any syllabi, lesson plans or course descriptions/materials for any courses taught by me in conjunction with the VCS program. I further understand that ABAI may copy, release, or disseminate the course materials, as may be deemed pertinent, in ABAI's sole discretion, to VCS review or disciplinary review.

By accepting this attestation, you confirm that all the information provided on this page is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

Duration of Verification

Verification of a course sequence will be valid for one year from the date of approval; retroactive approval will not be granted. Renewal applications must be completed annually. VCS Coordinators will be notified in advance of their renewal period. Once verified, VCS Coordinators will be issued a new ABAI VCS logo. Existing VCSs will be issued a new logo after their renewal application is verified by ABAI.

Course sequences verified by the BACB prior to January 1, 2019, will remain and will complete a renewal application with ABAI in 2019; coordinators will be notified of their renewal period. Prior to renewal with ABAI, VCSs should continue to refer to their verified coursework as such: "The Behavior Analyst Certification Board" has verified the following courses toward the coursework requirements for eligibility to take the Board Certified Behavior Analyst* (Option 1) or Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst* examination. Applicants will need to meet additional requirements before they can be deemed eligible to take the examination."

Once a course sequence has been verified by ABAI, VCS Coordinators may use the following language: "The Association for Behavior Analysis International has verified the following courses toward the coursework requirements for eligibility to take the Board Certified Behavior Analyst* (Option 1) or Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst* examination. Applicants will need to meet additional requirements before they can be deemed eligible to take the examination."

Fees

ABAI will implement modest fees for all Verified Course Sequences applications, both new and renewing, beginning January 1, 2020, as follows:

	U.S. BCBA	U.S. BCaBA	Non-U.S. BCBA or BCaBA	ABAI-Accredited Programs
Application Fee:	\$500	\$250	\$125	\$0
Annual Renewal Fee:	\$250	\$125	\$65	\$0

Application fees are for programs applying for VCS status or re-applying after a lapse in verification. Annual renewal fees are for programs renewing established VCSs before expiration.

Established VCSs will complete a new application when changing task list editions but pay only the renewal fee. Application and renewal fees will be submitted at the end of the application/renewal process. Applications/renewals will not be processed until fees are submitted. Refunds and fee transfers are not permitted.

Communication and Information

ABAI will provide timely information to VCS Coordinators. The ABAI VCS listserv will be the primary mode of communication between ABAI and the VCS Coordinators. The ABAI VCS email will be used for direct and individual communication with ABAI. Public information will be available on the ABAI VCS website. Additionally, VCS Coordinators may provide feedback via the feedback section of the VCS website. However, if your questions or concerns require an immediate/individual response, please contact us via the VCS email address.

We also encourage VCS Coordinators to remain current with ABAI information and events. Furthermore, VCS Coordinators should remain current with the BACB Newsletters as a source of information about the BACB's activities and standards that affect certificants, students, and fieldwork requirements. VCS Coordinators should assist in disseminating ABAI VCS information and relevant BACB newsletters with faculty and students.

Coursework

Hours of Instruction

For establishing instructional requirements that can be applied globally, our coursework requirements are expressed in hours of instruction, not credit hours, as some institutions do not use this metric. For institutions that use semester hours, 1 semester credit hour represents 15 hours of classroom instruction. For institutions that use quarter hours, 1 quarter credit hour represents 10 hours of classroom instruction. These commonly used conversions are based on U.S. Department of Education guidance.

Courses vs. Modules: What is referred to in the U.S. as a *course* is commonly called a *module* in many non-U.S. universities and colleges. For this handbook and the VCS system, the term “course” refers to an individual module (e.g., a 3-credit, 45-hour course) rather than an entire degree program or course of study.

Modes of Instruction

Online (distance): 100% of the course instruction is delivered in a synchronous or asynchronous mode. Scheduled face-to-face meetings may or may not be required for orientation and student evaluation.

On Campus (face to face): Courses meet face to face for all the course contact hours prescribed by the course type and units. (Syllabi/grades may be posted online.)

Hybrid: Courses use both classroom and online instructional modes and meet face to face for 25%–75% of the course contact hours prescribed by the course type and units.

Both (On Campus and Online): Course instruction is offered in both modes.

Coursework Level

Undergraduate: Coursework at the level of a bachelor's degree or its equivalent. This may include stand-alone course sequences that offer coursework for BCaBA examination applications.

Graduate: Coursework at the level of a master's or doctoral degree (or its equivalent). This may include stand-alone course sequences that offer coursework for BCaBA and BCBA examination applications.

Sequence Structure

Stand-Alone Sequence: Courses are offered separately from a program/degree, possibly post-degree.

Embedded in a Program/Degree: Courses are offered within a program/degree, possibly as a requirement for degree completion.

Content Area Requirements

BCBA*-Level Content Requirements:			
The applicant must complete graduate-level instruction in the following content areas and for the number of hours specified.			
Fifth Edition Task List (Implementation: 2022)		Fourth Edition Task List (Implementation: 2015)	
BACB Compliance Code and Disciplinary Systems; Professionalism <i>Note: The content must be taught in one or more freestanding courses.</i>	45 hrs	Ethical and Professional Conduct <i>Note: The content must be taught in one or more freestanding courses.</i>	45 hrs
Philosophical Underpinnings; Concepts & Principles <i>Note: 45 hours must be taught as one freestanding course on concepts and principles.</i>	90 hrs	Concepts & Principles of Behavior Analysis	45 hrs
Measurement, Data Display and Interpretation; Experimental Design <i>Note: The content must be taught in one or more freestanding courses.</i>	45 hrs	Measurement (including data analysis)	25 hrs
		Experimental Design	20 hrs
Behavior Assessment	45 hrs	Identification of the Problem and Assessment	30 hrs
Behavior-Change Procedures; Selecting and Implementing Interventions	60 hrs	Fundamental Elements of Behavior Change and Specific Behavior Change Procedures	45 hrs
		Intervention and Behavior Change Considerations	10 hrs
		Behavior Change Systems	10 hrs
Personnel Supervision and Management	30 hrs	Implementation, Management, and Supervision	10 hrs
		Discretionary	30 hrs
Total	315 hrs	Total	270 hrs

BCaBA [®] -Level Content Requirements:			
The applicant must complete instruction in the following content areas and for the number of hours specified.			
Fifth Edition Task List (Implementation: 2022)		Fourth Edition Task List (Implementation: 2015)	
BACB Compliance Code and Disciplinary Systems; Professionalism <i>Note: 15 hours must be taught in one or more freestanding courses.</i>	30 hrs	Ethical and Professional Conduct	15 hrs
Philosophical Underpinnings; Concepts & Principles	45 hrs	Concepts & Principles of Behavior Analysis	45 hrs
Measurement, Data Display and Interpretation; Experimental Design	30 hrs	Measurement (including data analysis)	10 hrs
		Experimental Design	5 hrs
Behavior Assessment	45 hrs	Identification of the Problem and Assessment	30 hrs
Behavior-Change Procedures; Selecting and Implementing Interventions	60 hrs	Fundamental Elements of Behavior Change and Specific Behavior Change Procedures	45 hrs
		Intervention and Behavior Change Considerations	5 hrs
		Behavior Change Systems	5 hrs
Personnel Supervision and Management	15 hrs	Implementation, Management, and Supervision	5 hrs
		Discretionary	15 hrs
Total	225 hrs	Total	180 hrs

Distribution of Course Content

In general, the required content may be taught in behavior analysis courses or embedded in other courses. For example, a 45-hour course that devotes 15 hours to symptoms and diagnosis of mental health disorders and 30 hours to behavior-analytic behavior change procedures would be able to count only those 30 hours toward the coursework requirement. Some content areas require the content, or components of content, to be taught in freestanding courses.

Course documentation (e.g., syllabi) should include a detailed schedule with the objectives, topics, corresponding items from the BCBA/BCaBA Task List (edition indicated), and activities/assignments for each session to identify content area alignment with instructional hours.

In the “Course List” section of the VCS application, please select at least one content area per course, then, select the corresponding student learning outcomes (task list items). Note that for BCaBA applications the content areas “Philosophical Underpinnings” and “Concepts and Principles” are combined. For BCBA applications they are separate.

Instructional Activities

Instructional time is held to the same standards regardless of the mode of instruction (on campus or online). ABAI expects that the pedagogy utilized meets the standards of evidence-based practices in higher education. We acknowledge faculty's innovation and creativity in their methods of instruction and modes of delivery in the training and professional development of behavior analysts. ABAI expects new approaches to instructional techniques lend to the growing research of evidence-based practices. It is imperative that programs also adhere to the requirements set forth by their institution and its regional/national accrediting agency.

The VCS Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the content area requirements are met and can be verified in the event of a challenge or inquiry. Documentation, including course syllabi, should include a detailed schedule with the objectives, topics, corresponding items from the appropriate task list (or beyond), and activities/assignments for each session to identify content area aligned with instructional hours. VCSs are subject to an audit from ABAI. If your program is audited ABAI may ask for additional and/or verification of course information.

Experience/Fieldwork

The BACB's October 2017 newsletter introduced revised BCBA and BCaBA experience, and supervision requirements and new supervised fieldwork standards. The BACB eliminated practicum and intensive practicum options and introduced two categories of supervised fieldwork available in all settings. Additionally, fieldwork hour requirements were increased, the supervisory period duration was revised, supervisory contact requirements were increased, and the distributions of restricted and unrestricted activities were revised.

University programs may continue to offer fieldwork experience, and we encourage them to do so; however, it will no longer be "Verified Experience." VCSs that offer content hours in their practicum courses may continue to submit those courses as part of their sequence.

Fieldwork is one component of BACB examination applications, with its own requirements. Whether it is a part of university practica or an individual organization's supervision structure will not affect the VCS. All examination applications received on or after January 1, 2022, will need to adhere to the new experience requirements (fieldwork and concentrated fieldwork).

Additional Information

Code of Ethics Statement

ABAI expects its members to uphold the highest standards of personal and professional behavior in the conduct of their work and the advancement of behavior analysis. ABAI embraces the diversity of professions within its membership; thus, each ABAI member should adhere to the ethical standards that have been defined for his or her profession. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- The American Psychological Association's [Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct](#)
- The Association for Clinical Researchers' [Code of Ethics](#)
- The Association for Institutional Research's [Code of Ethics](#)

- The Behavior Analyst Certification Board's [Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts](#)
- The National Association of School Psychologists' [Professional Conduct Manual](#)
- The National Association of Social Workers' [Code of Ethics](#)
- The National Education Association's [Code of Ethics of the Education Profession](#)

ABAI's code of ethics statement was accepted by the Full members of ABAI in 2007.

Diversity Policy

ABAI encourages diversity and inclusiveness in the field of behavior analysis broadly, and within the organization specifically. Diversity refers to differences in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, country of origin, religious or spiritual beliefs, ability, and social and economic class.

The diversity policy was approved by the Executive Council in 2018.

Terms of Use

The ABAI VCS system and its website operate under the ABAI [terms of use](#).

Agreement

The VCS Coordinator and instructor agreements state that application submittal is a declaration that the information provided is true and accurate. ABAI may copy, release or disseminate course materials, as may deemed pertinent, in ABAI's sole discretion, to VCS review or disciplinary action. Furthermore, ABAI will use course information as data to evaluate programs. ABAI may also release or disseminate course information in a manner aligning with its mission. Any public dissemination of information will be done with ethical integrity.

Submission of a VCS application constitutes an agreement that the sequence and its instructors will comply with all the rules and standards outlined in this handbook, in ABAI official communications, and at <http://www.ABAInternational.org/VCS>. Coordinators must inform instructors and students that VCSs are subject to ABAI's code of ethics statement.

Noncompliance with VCS Requirements

Failure to comply with these standards can be grounds sanctions against a VCS, including suspension; sanctions against instructors; and possible action against the certification status of instructors and coordinators. Students must also be informed of the possibility of sanctions if they advertise their VCS completion as "certification," "accreditation," or similar. ABAI's complaint process may be used to file a complaint or report a violation against a VCS.

Initial VCS Application Instructions

1. Review program eligibility criteria on the [ABAI VCS website](#).
2. Review the application support materials on the ABAI VCS website.
3. Review the course list and content area requirements with your department/colleagues in advance.
4. Confirm each course in the sequence has properly documented content allocations.
5. Confirm all relevant materials are gathered prior to beginning the application. However, you may save the application and return at any time to complete it.

Representatives of sequences that are not yet well established (e.g., courses are undergoing revision, departmental support for behavior-analytic training is questionable) may wish to postpone applications for VCS status until a more stable environment can be established.

VCS Application Requirements

Proposed VCS Coordinators may begin the application online. The following information is required:

- Institutional information
 - Institution name, department type, program name, program website, address
 - Coursework and certification level, mode of instruction, sequence structure, credit system
 - Name of accrediting body (if U.S. institution)
- Coordinator information
 - Name, email address, phone number, title, highest degree, certification
 - Curriculum vitae
 - Full-time faculty status letter
 - Affidavit
- Instructor information
 - Name and email
 - Qualifications
- Course information (review content area requirements section in this handbook)
 - Course number and name, instructor(s)
 - Content areas and student learning outcomes (task-list items)
 - Behavior analytic readings
 - Course objectives
 - Course syllabus

Revise and Resubmit

The VCS Coordinator should submit a VCS application only if it is accurate and complete. The VCS application will be locked from editing at the time ABAI begins its review. Feedback will be provided if a VCS application does not meet the requirements, and the VCS Coordinator is responsible for obtaining accurate information and updating coursework (or other application materials) before submitting the revised VCS application for further review. Active status is awarded on the date that the VCS application is **verified**. If after one year from the revise-and-resubmit date the program has failed to meet the requirements, a new application will be required (including corresponding fees).