



BACB Newsletter - Special Edition on New Standards

February, 2013

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The BACB reviews and raises standards for its certification programs on an ongoing basis. The most recent example of this process occurred in 2012 with the changes to the experience and supervision standards resulting from the Supervision Task Force. Due to the growth of BACB certification and the increased scrutiny the organization has received in political and professional arenas, the BACB's Board of Directors authorized further review and potential modification of a number of its certification standards. A workgroup comprised of 8 subject matter experts was convened for a 2-day meeting in June 2012. Membership included individuals with at least BCBA certification who are involved in university teaching and/or service-delivery oversight. The group was also geographically diverse, representing 6 US states and 2 countries. During the meeting, each of the standards for consideration was carefully discussed and, if needed, revised to reflect greater rigor and/or clarity. A consensus approach was used throughout this process. The BACB Board of Directors reviewed and approved the recommendations of the standards workgroup in October 2012. The changes are described below.

Degree Eligibility Requirements

Degree type. The current degree requirement for certification eligibility was enacted on January 1, 2011 and was designed to restrict the previously unrestricted degree requirement under which an applicant's degree could come from any academic discipline. This change was made as a shaping step toward a possible long-term goal of requiring a degree in behavior analysis (or equivalent) for certification as a BCBA. Current applicants for the BCBA and BCaBA examinations must have the appropriate degree from an accredited university that was "conferred in behavior analysis or other natural science, education, human services, engineering, medicine or a field related to behavior analysis and approved by the BACB."

There will be two changes to the degree eligibility requirement. First, the requirement will no longer apply to applicants for the BCaBA examination. The BCaBA degree requirement will be revised as follows and is **effective immediately**:

New BCaBA Degree Requirement

Possession of a minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited university.

The second change is that the degree requirement for the BCBA examination will be further restricted, as follows:

New BCBA Degree Requirement

Possession of a minimum of a master's degree from an accredited university that was (a) conferred in behavior analysis, education, or psychology, or (b) conferred in a degree program in which the candidate completed a BACB approved course sequence.



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The change in the BCBA master's degree requirement will go into effect for all completed applications received after **December 31, 2015**.

University accreditation. The current language describing the university accreditation standard is as follows:

A United States or Canadian institution of higher education fully or provisionally accredited by a regional, state, provincial or national accrediting body; OR an institution of higher education located outside the United States or Canada that, at the time the applicant was enrolled and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard of training equivalent to the standards of training of those institutions accredited in the United States.

Implementation of this standard has been somewhat difficult because the inclusion of "state" accreditation and "training equivalent to the standards ... in the United States" has resulted in instances of questionable equivalence. To clarify this standard, existing accreditation databases and degree-equivalency systems will be used to help eliminate ambiguity during the application process. The language will be revised as follows and is **Effective immediately**:

New University Accreditation Standard

Degrees must be conferred by:

A United States institution of higher education listed in the [*CHEA Database of Institutions and Programs Accredited by Recognized U.S. Accrediting Organizations*](#); OR

A Canadian institution of higher education that is a member of the [*Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada*](#) or the [*Association of Canadian Community Colleges*](#); OR

An institution of higher education located outside the United States or Canada that, at the time the applicant was enrolled and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard of training equivalent to the standards of training of those institutions accredited in the United States as demonstrated by [*World Education Services*](#) or by a member of the [*National Association of Credential Evaluation Services*](#).

BCBA-D Eligibility Requirements

The Board Certified Behavior Analyst - Doctoral (BCBA-D) designation was first made available on December 15, 2008. Eligibility requirements for this designation were unveiled in a multiple-stage format. Since its inception, Stage 1 requirements for the BCBA-D have been in place. The key Stage 1 requirements require that an individual:

- A. Is actively certified as a BCBA; AND
- B. Has earned a doctoral degree in applied behavior analysis, other human services, education, science, medicine, or another field approved by the BACB and strongly related to applied behavior analysis, that was conferred by an accredited university; AND
- C. Demonstrates that he/she: (i) has used graduate-level university coursework (taken for graduate academic credit) to qualify for the BCBA credential; (ii) has taught courses in behavior analysis in a university program with a BACB approved course sequence full-time for at least two years; OR (iii) could currently qualify under one of the existing BCBA eligibility options.

An important distinction of the Stage 1 BCBA-D requirements is that the criteria in B and C above are assessed only via applicant self-report. The BCBA-D requirements have been revised to reflect that an



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individual with this designation not only holds both a doctorate and the BCBA credential, but actually studied behavior analysis during his or her doctoral education. The Stage 2 BCBA-D requirements are as follows, and will be effective for all applications for the designation received after **February 28, 2014**.

New BCBA-D Requirements

The key Stage 2 requirements require that an individual:

- A. Is actively certified as a BCBA; AND
- B. Has earned a doctoral degree from a graduate program accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International; OR
- C. Has earned a doctoral degree from an accredited university in which he or she conducted a behavior-analytic dissertation (including at least 1 experiment); AND passed at least 2 behavior analysis courses as part of the doctoral program of study; AND met all BCBA coursework requirements prior to receiving the doctoral degree.

In addition to the changes indicated above, self-report assessment will be removed from the BCBA-D application process. Applicants for the BCBA-D designation will need to submit official university transcripts and programs of study for staff review. The behavior-analytic nature of the dissertation will be determined from the published dissertation abstract and, if necessary, from the dissertation itself.

We should note that certificants who hold the BCBA-D designation under Stage 1 requirements will not need to meet the new requirements as long as they maintain their certification.

Continuing Education Requirements

The BACB's current continuing education requirements are linked to each certificant's recertification cycle (3 years). At the end of each cycle, certificants must attest to completing 36 hours (BCBA, BCBA-D) or 24 hours (BCaBA) of continuing education, with 3 hours in the area of ethics and professional behavior.

A number of changes will be made to the current continuing education requirements, as follows:

New Continuing Education Requirements

1. The recertification cycle will be changed from 3 to 2 years. With this change, certificants will renew and recertify in alternate years.
2. The number of required continuing education credits per 2-year recertification cycle will be 32 for BCBA/BCBA-Ds and 20 for BCaBAs. These changes represent 33% and 25% increases in continuing education hours for BCBA/BCBA-Ds and BCaBAs, respectively.
3. The ethics and professional behavior category will be restricted to ethics content only and all certificants will need to obtain 4 hours per cycle from this category. It should be noted that BCBA/BCBA-Ds who wish to supervise individuals pursuing BACB certification or the ongoing practice of BCaBAs will also need obtain 3 hours of supervision continuing education per recertification cycle as part of the 32-hour requirement.
4. A new category of continuing education activities (CE Type 7) has been added to reflect the learning that occurs in scholarly activities such as the publication of journal articles and editorial reviews (see revised continuing education table on following page).



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Revised Continuing Education Types

CE TYPE	DESCRIPTION	LIMIT	DOCUMENTATION
1	College or university coursework	None - all of your CE can come from this type	Official transcript with passing grade & syllabus showing behavior analysis content
2	CE issued by approved continuing education (ACE) providers	None - all of your CE can come from this type	Certificate or letter from ACE provider
3	Non-approved events	A maximum of 25% of your CE can come from this type	Documentation of event showing behavior-analytic content (e.g., conference program, flyer, or agenda).
4	Instruction of Type 1 or Type 2 events	A maximum of 50% of your CE can come from this type	Letter from department chair or ACE provider
5	CE issued by the BACB directly	A maximum of 25% of your CE can come from this type	BACB posts directly to your online account
6	Take and pass the certification exam again	Passing the exam equals 100% of the required CE	BACB posts directly to your online account. Note: If you elect this option, you may not recertify or reenter via other options in the event that you do not pass the examination.
7	Scholarly Activities Publication of an ABA article in a peer-reviewed journal OR service as reviewer or action editor of an ABA article for a peer-reviewed journal.	A maximum of 25% of your CE can come from this type. Can claim only in the recertification cycle when the article was published or reviewed. One publication = 8 hr One review = 1 hr	Final publication listing certificant as author. Editorial decision letter (for action editor activity). Letter of attestation from action editor (for reviewer activity).

Note: A maximum of 75% of the total may come from categories 3, 4, 5, and 7. At least 25% must come from Type 1 or Type 2. Passing the examination (Type 6) meets all CE requirements except for supervision.

All of the changes to continuing education requirements will take effect for each certificant for the first recertification cycle that begins after **December 31, 2014**.

We have listened to your comments about the existing continuing education audit system and want you to know that we are working on a standardized process that will soon eliminate the need for audits. The BACB is developing an extension of the Certificant Gateway to permit certificants to upload documentation of their continuing education activities on an ongoing basis. After this system is launched, there will be no need to audit certificants for their continuing education materials because supporting documentation will be available in our database for all certificants. At that point, we will switch to internal audits of uploaded materials. We will provide information on this new system in a future issue of the BACB Newsletter.

Pass Rates to be Reported for Approved Course Sequences

On an annual basis, the university faculty contact person for each BACB approved course sequence (ACS) may request its annual pass rate if at least 6 of its graduates took the examination during the year. These data were originally provided to give faculty members feedback about their graduates' examination performance so that courses could be modified as needed. Until recently, course sequences were prohibited from advertising their pass rates. However, beginning in 2011, permission to advertise such data was expressly provided. The rationale behind this recent change was to further shape our ACS system such that data would be now provided to potential students so



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they could make more informed decisions prior to enrollment (at least for programs that advertised their pass rates).

We are ready to take the final step in this incremental process. Beginning in 2014, ACS pass rates will be reported on our website. The first data will be from examinations administered in 2013, with additional data added in subsequent years. Data will be omitted for ACSs with fewer than 6 students testing in a year and ACSs in their first 4 years of existence.

We hope that publicizing ACS pass rates, which is a practice already employed by some certification and licensure boards, will be a useful resource for potential students and serve as a feedback mechanism for universities. After the pass-rate data are published on the [BACB website](#), the BACB will discontinue reporting pass rates directly to universities.

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