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An Upcoming BACB Initiative: The Supervision Task Force

In our January 2011 newsletter, we described the many efforts that have been made since the BACB’s inception in 1999 to carefully evaluate and improve the standards of our certification programs. For example, coursework requirements for the BCBA exam were increased from 180 hours to 225 hours in 2005 and will be further increased to 270 hours in 2015. The next aspect of our certification programs that are due for analysis and improvement is the supervision that applicants receive during their experience requirement. The last time supervision standards increased was in 2006 when supervisors were first required to hold BCBA certification. Due to the growth of BACB certification and the importance of supervised experience to the preparation of quality certificants, we feel that it is time to reevaluate our supervision standards.

Beginning this fall, Drs. Jerry Shook and Jim Carr will launch the Supervision Task Force, a process that ultimately will establish (a) more clearly defined approved experience activities, (b) new supervisor qualifications, and (c) guidelines for the format of supervision. The task-force activities will involve a survey of certificants regarding supervision practices, a meeting of subject matter experts, and a survey of university faculty. The task force’s recommendations will then be submitted to the BACB Board of Directors for final input and approval before being disseminated along with an implementation timeline.

We look forward to communicating additional details about the Supervision Task Force in future newsletters.

May BCBAs and BCaBAs Implement Nonbehavioral Interventions?

The BACB periodically receives inquiries from certificants regarding the appropriateness of BCBAs and BCaBAs who either deliver both behavioral and nonbehavioral interventions (e.g., ABA and Floortime) or are affiliated with agencies that do. The inquiries often imply that such activities constitute unethical behavior of certificants. Indeed, this notion might seem to be supported by the *BACB Guidelines for Responsible Conduct*, especially the following guidelines:

- The behavior analyst always has the responsibility to recommend scientifically supported most effective treatment procedures (2.10a)
- The behavior analyst designs programs that are based on behavior analytic principles (4.0)
- The behavior analyst should promote the application of behavior principles in society by presenting a behavioral alternative to other procedures or methods (9.01)



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However, it is important to note that the BCBA and BCaBA credentials and the *Guidelines for Responsible Conduct* only relate to the **behavior-analytic activities** described in the BACB Task List. The BACB does not recommend that certificants deliver nonbehavioral interventions, especially if they have not yet been scientifically supported. Such activity is contrary to the tenets of our discipline and can be confusing for the consumers of behavior-analytic services. That said, the BACB cannot legally* prohibit certificants who are **appropriately trained and credentialed in other areas** from engaging in those relevant activities as long as they do not advertise or imply that they are competent to perform those activities because of their BACB certification. However, unsanctioned practice of nonbehavioral interventions or misrepresentation of nonbehavioral interventions as being covered by a BACB credential would be grounds for BACB disciplinary action under the *Professional Disciplinary and Ethical Standards*. Unlawful practice would likely be implicated by a sanction (Standard 7) or charge/conviction (Standard 8) and misrepresentation of the scope of coverage of the BACB credential may constitute misuse of trademark (Standard 3) or gross or repeated misconduct/unprofessional conduct (Standard 6).

If you deliver or are otherwise affiliated with the delivery of nonbehavioral interventions, we strongly encourage you to include a written disclaimer in all promotional materials (including web sites) in which both behavioral and nonbehavioral interventions are mentioned. The disclaimer should be placed alongside the names and descriptions of nonbehavioral interventions and read as follows:

These interventions are not behavior-analytic in nature and are not covered by my BACB credential.

If the BACB receives a complaint regarding certificants who are involved with nonbehavioral interventions, the following questions will be asked to determine whether a violation of the Professional Disciplinary and Ethical Standards has occurred.

1. Did the certificant identify nonbehavioral interventions as BCBA- or BCaBA-related services?

2. Did the certificant bill nonbehavioral interventions as BCBA- or BCaBA-related services?
3. Is the certificant independently credentialed to provide the nonbehavioral interventions in question?
4. Was the consumer or third-party payer informed that the nonbehavioral interventions are not covered by the BCBA or BCaBA credentials?

It is now, more than ever, critical that behavior-analytic services be kept separate and distinct from nonbehavioral interventions. After decades of growth, applied behavior analysis is coming into its own as an independent profession and the discipline's leaders are working together to ensure clear scopes of practice and recognition for third-party payment. Failure to keep behavioral and nonbehavioral interventions distinct from each other would be detrimental to our consumers and to the formal recognition of applied behavior analysis.

*The BACB does not opine on whether particular nonbehavioral activities are legally permitted or prohibited.

How Do Distance Education Programs Measure Up? A Comparison of Distance and On-Campus Course Sequences

As many of you are undoubtedly aware, some certificants completed their required coursework through distance-education (e.g., online) programs. The BACB does periodically approve distance-education course sequences, as long as they meet all course-content and instructor requirements and are offered by fully accredited institutions of higher learning. Distance programs have been instrumental in offering behavior-analytic instruction to learners who are unable to attend on-campus programs. As such, these programs are an important resource in making behavior analysis more available. Distance



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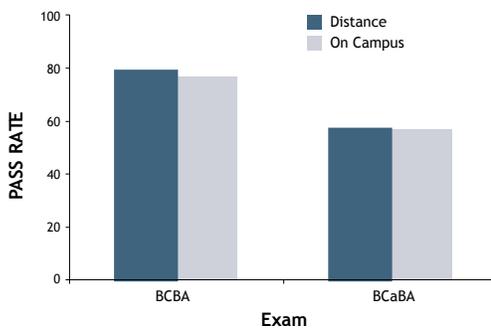
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programs represent the minority of training options. Currently, 12.8% of all approved course sequences are offered using a distance model. Data from three recent exam administrations show that 32.3% of applicants for the BCBA and BCaBA exams completed their coursework requirement in a distance course sequence.

An important question regarding the integrity of our certification programs is whether students educated in a distance program perform as well on the exams as those educated in an on-campus program. As can clearly be seen in the figure below, recent applicants who received training in a distance course sequence were just as likely to pass the BCBA or BCaBA exams as applicants who were educated in an on-campus program.



Pass rates for applicants taking the BCBA and BCaBA exams during the April/May 2010, September 2010, and January 2011 administration windows by program type (distance vs. on campus).

Of course, distance and on-campus programs might differ on other measures, much as on-campus programs might differ from each other. We will continue to evaluate data on our programs to educate you and, ultimately, keep improving the rigor and quality of our credentials.

News and Notes

BACB Names Dr. Jim Carr as New CEO

Beginning in January of 2012, Dr. Jim Carr, Ph.D., BCBA-D will serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the BACB, succeeding the current and founding CEO, Dr. Jerry Shook, Ph.D., BCBA-D. At the request of the BACB Board of Directors, Dr. Carr resigned his position on the BACB Board in March of 2011. Dr. Carr has since been providing part-time assistance to the BACB, while becoming more familiar and directly involved with the leadership, management, and day-to-day workings of the BACB. During this time, Dr. Carr has been overseeing and directing tasks related to certification and state legislative efforts. Dr. Carr will assume full-time CEO responsibilities with the BACB following conclusion of his responsibilities with the behavior analysis faculty at Auburn University at the end of this year.

Dr. Carr is currently and plans to continue to be an associate editor of the journals *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, *The Behavior Analyst*, and *The Analysis of Verbal Behavior* and is a past associate editor of *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*. He received his Ph.D. in 1996 from Florida State University and previously served on the behavior analysis faculties at University of Nevada-Reno (1996-1999) and Western Michigan University (1999-2008). The BACB welcomes Dr. Carr with open arms! During this transition and thereafter, Dr. Shook will continue his BACB services with selected and expanded duties regarding program development and expansion.

January 2011

Exam	Number of Candidates Who Took the Exam	Number of Candidates Who Passed the Exam	Percentage of Candidates Who Passed the Exam
BCBA	735	520	71%
BCaBA	207	110	53%

April/May 2011

Exam	Number of Candidates Who Took the Exam	Number of Candidates Who Passed the Exam	Percentage of Candidates Who Passed the Exam
BCBA	861	608	71%
BCaBA	284	144	51%



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Recent Examination Administrations

There have been two administrations of the BACB examinations since our last newsletter. During the January 2011 administration, 942 people took a BACB examination. During the April/May 2011 administration, 1,145 people took an examination. On the previous page is a breakdown of the numbers for each exam.

We anticipate that about 1,400 people will take a BACB exam during the administration that is currently in progress. The results for that administration should be available in mid-November, and will be posted online [here](#), along with the results from all of the past BACB exam administrations.

Online Approved Course Sequence Application

As you may know, the BACB Board of Directors approved a new Fourth Edition Exam Content Task List and increased coursework requirements last year. These new requirements will go into effect with the first examination of 2015.

With new requirements comes the need to conduct new approvals for course sequences. We're pleased that many university programs are already taking steps to align their coursework with the Fourth Edition requirements. In order to streamline the process, we have developed a new course sequence application that is entirely online. We have just recently introduced this application to the faculty contacts for currently approved course sequences and expect to begin processing Fourth Edition course sequence applications in the near future. We look forward to continuing to work with universities to identify coursework that meets the BACB's requirements.

If you are a contact for an approved course sequence and you have questions about the process, or if you are a faculty member who is interested in course sequence approval, please feel free to email ACS@BACB.com

Upcoming Conferences

We are always happy to participate in regional conferences, whenever possible. We will be at the Florida Association for Behavior Analysis (FABA) in September where we will have an exhibit booth and will deliver three

presentations about various aspects of the BACB. We will also give one presentation at the Berkshire Association for Behavior Analysis and Therapy (BABAT) conference in October. We look forward to seeing you there!

Operations Update

We often receive inquiries from certificants about where they can find information on upcoming continuing education events. In order to make this information more accessible to certificants, we have added a listing of provider events to our web site [here](#). Approved Continuing Education providers are encouraged to submit information about their upcoming events for publication on this page.

The [online certificant registry](#) is now updated every week. If you haven't viewed the registry lately, you'll notice that we now provide additional information, such as each individual's certification number, original certification date, and renewal, recertification, and expiration dates. We've found that these changes facilitate the verification process for third parties, such as insurance companies.

We're excited to share that we are planning to develop web applications for smart phones, so that you can easily access information from www.BACB.com on hand-held devices.

Finally, although the MyBACB system is usually available anytime, we strongly encourage you not to wait until the last minute to complete your online renewal or recertification applications. While the system is running smoothly, sometimes there are problems. We can fix them if you let us know you're having trouble. However, we recommend completing your online application by the 15th of the month in which it is due. This will allow sufficient time to address any processing problems well in advance of your certification expiration date. Also, please note that the MyBACB system operates on the Eastern time zone in the United States and assesses late fees accordingly, regardless of your location. Taking care of your applications early is the best way to avoid late fees.