December 11, 2019

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: John A. Elliott, Ph.D.
Provision and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: New Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve a new Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis.

BACKGROUND:

Behavior analysis is the science of behavior, based on the premise that attempting to improve the human condition through behavior change (e.g., education, behavioral health treatment) will be most effective if behavior itself is the primary focus. Behavior analytic assessment and intervention techniques are evidence-based and are considered the first-line mode of treatment in many areas, including development of academic and behavioral supports for individuals with developmental disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). In 2018, the CDC determined that approximately 1 in 59 youth is diagnosed with ASD. Behavior analysis is considered the “gold standard” for ASD treatment in school, home, and community settings. To ensure adequate competence in behavior analysis, the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) and Applied Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) developed the Board Certified Behavior Analyst credential. To obtain the credential, an individual needs to complete a Master’s degree and meet several other requirements.

BCBAs are in high demand, with hundreds of thousands of jobs left open nationally, and tens of thousands of jobs left open regionally. Connecticut and other states have passed legislation to license BCBAs and many insurance carriers reimburse for BCBA services. Analyses project the number of jobs will grow both nationally and regionally in the years to come. Each year, students in the School Psychology and Special Education Programs in the Neag School of Education at UConn take coursework at other universities to obtain their BCBA; further, these programs are contacted regularly with inquiries about if and when we are going to provide BCBA-aligned coursework. This certificate program fits this demonstrated need.

Currently, there are insufficient faculty at UConn who meet the instructor requirements determined by ABAI/BACB (i.e., holding a BCBA or BCBA-D credential) to provide all courses. As such, the certificate program will be a collaborative effort between the Institute for Professional Practice, Inc. (IPPI) and UConn. A memorandum of agreement has been drafted by the UConn General Counsel’s office which outlines that IPPI will assist with course development, will advertise the program, and will pay Neag the equivalent of four adjuncts and these funds to pay IPPI personnel to adjunct four courses. IPPI will strongly encourage, if not require, employees seeking the BCBA credential (which IPPI pays for) to enroll in the UConn program. IPPI has agreed to continue this arrangement annually until the certificate program is able to self-fund the adjunct positions. Due to this agreement, no additional financial resources are needed to provide the courses.
### General Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of degree program:</th>
<th>Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of sponsoring Department:</td>
<td>Educational Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of sponsoring College:</td>
<td>Neag School of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campuses:</td>
<td>Storrs, Program Entirely Online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact persons:</td>
<td>Associate Prof. Lisa Sanetti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of Proposal:</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Program:</td>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipated Initiation Date:</td>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipated Date of First Graduation:</td>
<td>Spring 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial program, approved by</td>
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<td>Provost’s Office:</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Tuition for the program approved by</td>
<td>Fee-based</td>
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<td>Provost’s Office:</td>
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<td>CIP Code:</td>
<td>42.2814 (Applied Behavior Analysis)</td>
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### Justification for the New Program

Behavior analysis is the science of behavior, based on the premise that attempting to improve the human condition through behavior change (e.g., education, behavioral health treatment) will be most effective if behavior itself is the primary focus. Behavior analytic assessment and intervention techniques are evidence-based and are considered the first-line mode of treatment in many areas, including development of academic and behavioral supports for individuals with developmental disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

In 2018, the CDC determined that approximately 1 in 59 youth is diagnosed with ASD. Behavior analysis is considered the “gold standard” for ASD treatment in school, home, and community settings. To ensure adequate competence in behavior analysis, the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) and Applied Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) developed the Board Certified Behavior Analyst credential. To obtain the credential, an individual needs to (a) complete a Master’s degree, (b) complete approved coursework in behavior analysis that aligns with the 5th Edition Task List of competencies (available here: https://www.bacb.com/bcba-bcba-task-list/) developed by the BACB (does not need to be a part of their Master’s degree, but can be), (c) complete a supervised clinical experience (can be separate from coursework), and (d) pass a certification examination.

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Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis

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Are there similar programs in CT or elsewhere?
There are numerous BCBA programs throughout the country. The BACB verifies that course sequences at programs align with the Task List credentials. This process allows program applicants to know that their coursework will be fully accepted toward the BCBA credential. A full list of “verified course sequences” is available here: https://www.abainternational.org/vcs/directory.aspx.

In Connecticut, Western Connecticut State University provides an on-line course sequence and the University of St. Joseph and Southern Connecticut State University provide in-person BCBA course sequences. (Note: Western Connecticut State University provides an in-person BCBA course sequence, which is for undergraduate students.)

The proposed course sequence will be submitted to be recognized as a “verified course sequence” when approved at UConn.

What are the desired learning outcomes of the program?
The learning outcomes are clearly defined by the 5th Edition Task List developed by ABAI; the number of hours spent on these areas are also defined by ABAI. Per the 5th Edition Task List, the knowledge and skills outcomes expected are divided into Foundations and Applications. Foundations includes competencies related to (a) philosophical underpinnings; (b) concepts and principles (90 hours across a and b); (c) measurement, data display, and interpretation; and (d) experimental design (45 hours across c and d). Applications includes (a) ethics (45 hours); (b) behavior assessment (45 hours), (c) behavior change procedures; (d) selecting and implementing interventions (60 hours across c and d); and (e) personnel supervision and management (30 hours).

Program Description
The Graduate Certificate in Behavior Analysis prepares graduates to be effective practitioners who can assess, design, implement, and evaluate applied behavior analysis (ABA) programs using ethical and professional practices and interactions. It is a seven-course (21-credit) graduate certificate program offered entirely online. The Graduate Certificate in Behavior Analysis is designed to fulfill the coursework requirements for Board Certification as a Behavior Analyst (BCBA). That is, the learning outcomes of the Graduate Certificate in Behavior Analysis are
Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis

aligned with the Behavior Analyst Certification Board accreditation agency’s Fifth Edition Task List and Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts. As such, it targets graduate students, working professionals, and others who are interested in obtaining their BCBA, gaining an in-depth knowledge of Applied Behavior Analysis, or engaging in continuing education.

The Graduate Certificate in Behavior Analysis includes 7 courses; 5 of these courses (EPSY 5461, EPSY 5462, EPSY 5463, EPSY 5464, EPSY 5465) are new and undergoing Curricula and Courses Committee review and 2 courses (EPSY 5405 and EPSY 6469) are already approved courses offered in person, that will be now also be made available online. Note that the content and learning outcomes of EPSY 5405 and EPSY 6469 are not being substantially modified to be offered online. The 7-course sequence can be completed in approximately one year; EPSY 5461 and EPSY 5462 can be completed in Summer 1, EPSY 5405 in Fall, EPSY 6469 in Spring, and EPSY 5463, EPSY 5464, and EPSY 5465 in Summer 2. Alternatively, these courses can be completed across multiple years. Courses are predominately offered in the summer because many individuals who are interested in obtaining the BCBA credential currently work in PK-12 settings or are already enrolled in a full-time Master’s program and thus have more time to dedicate to coursework during the summers.

The certificate requires completing all seven courses while maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or higher in each required course.

Proposed Graduate Catalogue Copy
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Required Courses: EPSY 5461, EPSY 5462, EPSY 5405, EPSY 5469, EPSY 5463, EPSY 5464, and EPSY 5465

This certificate is offered by the Neag School of Education.

Faculty Involvement
Dr. Lisa Sanetti in the School Psychology Program will be the primary faculty involved with administering this program. Dr. Brandi Simonsen and Craig Kennedy in the Special Education Program may also be involved in teaching and advising students in the program, as faculty who meet the instructor requirements dictated by ABAI/BACB.
Enrollment and graduate projections
We expect to admit 10-25 students per year, and to graduate 5-25 students per year.

Program Evaluation
The program will be evaluated in several ways. Annually the following data will be reviewed: (a) number of accepted applicants who matriculate, (b) prior/current institution of Master's degree, (c) diversity of applicants and matriculated students, (d) time to certificate completion, (e) student grades, (f) course evaluations, (g) percentage of students who obtain supervised clinical placements, (h) exit and alumni surveys and (i) percentage of students who pass the BCBA exam. If data suggest accepted students are not matriculating, we will work with CETL and the Neag School of Education Assessment Office to determine how we can obtain feedback about the reasons for not matriculating to inform program revisions.

We hope to recruit diverse students who are completing graduate degrees from increasingly diverse and high-quality institutions over time; these data may inform recruitment strategies. Time to certificate completion data will be used to understand how many students are completing in 12-14 months versus those who are taking longer to complete. We expect the majority of students to obtain a B or better in courses; if data suggest otherwise, faculty will reflect on course development, recruitment, and other supports that may be needed. Course evaluations will be reviewed after each term to inform iterative course improvement. Although UConn will not be responsible for overseeing or coordinating practicum placements for certificate students, data will be collected from students on if, when, and where they obtain BACB-aligned supervised clinical placements; we hope that 100% of students obtaining such placements during or immediately following coursework.

We will work with the Neag School of Education Assessment Office to develop both exit and alumni surveys to evaluate the program, determine time to BCBA exam, and employment in the field. The BACB will provide us with data on the percentage of UConn students who pass the BCBA exam; success would be at least 85% passing the exam their first time.

Program Administration
Admissions will occur twice per year, for entry in the Summer or Fall terms. All associated faculty will review application materials and offer admission to those applicants who meet the program requirements. No interview will be required.

Each certificate student will be advised by Dr. Lisa Sanetti, with assistance from other associated faculty as needed. Dr. Lisa Sanetti will hold an annual meeting for associated faculty and any interested clinical supervisors of current/former students to provide input about the program
processes and outcomes so that oversight of the program is informed by numerous stakeholders. Programmatic changes will be made by consensus of associated faculty based on the evaluation data outlined above, input from stakeholders, and within the guidance of the BACB Task List content and hours requirements.

Funding and Financial Resources Needed
Currently, there are insufficient faculty at UConn who meet the instructor requirements determined by ABAI/BACB (i.e., holding a BCBA or BCBA-D credential) to provide all courses. As such, the certificate program will be a collaborative effort between the Institute for Professional Practice, Inc. (IPPI) and UConn.

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Due to this agreement, no additional financial resources are needed to provide the courses. The Department of Educational Psychology has agreed to pay for the application fee ($500) and annual renewal fee ($250) for being a “verified course sequence” to ABAI, until the program is able to self-fund these dues.

Other Resource Needs
Resources related to course development will be needed from CETL. CETL is aware of the development of these courses and has approved the timeline for course buildout and delivery.

Consultation with other potentially affected units
Course and certificate development have been completed in consultation with faculty who teach the existing EPSY 5405 and EPSY 6469, and they are supportive. Further, the EPSY faculty have been consulted about development of this certificate and are fully supportive as demonstrated by their unanimous vote for the certificate courses on Sept 6, 2019.

Internal and external applicants can apply to this program.

Anticipated term and year of first enrollment
Summer 2020

Admission Requirements
Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis

A personal statement that describes your interest in pursuing a Graduate Certificate in Behavior Analysis, your ultimate plans, and any formal or informal experiences you have had with behavior analysis.

Three letters of reference from individuals who can address the candidate’s potential for success. For those that have been in the workforce for an extended period of time, these letters may be from professionals, although it is preferable to include at least one academic reference.

Current resume or CV.

Unofficial transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate schools attended regardless of whether a degree was received.

Official transcripts mailed to The Graduate School (see address below). Please note that official transcripts from students previous educational experience at UConn are not required.

Successful candidates normally meet the recommended 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA.

Demonstrated English Proficiency (does not apply to native English speakers) as measured by the TOEFL (minimum overall score of 550 for the paper-based test or 79 for the internet-based test) or IELTS (minimum average overall score of at least 6.5).

Required for application:
- Personal Statement
- Three Letters of Recommendation

Term(s) to which students will be admitted
- Fall
- Summer

Unsure of application deadline at this time.

Initiator
Jane Gordon, jane.gordon@uconn.edu, 401-258-9204

Program Director Name
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Lisa Sanetti, lisa.sanetti@uconn.edu