



Docket Item:

University Program Approval: Oregon Tech, Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis (MS-ABA)

Summary:

Oregon Tech proposes a new degree program leading to a Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis. Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) staff completed a review of the proposed program. After analysis, HECC staff recommends approval of the program as proposed.

Staff Recommendation:

The HECC recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission approve the following program: Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis at Oregon Tech.

Oregon Tech seeks the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission's approval to offer an instructional program leading to a M.S. degree in Applied Behavior Analysis.

1. *Describe the purpose and relationship of the proposed program to the institution's mission and strategic plan.*

The mission of the Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis (MS-ABA) program is to enable students to become effective and ethical behavior analysts. Students will be prepared to apply principles of behavior analysis to enhance the lives of individuals across a wide variety of settings. The program emphasizes a foundation in theory, concepts, and principles, development of basic behavior analytic skills, and an emphasis on professional and ethical responsibilities.

Program Objectives

- (1) To produce competent graduates who can work effectively and ethically across settings and with diverse populations.
- (2) To enable students to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for immediate employment in ABA and/or further graduate study in ABA and related areas.
- (3) To prepare students for national certification and Oregon licensure as behavior analysts.

Relationship to Mission and Strategic Plan

The MS in Applied Behavior Analysis clearly supports Oregon Tech's mission to provide rigorous, high quality applied degree programs designed to meet accreditation standards, focus on the application of theory to practice, and offer statewide educational opportunities for emerging needs.

Applied Degree Program: Applied Behavior Analysis is an applied field and the courses provide a strong foundation in theory with a focus on application to practice. The MS-ABA curriculum emphasizes a strong theoretical foundation and hands-on application through supervised practicum and thesis requirements.

Rigorous, High Quality Program: The MS-ABA curriculum includes the nine-course sequence that has been evaluated and approved by the BACB® as meeting the course work requirements for eligibility to take the national certification exam. The curriculum has been designed to meet the accreditation standards of the Behavior Analysis Accreditation Board (BAAB).

Statewide Educational Opportunities: The MS-ABA will build upon the Graduate Certificate in ABA and continue to offer coursework and practicum sites to students throughout Oregon. The Graduate Certificate offers courses to students via synchronous video-conferencing (Zoom), combining the ease of access of an online program with the intimate interactivity of an on-campus program.

plan/strategic-action-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=4). The MS-ABA is clearly aligned with the university's strategic priorities. The MS-ABA is an applied degree program designed to ensure student and graduate success, and provide statewide educational opportunities. The MS-ABA program will contribute to the achievement of Oregon Tech's five strategic goals in the following ways.

Goal 1: Student Success – The MS-ABA is designed to foster student success by providing a degree that prepares students to meet the workforce demand for the highly qualified behavior analysts, providing statewide access to courses and practicum opportunities, maintaining low in-class student-to-faculty ratios, and establishing practicum opportunities with industry partners throughout Oregon.

Goal 2: Faculty and Staff Success – The MS-ABA curriculum requires students to complete a thesis. This requirement provides faculty with the opportunity to engage in applied research, allowing faculty to be supported in their professional development. The rigorous curriculum and thesis requirements will attract and contribute to the retention of faculty who are passionate about their profession and eager to share that passion with students.

Goal 3: Economic and Workforce Connections – The Oregon Talent Council has identified behavioral health workers as a pivotal, high demand occupation. The MS-ABA is designed to contribute to the economic development of Oregon by providing the education and training needed to meet this mission-critical workforce demand and is built upon our positive relationships with industry partners. The statewide focus of the program will allow us to meet the workforce demand in urban and rural areas of the state and to serve all Oregonians.

Goal 4: Student Access and Diversity – The MS-ABA program is designed to facilitate student access, providing the options for face-to-face courses that can be attended on campus or via Zoom. Statewide access to the program is especially beneficial for students in rural areas of the state. Diversity in the student population is desirable and students from rural areas and from underserved populations will be encouraged to apply.

Goal 5: University Financial Success – The MS-ABA will attract new students to the university, thus contributing to enrollment growth and the financial success of the university. The MS-ABA may attract students to our undergraduate ABA programs as well as attracting our recent graduates to return to Oregon Tech for the MS degree.

2. *What evidence of need does the institution have for the program?*

Behavior analysts are in high demand in a variety of behavioral health and industry related areas. The need for behavior analysts to provide ABA services to children with autism is particularly urgent. However, ABA is not limited to serving families and individuals affected by autism. Behavior analysts provide services across a wide variety of populations (including autism, intellectual and developmental disabilities, psychological impairment, and traumatic brain injury as well as typically-developed populations) and work in a variety of settings (homes, clinics, schools, organizations, and in the community) to enhance independence, productivity, manage performance, and reduce harm. As the applicability of behavioral

population of children with autism. Oregon Tech is working with three ABA providers to establish practicum sites. Centria HealthCare, Cascade Behavioral Interventions, and A Hope for Autism have joined with Oregon Tech in order to meet their growing workforce needs.

The MS-ABA program will provide a pathway for professionals entering or already working in the autism field to earn the credential they need in order to continue to provide these services in Oregon under the new administrative rules established by the Behavior Analysis Regulatory Board (BARB). The MS-ABA also provides the foundation in ABA that prepares professionals to pursue employment as behavior analysts across populations and settings.

3. *Are there similar programs in the state? If so, how does the proposed program supplement, complement, or collaborate with those programs?*

No other colleges or universities in Oregon currently offer a Master's of Science degree in Applied Behavior Analysis. Oregon Tech offers a graduate certificate in ABA. Portland State offers the courses through their online special education programs. The University of Oregon offers a BACB® approved course sequence on-campus as a component of their special education and school psychology programs. Oregon Tech and Southern Oregon University offer a joint, one-year, Master's in Education degree with emphasis in Autism Spectrum Disorder and Applied Behavior Analysis. Oregon Tech currently collaborates with SOU to offer the joint MEd in ABA/ASD.

The proposed MS-ABA is distinctly different from these programs in scope and emphasis. The MS-ABA focuses specifically on applied behavior analysis and applications beyond special education and provides an alternative to online programs. We will continue to collaborate with Southern Oregon University to offer the joint MEd degree. Oregon Tech's supervised practicum course may be attractive to students in ABA programs that lack the practicum component. We will continue to explore opportunities to collaborate.

All appropriate University committees and the Statewide Provosts Council have unanimously approved the proposed program. The Oregon Tech Board of Trustees approved the program on March 3, 2017.

Recommendation to the Commission

The Statewide Provosts Council recommends that the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission authorize Oregon Tech to establish an instructional program leading to a Master of Science (M.S.) degree in Applied Behavior Analysis, effective Fall 2017.

Institution: Oregon Tech
Program: M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis

Action: At the May 4, 2017 meeting, the Statewide Provosts Council approved a new program for Oregon Tech, M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis, to move forward to the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission for its review and approval. The Oregon Tech Board of Trustees approved it at their March 3, 2017 meeting.

Eastern Oregon University

Sarah Witte, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



Oregon Health & Science University

Elena Andresen, interim provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



Oregon State University

Ed Feser, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



Oregon Tech

LeAnn Maupin, acting provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



Portland State University

Sona Andrews, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



Southern Oregon University

Susan Walsh, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



University of Oregon

Scott Coltrane, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



Western Oregon University

Steve Scheck, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained

