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Oklahoma Enacts Behavior Analyst Licensing Law Using BACB Model

Gerald L. Shook, PhD, BCBA-D

On May 5th the Governor of Oklahoma signed into law [a behavior analyst licensing act](#), which uses active BACB certifications as the basis for obtaining and maintaining the license. The BACB worked with certifiants, government agencies, parent advocates and the Oklahoma legislature to develop this important law.

Oklahoma has a long history of supporting behavior analysis and behavior analyst certification. In the 1990s, it was the first state to use the Florida certification model and examination as the basis of its own state certification program. Shortly after the BACB was established, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services made arrangements to transfer its certifiants to the BACB, closed down its state certification program, and has relied on the BACB to credential behavior analysts in Oklahoma.

Over a year ago Tom Evans, PhD, BCBA-D, who is a government official in the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, approached the BACB with a challenge. The State was interested in developing more behavior analysis services for individuals with autism and had formed a powerful coalition of BACB certifiants, government agencies, parent advocates, university representatives, and legislators who were committed to the effort. At that time, the group had legislation before the 2008 Oklahoma Legislature to fund a behavior analyst Graduate training program at the University of Central Oklahoma to prepare students to take the BCBA examination (This legislation was later passed into law during the 2008 session and Rita Chandler, PhD, BCBA-D was charged with developing the program).

After carefully considering the alternatives within the context of Oklahoma law, the coalition had determined that the best approach for Oklahoma was to pursue licensure for behavior analysts during the upcoming 2009 Legislative Session. There was strong support for this approach across all of the relevant players, with little apparent meaningful opposition, and the coalition was confident it could pass the law. The BACB agreed with the coalition's assessments and accepted Tom's challenge.

There was agreement between Oklahoma and the BACB on the preferred licensing structure to be proposed. The licensure act would use active BACB certification as its basis: Individuals would have to be active BCBA's and BCaBA's to obtain and maintain their respective licenses. Oklahoma would form a board for the new profession within the Department of Human Services to issue the licenses and deal with disciplinary matters (which would be coordinated with the BACB disciplinary process).

The [BACB Model Licensure Act](#) was developed in conjunction with the [Oklahoma law](#), and the two documents share basic components. This BACB certification-based licensing approach is attractive to states because it is based on the well-respected and nationally-accredited BACB certifications, which adhere to the same stringent requirements as do state licensure programs. States are assured of the integrity of these credentials because



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both of the BACB certifications hold the rigorous accreditation of the National Council for Certifying Agencies. States know that as long as the BACB certifications hold this accreditation, they will have met the highest professional standards.

In addition, the BACB Model Act is uncomplicated and reasonably easy for states to implement. It is cost-effective and, aside from the disciplinary board, virtually cost-neutral for states to operate, an important consideration in these difficult economic times. This cost savings is passed on to certificants as well, as they can benefit from the BACB's ability to spread examination development and administrative costs across an international population. Certificants also benefit from state use of the BACB program because it ensures that the examination and continuing education requirements are controlled by the field, rather than individual state legislatures that are politically driven.

The behavior analyst licensure bill was brought before the 2009 Oklahoma

Legislature earlier this year. As is typically the case, the bill was sliced and diced by legislators, special interests, government agencies, and lobbyists of other professions as it bounced back and forth between House and Senate committees. The BACB worked closely with legislative staff and had input on bill language in every step of this process. This systematic, coordinated and arduous effort was successful, resulting in the passage of this very good bill into law on May 5, 2009.

At this point, behavior analyst licensure is not appropriate for every state. Many states have formidable enemies to this licensure that will require well-organized behavior analysts, supportive parent advocates, well-connected lobbyists, and big money to overcome. Occasionally the stars line up in a state, however, and opportunities present themselves to the observer who is looking for them. Such was the case in Oklahoma, where Tom Evans and members of a powerful coalition found themselves in a unique situation and forced the stars into alignment for the great benefit of children with autism.

European Association for Behaviour Analysis Endorses BACB Certifications

Gerald L. Shook, PhD, BCBA-D

The European Association for Behavior Analysis has formally endorsed BACB certifications "as standards for professional practice in Europe and commits to help with their dissemination in Europe". The BACB recognizes that EABA is the reference for behavior analysis in Europe, and is an allied institution in spreading behavior analysis and BACB credential recognition in Europe.

Last month, European Association for Behavior Analysis (EABA) Executive Board members met with the BACB CEO during the Experimental Analysis of Behavior Group Conference in London. The group discussed how the two organizations might collaborate to increase training and BACB certification recognition in Europe. The group reached agreement on the following three initiatives as starting points for the cooperative effort:

- Creation of a joint EABA/BACB panel on certification issues in Europe,
- Formal [endorsement](#) of BACB credentials by EABA, and
- Translation of essential BACB website content by the EABA to be posted on the BACB website
- The EABA Executive Board will meet with the BACB Board of Directors at the latter's annual meeting later this month to continue discussions on how the two organizations might work together to further behavior analysis training and certification recognition in Europe.

EABA Executive Board

- President: **Erik Arntzen**, Norway
- Secretary: **Javier Virues-Ortega**, Spain
- Treasurer: **Giovambattista (Nanni) Presti**, Italy
- Applied Science Representative: **Neil Martin**, UK
- Basic Science Representative: **Ricardo Pellón**, Spain



Did You Know?



- More than 600 people have applied for the BCBA-D designation. Individuals holding this designation are now identified as such on the Certificant Registry.
- At least 5,000 certifiants have email addresses on record with the BACB.
- Each certificant needs a unique email address in order to access the online certification management system. If you typically share an email address with another person, please be sure that each of you has a unique address on file with the BACB.
- There are 152 universities that have BACB approved course sequences; 31 of these universities are outside of the United States. About 25% of the 152 universities have approved practicum.
- 2009 marks the ten year anniversary of the BACB first assuming the behavior analyst certification responsibility from the State of Florida.

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Online Certification Management

We are happy to see that a number of certifiants have taken advantage of our new online certification management system (available at <http://portal.bacb.com>). If you haven't already done so, please take a few minutes to create your account and have a look at your online profile. If you have any difficulty please let us know at info@bacb.com, so that we can troubleshoot the problem for you. The online certification management system will allow you to change your contact information online and manage your preferences for being listed in the online registry of certifiants.

You can also keep track of your continuing education hours using this system. The CE management section allows you to input the pertinent information about CE events you have attended. Currently, you can self-report Type 2 (approved) CE events. In the future, we anticipate having the approved providers upload this information to reduce the need for paper certificates and auditing. Please note that you will need some basic information, such as the provider number, from your CE certificates if you are entering Type 2 events. If you have lost track of any Type 2 certificates, you may need to contact the provider for that information.

If you have attended BACB-sponsored Type 5 CE events, such as item writing or exam review events, the BACB staff will enter that information directly into your online profile.

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, this system will allow you to complete your renewal and recertification applications online and pay securely with a credit card. As always, renewal and recertification forms are available for download at www.BACB.com. However, we encourage you to use the online system to complete your application while saving time and trees!

In response to the growing number of BCaBAs and individuals pursuing certification that are in need of supervision, we have included some questions in the online profile for BCaBAs to indicate whether they are interested in serving as supervisors. This information will be incorporated into the Certificant Registry in the near future.

Hemingway Award Winner

The Behavior Analyst certification Board is pleased to name Fran Warkomski, EdD, BCBA-D as the 2009 recipient of the Michael Hemingway Award for her contributions to behavior analysis and BACB certification. As Director of the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network,



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Fran formed a partnership between the Department of Education and Penn State University to develop a statewide distance-learning program to prepare individuals for certification. Prior to the formation of the BACB, she established the Pennsylvania Behavior Analyst Credentialing Program within the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The Pennsylvania program was based on the successful Florida model, and Fran worked closely with Michael Hemingway to learn about the Florida program and gain access to the Florida examination, which formed the basis of the Pennsylvania program. Because the program was consistent with the Florida model, individuals who were credentialed in Pennsylvania could transfer to the BACB once it was established. Although her professional training was in the field of speech pathology and audiology, Fran elected to participate in the university training, take the examination, and become certified. Fran partnered again with Penn State to develop the annual National Autism Conference, which is over a decade old and has become one of the largest autism conferences in the world. From its inception, the conference has had a strong ABA emphasis and has featured presentations from some of the nation's preeminent behavior analysts. Fran later became the Director of the Bureau of Special Education for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and held the distinction of being the highest-ranking government official who was also a BCBA. Fran Warkowski is currently the Executive Director of the Scott Center for Autism Treatment at Florida Institute of Technology.

New Members of the BACB Board of Directors

The results of the recent Directors Election are in, and the following individuals have been elected by certificants to three-year terms: [Judy Favell](#), PhD, BCBA-D

(reelected to a second term), [James Carr](#), PhD, BCBA-D (first term), and [Deborah Harris](#), BCaBA (first term). Please click on the individual director's name for information on them. Nearly 20% of eligible certificants participated in the election, which is an extremely good "turn-out" for an election of this nature. We extend our congratulations to the newly-elected directors and offer our thanks to all of the candidates for running. We also wish to thank all of the certificants who nominated candidates and who voted in this important election. For information on the BACB director election process please [click here](#).

Appreciation of Service

The BACB wishes to thank directors Ray Romanczyk, PhD, BCBA-D and Crystal Harms, MEd, BCaBA for their service as members of the Board of Directors. Ray rotates off the Board after serving two terms. He brought critical insight from a broad perspective to the Board and helped us look at all sides of difficult issues. Crystal leaves the Board after three years of service. She was the BCaBA Representative on the Board and brought that perspective as well as that of a real-world practitioner. We appreciate the exemplary service of both of these individuals and we encourage you to express your thanks to them for a difficult task that was well-done.

BCBA-D Application Deadline

The deadline for submitting your application for BCBA-D under the current standards is June 1, 2009. The BACB Board of Directors will be reviewing this credential at its annual meeting at the end of this month and may make recommendations that could result in expanded qualification requirements. All qualified CBAs with Doctorates are encouraged to apply. Please [click here](#) for information on the BCBA-D





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BACB @ ABAI

The BACB is pleased to participate again in the annual convention held by the Association for Behavior Analysis, International. Below are some events that may be of interest to certificants:

FRIDAY - TUESDAY

BACB Exhibit

5/22/2009 – 5/26/2009 (Friday - Tuesday)

See ABAI program for booth hours and exhibit area location

SATURDAY

Behavior Analyst Certification Board: Introduction & Application

Chair: Christine L. Ratcliff (Behavior Analyst Certification Board)

Business Meeting #114

Saturday, 5/23

7:30PM – 8:20PM

North 124 A

SUNDAY

Behavior Analyst Certification Board: International Development

Chair: Gerald L. Shook (Behavior Analyst Certification Board)

Business Meeting #144

Sunday, 5/24

8:00AM – 8:50AM

North 124 A

Type 5 CE available through BACB

Behavior Analyst Certification Board: University Contact Faculty

Chair: Gerald L. Shook (Behavior Analyst Certification Board)

Business Meeting #324

Sunday, 5/24

7:00PM – 7:50PM

North 124 A

MONDAY

Behavior Analyst Certification Board: Status & New Developments

Chair: Gerald L. Shook (Behavior Analyst Certification Board)

Business Meeting #497

Monday, 5/25

7:30PM – 8:20PM

North 124 A

Type 5 CE available through BACB

TUESDAY

Professional Development Series: Aspects of Being a BCBA

Chair: Erick Dubuque (Univ of Nevada, Reno)

Panel Member: Christine L. Ratcliff (Behavior Analyst Certification Board)

Panel Discussion #523

Tuesday, 5/26

9:00AM – 10:20AM

North 122 BC