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Professional Conduct

The BACB awards certificates at two levels. At present, an individual earns a BCABA certificate by documenting a baccalaureate degree, 90 contact hours of coursework, 6-12 months of supervised or mentored experience, and passing a written examination. The BCBA certificate requires a master's degree, 180 hours of coursework, 9-18 months of supervised or mentored experience, and passing a written examination. The coursework component of both sets of standards will increase for the fall 2005 examination.

These standards are the result of considerable deliberation by the BACB. Although each certificate represents a meaningful and valuable level of achievement in behavior analysis, they are importantly different, and the BACB has articulated these differences and their implications for practice. In describing the [Work Circumstances](#) associated with these certificates, the BACB summarizes the general skill areas for each certificate and adds in each case an important clarification. The concluding sentence for BCABAs states:

It is strongly recommended that the BCBA supervise the work of Board Certified Associate Behavior Analysts and others who implement behavior analytic interventions.

The concluding sentence for BCABAs reiterates this caution:

It is strongly recommended that the BCABA practice under the supervision of a BCBA, and that those governmental entities regulating BCABAs require this supervision.

These sentences leave no doubt that the BACB urges that both certificants and employers recognize that the BCABA represents an importantly different level of achievement from that represented by the BCBA certificate. The State of California has responded by issuing regulations requiring supervision of BCABAs who work with people in the community with persons with developmental disabilities, and other states are considering formalization of a supervision requirement for BCABAs.

The implication of this distinction is clarified in the [Guidelines for Responsible Conduct for Behavior Analysts](#) in paragraph 1.2.1:

Competence. Behavior analysts provide services, teach, and conduct research only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, or appropriate professional experience.

In sum, the BACB has made it clear that BCABAs should offer services only under the supervision of a BCBA. In general, the amount and nature of supervision required will be dictated by a number of factors including, but not limited to, the BCABA's experience and training with the presenting problem; the potential for physical risk presented by the behavior involved or the intervention to be used; the history of the BCABA in intervening successfully under similar conditions; and contractual stipulations regarding supervision with the BCABA's client. The BACB will be considering the particulars of supervision over the upcoming year and is likely to provide additional guidance on this matter in the future.



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Job Analysis Results

Conducting a job analysis is one of the major steps in developing a valid credentialing examination. A job analysis defines the body of knowledge required for competent practice of the profession and is mandated by both accepted standards of best psychometric practices and case law in this area. The BACB recently completed a new job analysis associated with the Third Edition Task List, which will be the basis for examinations starting in the fall of 2005.

This job analysis began in 1998 by bringing together a group of experts in the field to consider whether changes should be made to the Second Edition Task List. In 1999, a larger expert panel was formed to continue the work of drafting a revised Task List. A pilot version of a job analysis survey was then evaluated with still another expert panel, the results of which allowed preparation of a survey instrument.

A cohort consisting of all certificants at both levels, as well as approximately one-third of the full members of the Association for Behavior Analysis, was invited to participate in an electronic survey process. The results of this survey were published in the Spring 2004 issue of *The Behavior Analyst*, and this newsletter article only summarizes a few points of interest.

This survey is important not only because it constitutes the mechanism for determining the essential content for practitioners in behavior analysis but because it constitutes a rare study of some aspects of the field of applied behavior analysis. Many of the survey findings are demographic in nature. For instance, the mean age in years of respondents was **36.7** for BCABAs, **40.5** for BCBAs, and **51.6** for those full members of ABA who participated in the survey. Of the total sample, 45% were male, but 78% and 56% of BCABAs and BCBAs, respectively, were female. Other demographic information reported for the BCABA, BCBA, and ABA cohorts showed

education background, years of professional experience, the primary source of training in behavior analysis, position title or career track, and the primary client population worked with.

The primary task of respondents was to evaluate the importance of each of the Third Edition Tasks in the 10 content areas for each level of certificant. The data showed that respondents viewed each of the content

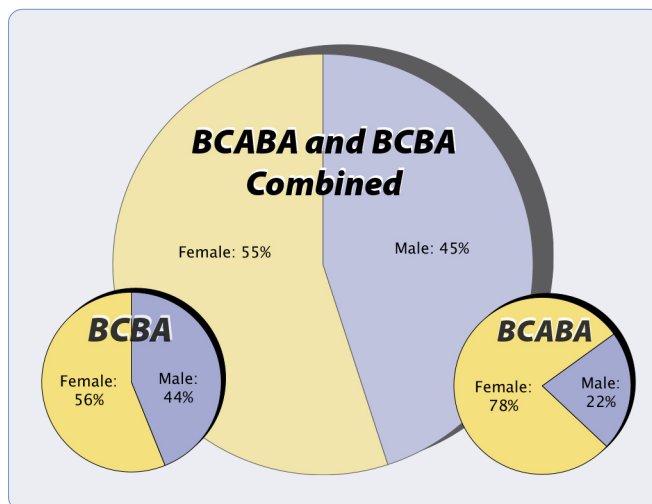


Fig. 1 Gender demographics

areas as relatively important, especially for BCBAs, although all areas were rated well above the midpoint for BCABAs as well. This assessment was also remarkably consistent across different areas of career interests (e.g., OBM, education, behavior therapy, psychology). These findings suggest that the core knowledge defining minimum competencies for applied behavior analysts are widely agreed on in the field.

The article in *The Behavior Analyst* describes these and more findings in detail. The report makes clear that the certification program is having a systematic influence on graduate training curricula in behavior analysis.

Shook, G.L., Johnston, J.M., Mellichamp, F.H. (2004). *Determining essential content for applied behavior analyst practitioners. The Behavior Analyst*, 27, 67-94.



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Recent Developments

New features recently were added to the [BACB Registry of Certificants](#) page on BACB.com in order to increase its usability for both consumers and certificants. The new page allows visitors to find certificants by their last name, city, state (US), country (international), or to enter a zip code & mile radius to find up to 100 certificants, within the mile radius, closest to that zip code. Visitors may email individual certificants (without having the certificant's email address accessible to the visitor). Certificants may opt out of the email feature by contacting the BACB at info@BACB.com.

A new feature also was added to the [Approved University Courses](#) page. It illustrates universities with BACB-approved course sequences as dots on a map, lists the name and location of the university if visitors hover over the dot, and takes visitors to the university listing within our traditional alphabetical listing of universities if you click on the dot/name. The alphabetical listing indicates if the university coursework is approved at the



Fig. 2 Interactive Map on BACB.com

BACB and/or BCABA level, allows the visitor to email the university contact faculty with questions or for more information, and, for many university listings, provides a link to the university website. We believe this new map feature, coupled with the alphabetical listing, will provide information and easy access to behavior analysis programs and information for BACB.com visitors.

Did you know that...



- The total number of certificants, including recent transfers from Florida, is over 3,200.
- The annual increase in certificants continues to be positively accelerated.
- The BACB has approved 77 course sequences in 63 universities as meeting the coursework requirements for taking the BCBA or BCABA examination.
- Seven of these BACB approved course sequence are offered within a distance learning format.
- There are eight BACB approved course sequences in countries outside of the United States.
- During 2004 the BACB will have examination administration sites throughout the United States as well as Cambridge, England; Dublin, Ireland; Toronto, Canada; and Tel-Aviv, Israel, with a New Zealand site to be added soon.
- The latest BACB developments relevant to certificants are always listed at the beginning of the Maintain Certification page on BACB.com.



Recertification

As you know, BACB certificants must earn continuing education units (CEUs) during their recertification cycle and provide documentation, upon request, to the BACB in order to retain certification. During this cycle, which is typically three years, BCBAs must earn 36 CEUs, and BCABAs must earn 24 CEUs ([click here for Recertification Standards](#)). Because limited CE opportunities were available when the BACB was first established, early certificants were given a one-time extension of their recertification cycle until 2005 ([click here to see extension policy in Attachment 1 of the Standards](#)).

The first BACB recertification cycle ends for many BCBAs and BCABAs in 2005. Because this will be the first time certificants, and the BACB, go through the recertification process, certificants have asked a number of questions regarding standards, policy, and the recertification process itself. Most of these questions are relevant to all BACB certificants, including those whose recertification cycle does not end in 2005, so the BACB strongly encourages all certificants to read the following Questions & Answers.



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Recertification Q & A's

Q: I am an early certificant who had their recertification cycle extended. How many CEUs am I required to have for my initial recertification?

A: You will be required to have the same number as you would for a typical three-year cycle: 36 for BCBAs, and 24 for BCABAs.

Q: Do all of the CEUs I earn have to be Type 2 "approved" continuing education or are there other ways for me to satisfy the recertification requirement?

A: No, you may fulfill your continuing education requirement in a number of ways. The types of continuing education are summarized below ([click here for the complete policy](#)). Please refer to the policy for a complete description.

Type 1 CE: Completion of graduate level university courses (for BCBAs), or undergraduate or graduate university courses (for BCABAs). Course content must be entirely behavior analytic. Any portion or all of the total required number of hours of continuing education may be applied from this category during any certification period. (Here's a good reason to enroll in that course you've wanted to take from the local university or through a university's distance learning program).

Type 2 CE: Completion of events sponsored by providers approved by the BACB. Any portion or all of the total required number of hours of continuing education may be applied from this category during any certification period. (This is the "approved" CE offered at conferences and through other Approved Continuing Education (ACE) Providers – [click here for the list of ACE Providers](#)).

Type 3 CE: Completion of events not approved by the BACB, only if they relate directly to the



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practice of behavior analysis. Up to 25% of your CE may come from this category. (Did you attend a conference session that was not "approved", or attend a local behavior analytic presentation of at least 50 minutes duration? You may be able to count these presentations under this category).

Type 4 CE: Instruction by the certificant of Type 1 or Type 2 CE events. Up to 25% of your CE may come from this category. (If you taught an appropriate behavior analytic university course or presented Type 2 events approved by an ACE Provider, you may be able to count your presentations under this category).

Type 5 CE: Credentialing events or activities initiated and pre-approved for CE by the BACB. Up to 25% of your CE may come from this category. (If you participated in any of the BACB-sponsored events such as KSA writing, test question writing, pilot testing, subject matter expert panels, or other events, you may apply them to up to 25% of your requirement).

Type 6 CE: Retaking and passing the appropriate certification examination during your final year of the recertification cycle. This fulfills your entire recertification requirement. (This is probably the least expensive means to satisfy the requirement).

Q: How can I find out when my recertification cycle ends and when I have to recertify?

A: Look on your certificate for the "Recertification Date." Your recertification application must be postmarked 45 days before this date (for example, if your recertification date is June 30, you must postmark by May 15; or if your recertification date is December 31, you must postmark by November 15). If you do not have your certificate, you may email the BACB to find out ([click here to send an email](#)). The BACB will send out recertification reminders via email and the US Postal Service.

Q: What documentation do I need for the BACB for the various types of CE?

A: The documentation currently required for each type of CE is listed after the type of CE on the Recertification Standards ([Click here for the Recertification Standards](#)

[and documentation requirements](#)) and is summarized below. Please refer to the Standards for a complete description. Note that the documentation required for some types of CE changes at the end of 2005.

Type 1: Course syllabus & transcript

Type 2: Certificate from ACE provider

Type 3: Attestation signed and dated by the certificant.

Type 4: Any verifiable documentation (including course syllabus, program agenda, letter from university or ACE coordinator, etc)

Type 5: Letter/certificate from BACB

Type 6: Copy of grade report indicating pass

Q: Should I send my documentation to the BACB at least 45 days prior to my expiration date as part of my application?

A: No, the BACB will do a random sampling process and will not review the documentation of all certificants. You should send in your application by the deadline and keep all of your documentation. Documentation should not be sent with the recertification application. The BACB will notify you if you are part of the sample that will be required to submit your documentation to the BACB, and you will be required to do so within 30 days of notification. ([Click here for a complete description of the recertification process](#)).

Q: What happens if I don't submit the proper materials or if the documentation I submit does not meet the BACB's requirements?

A: If documentation is not received or documentation submitted does not meet the BACB's requirements, then the person's certification will be placed on time-limited delinquent status until the necessary documentation is provided or the matter is otherwise resolved through the BACB's standards. ([Click here for a complete description of the recertification process](#)).