



# Teaching as Applied Behavior Analysis Graduate Student Handbook

## Order of Sections

Purpose and Introduction  
Faculty  
Program Information  
    Objectives  
    Attendance Requirements  
    Minimum Grades  
    Internship Requirements  
    Additional Needs  
    Yearly Evaluations  
    Master of Philosophy  
    Certification Exam  
    Dissertation  
    Institutional Review Board  
    Graduation  
    Transfer Credits  
Credentials  
Internship and Teacher Certification  
Current Internship Sites  
Navigating Teacher Certification  
BCBA/LBA Information  
International Student Resources  
Graduate Student Program Opportunities  
College Policies  
Helpful Links and Resources  
Tuition and Aid  
Frequently Asked Questions  
Table 1 (MA course sequence)  
Table 2 (PhD courses)

## Purpose and Introduction

Welcome to the Teaching as Applied Behavior Analysis (TABA) program! The purpose of this handbook is to articulate program policies and expectations. Enrolled students should read and refer to this handbook for guidance about the program. The TABA program is one of the Special Education programs in the Department of Health Studies and Applied Educational Psychology. Other Special Education programs include Intellectual Disabilities and Autism program and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program.

In our Master's, Certificate, and Doctoral program in TABA, we focus on the development of a strategic science of teaching to improve the educational attainment of young children. A strategic science of teaching involves using evidence-based procedures to improve teaching, collecting continuous data and making instructional decisions based on those data, and adapting teaching to meet each child's developmental level. We do not believe teaching is an art. While teaching does involve creativity, it is crucial to recognize that the foundation of effective teaching lies in scientifically-validated practices that drive learning and development. We believe teaching can be objectively defined, measured, and replicated across teachers and interventionists. Philosophically, our program aligns with Applied Behavior Analysis, with a focus on behavior-environment functional relations.

The TABA PhD program is an extension of the Master's program. During the Master's portion of the program, students learn 1) to speak and write scientifically (verbal behavior about the science), 2) to respond to children's behavior (contingency-shaped repertoires), and 3) to analyze data and make informed decisions about instruction (verbally-mediated repertoires).

The TABA PhD program builds on the competencies mastered during the Master's program to focus on 1) mastery of research methodology competences, 2) mastery of a wide variety of research areas, and 3) supervision and leadership in Applied Behavior Analysis and education, broadly. During the PhD program, students take research classes related to single-subject designs, group designs, in statistical methods. Students conduct research on an ongoing basis that culminates in the dissertation. An important aspect of the program is mentoring MA students and developing leadership repertoires.

Specific to the doctoral program

TC website for Master's program: <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/health-and-behavior-studies/applied-behavior-analysis/degrees--requirements/applied-behavior-analysis-ma-dual/>

TC website for ABA Certificate (dually enroll in this program to qualify for NY Licensed Behavior Analyst credential: <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/health-and-behavior-studies/applied-behavior-analysis/degrees--requirements/applied-behavior-analysis-cert/>

TC website for Doctoral program: <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/health-and-behavior-studies/applied-behavior-analysis/degrees--requirements/applied-behavior-analysis-phd/>

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## Program Information:

### PhD Program

(Official Title: Special Education: Applied Behavior Analysis)

The PhD program includes two years of MA coursework followed by an additional three years of doctoral coursework and the completion of the PhD. For a full description of the MA program, please see the MA Handbook. Some of that information will be briefly summarized here, but the focus of this handbook is on the PhD-only portion of the program. The PhD program is located at Teachers College and within Columbia University's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

The objective of our MA program is to prepare teachers, teacher trainers, and behavior analysts to use measurably effective instructional practices *to accelerate all children's educational progress*, including measurable increases in enjoying learning and schooling, academic literacy, problem solving, and self-management. Table 1 lists the 47 specific credits students complete toward the MA degree. Table 2 lists the coursework requirements toward the PhD degree that are in addition to the MA curriculum. The PhD program is accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis, International and the MA program is a Verified Course Sequence for the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, registered with New York State as a program leading to the coursework for the Licensed Behavior Analyst credential (if co-enrolled in the ABA Certificate program), and registered as a Teacher Preparation program in New York.

PhD students should also contact and follow the general PhD requirements, which can be found on the Office for Doctoral Students website (scroll to the bottom of the page past EdD requirements): <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/doctorsal/forms/requirements/>

The objective of our PhD program is to prepare researchers and leaders in Applied Behavior Analysis and education. The program incorporates an approach to teacher training in which all instruction used by teachers is based on scientific evidence and the use of scientific procedures to fit the appropriate science-based practices to individual students' varied learning and language developmental needs. Students accepted into the program are placed in teacher positions schools and classrooms that practice teaching as applied behavior analysis. The training of teachers is also based on scientifically tested procedures. Teacher trainees are taught until they master the science and its application with all children from 2 years through grade 6.

Research is a central component of the training—both the applications of research using science-based tactics and measurement, and the generation of new research. PhD students engage in research throughout their program, building on their research training in the MA and culminating in a dissertation that identifies and investigates a topic related to our mission. Dissertations must make contributions to both applied, and basic science. The faculty and the students generate a substantial body of research leading to publications and presentations at international scientific conferences each year, and this is a key component of the PhD training. Programmatic research is conducted in the following areas: effective classroom practices, language/verbal development interventions that result in children learning to learn in different ways, observational learning, and systems-wide scientific approaches to education.

Students who already hold MA degrees from other institutions must take the ten MA core courses, because the core prepares them with the means to be successful in completing milestone PhD requirements. PhD students also need to be dually certified in New York State for teaching children from birth to grade 2, and grades 1-6. The teaching placement is a critical part of the program, because it provides the opportunities to train MA students and to be involved in cutting-edge research. In that role PhD students are critical instructors for the first- and second year MA students, an experience that prepares the doctoral candidate to teach and mentor graduate-level students. Our PhD candidate teachers play a significant role in our record of providing measurably superior instruction and bridging the educational gap.

### **Program objectives:**

1. Use single-subject and group-design research to evaluate all aspects of an educational system, including educational interventions for children, staff and parent training, and teacher training.
2. Train and supervise classrooms and schools such that children are well-behaved and motivated to learn, using positive and non-coercive practices.
3. Master the existing science of learning as applied to the varied needs of children, master teaching others to implement the science of learning independently, and empirically evaluate the effects of such training.
4. Master protocols to identify and induce missing language developmental cusps and capabilities, and master teaching of others to implement these protocols and empirically evaluate the effects of protocols and a child's development.
5. Master how to use key educational standards and how to match existing tested curricula and tested teaching practices to categories of students and individual students, and master how to teach others to implement these competencies and empirically evaluate the effects of such training.
6. Teach others how to measure all students' progress continuously and directly in achieving standards and new developmental stages and empirically evaluate such training.
7. Empirically evaluate teaching practices when initial best practices are not successful with children.
8. Teach others to scientifically analyze the source of student learning problems and empirically evaluate such training.
9. Draw on evidence from behavior analysis, cognitive learning, developmental research, special education research, reading/writing literacy research and implement procedures in accordance with Applied Behavior Analysis and teaching as a science.
10. Teach others to teach children to be self-learners and empirically evaluate such interventions.
11. Design functional curricula building on the theory and science of verbal behavior, radical behaviorism, and the foundations of pragmatism. Teach others to design functional curricula and empirically examine the effectiveness of functional curricula.

### **Attendance Requirements:**

ABA PhD students should plan on two years to complete the MA program and an additional 3 years to complete the entirety of the PhD program. The PhD program requires full-time attendance. During the program, students attend internship sites during the day (full-time) and attend classes at night. Students are required to attend internships during the fall and spring semesters as part of Student Teaching. The internship experiences may be paid, assuming the internship site formally hires you. While there is no formal requirement to work at internship sites during the summer, we strongly encourage students to continue working at internship sites to gain additional valuable teaching and research experiences.

If a PhD student needs to leave the program temporarily for health or personal reasons, the student must file a leave of absence through the Registrar's office.

### **Minimum Grade:**

Students must earn a B- or higher for a class to count towards graduation requirements.

### **Internship Requirements:**

Students are required to attend an internship during the Fall, Spring, and Summer A semesters while in the ABA PhD program. While completing an internship, students must enroll in relevant courses (student teaching, internship). In the PhD program students enroll in HBSE 6404 during the first two years of the program (third and fourth year for students who complete the MA degree first).

### **Additional Needs:**

For classes and coursework, students will need a working computer that runs Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel. Once enrolled, Teachers College provides free access to Office 365, which can be used to access Word and Excel online. Students can also download local copies of these programs through Office 365.

Students are required to find their own transportation to internship sites and Teachers College. Having one's own car is certainly helpful as our internship sites are located outside of the NYC areas. Students without cars may be able to arrange carpools to get to internship sites and the university. Columbia University offers shuttle services that may be helpful for transportation ([see here](#)).

### **Yearly Evaluations**

Once a year, each PhD student meets with the ABA faculty to review their progress in the program. This is important to ensure you remain on track in the program. Prior to the meeting, the ABA faculty will solicit feedback from supervisors at sites as well as MA-level mentees. ABA faculty will also review student performance in coursework and research. During the meeting, the ABA faculty will discuss scholarship (research), coursework, teaching (from internship), and mentoring with each student.

### **Master of Philosophy**

En route to earning the PhD students meet the requirements for a Master of Philosophy, or MPhil. The MPhil requirement is met when students complete all coursework (see Tables 1 and 2, all course except dissertation courses), pass the Certification Exam (see next section), and complete the HBSE 7500 Dissertation Seminar course by successfully proposing the dissertation. Generally speaking, the MPhil is awarded for completing all doctoral requirements except for the dissertation defense. Please see the Office of Doctoral Studies website for more information: <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/doctoral/forms/requirements/>

### **Certification Exam**

Once students have completed all non-dissertation coursework for the doctoral program, students must complete the Certification Exam. Students should check the Office of Doctoral

Studies website for specifics about the scheduling of the exam:

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/doctoral/forms/phd-students-forms/>. In general, students complete the Certification Exam in mid-June after their second year of doctoral coursework (fourth year if coming from the MA program).

There are two parts of the exam, the AM and PM exams. The AM exam is for all special education PhD students and targets the design of studies to examine topics relevant to special education and behavior analysis. Students are provided two group design questions and two single-subject design questions and the student is provided 3 hours to answer one group design and one single-subject design question from the available questions. The content for this exam is drawn from Special Education courses (see Table 2). The PM exam covers topics related to behavior analysis and topics covered in Applied Behavior Analysis courses (see Table 2). Students are provided four questions and 3 hours to answer two questions from the available questions. Questions deal with the philosophy of science, basic behavioral principles, the application of principles, and conceptual issues in behavior analysis.

For both the AM and PM Certification Exams, two faculty members grade each question (two on AM, two on PM). If there is disagreement, a third faculty member grades the respective question(s). Faculty assign grades of Pass, Marginal Pass, or Fail based on whether all parts of the question are answered and answered with sufficient detail and synthesis of the literature. If a student fails one or more questions, the student is allowed one opportunity to retake the specific questions. Note, one only retakes questions that received a Fail rating, one does not complete the entire exam. Follow-up Certification exams are typically in October.

## **Dissertation**

All students must complete an original study as part of their dissertation research. Dissertations must make contributions to both the applied and basic science. To make a contribution to the applied science, a dissertation must have clear implications for improving socially important behavior (typically education or development given the research settings). To make a contribution to the basic science, procedures must deal with specific behavioral principles. The Office of Doctoral Studies provides information pertaining to the dissertation process. Often, PhD students begin piloting research in their second year (fourth year if from our MA program) that constitutes the basis of their dissertation. This then becomes their first study in the doctoral dissertation document. There are three official meetings for the dissertation: the proposal, the advanced seminar (or data hearing), and the final defense. Each meeting requires (1) an APA-style written document, (2) a 20-minute student presentation, and (3) a committee. Depending on whether this is the proposal, advanced seminar, or final defense, the Office of Doctoral Studies provides guidance on what should be included in the written document and the number of committee members. Students should contact the Office of Doctoral Studies website prior to their proposal to ensure they meet current standards. Students also need to track deadlines for having meetings and depositing the dissertation to graduate in specific semesters. For example, it is often the case that a student needs to have a final defense and deposit their finalized dissertation by mid-April in order to graduate in the Spring ceremony in mid-May.



*Office of Doctoral Studies important links:*

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/doctoral/>

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/doctoral/forms/phd-students-forms/>

### **Institutional Review Board**

Students must become familiar with the policies and procedures of the Teachers College Institutional Review Board (IRB). All research must be approved by an IRB. The Teachers College IRB approval is required for dissertation research to finalize one's dissertation proposal. That is, after one successfully proposes their dissertation, the research protocol must be approved by the Teachers College IRB, even if the research was previously approved by Teachers College's IRB or another IRB. The Teachers College IRB website provides a wealth of information about the process: <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/institutional-review-board/>. Being eligible to submit an IRB protocol requires professional development requirements, such as completing the Citi Training Ethics course.

### **Graduation**

Students are eligible to graduate following the completion of the MPhil and successful final defense of the dissertation. When preparing to graduate, check the Office of Doctoral Studies website for relevant dates and forms: <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/doctoral/>

### **Transfer credit policy**

Transfer credits are managed through the Office of the Registrar (see link below).

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/registrar/resources/transfer-credits/>

## **Credentials**

The MA program includes coursework that prepares students for a number of post-graduation credentials, such as New York State Initial Teacher Certification, Board Certified Behavior Analyst, New York Licensed Behavior Analyst, and CABAS® Certifications (Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 Ranks). The PhD program includes coursework and experience that prepares students for the Master Teacher CABAS® Certifications that focuses on supervision and expertise in research areas. See <https://www.cabasschools.org/cabas-rank-descriptions>

## **Internship and Teacher Certification**

We have secured sites that can provide the necessary supervision and practicum/fieldwork requirements for completion of both PhD and MA program requirements. During the MA

program, students work at internship sites and, when possible, earn a teaching assistant salary (see MA program handbook for more details). During the PhD program, students work at internship sites and, when possible, earn a substantially higher salary as a teacher. In this role, students are responsible for a class of students and teaching assistants, which likely includes at least one MA student. In order to secure a position as a teacher, a PhD student must have the requisite teaching certification (requirements gained through the MA program). PhD students also need to obtain the Board Certified Behavior Analyst credential so that they can provide relevant supervision to MA students. The PhD student is listed as the cooperating teacher for the MA student and compensation includes 3 credits that can be applied to tuition in the next semester. Please see the Office of Teacher Education website for information about cooperating teachers and using cooperating teacher credits to pay for tuition:

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/office-of-teacher-education/>

Full time employment varies per school site, which encompasses a typical 6-hour school day with additional time for planning (i.e. 8am-3pm). The agreements we have with internship schools are for those schools' calendars, which are different from the Teachers College calendar. To accept an internship, one must agree to abide by the respective site's employee/volunteer rules *and their calendar*. The internship sites tend to begin in early September, have a 1 to 2 week break in winter (starting back in early January), and end their calendar in mid-June.

Internship sites have rules for employees and volunteers that we expect our students to follow. We ask students to ask for those rules and abide by them. Your adherence to those rules is reported to us on Student Teaching evaluation forms. That is, our Professionalism Standards regard your professional behavior at your internship site. These include following your placement's dress code, professional communication with teachers, parents, and administrators, displays of integrity with learners, colleagues, and supervisors, completing school duties, upholding standards of confidentiality, and adhering to technology-use policies. A specific list of professional standards will be distributed and discussed in the Student Teaching course.

## **International Students**

International students have special circumstances related to internships. Internship sites are regulated by employment rules and may be subject to federal regulations regarding employment of non-U.S. citizens. For this reason, international students are encouraged to meet with ABA faculty and consult with TC's Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS, <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/international/>). In order for an internship site to pay an international student, the student will have to register for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and register for a relevant course (student teaching while in MA program, HBSE 6404 while in the PhD program). During the MA program, students are approved for part-time CPT in one's first year of studies (paid for up to 20-hrs per week) and full time CPT in one's second year of studies. During the PhD program, students are approved for full-time CPT until they earn their MPhil.

## **Current Internship Sites:**

Our schools are situated throughout the surrounding areas of New York city, serving a wide and diverse range of students. This diversity encompasses various cultural, socioeconomic, linguistic, and educational backgrounds. You can learn more about the CABAS® schools at <https://www.cabasschools.org>

#### The Fred S. Keller School

Campuses in Yonkers, Piermont, and White Plains, New York

Services children in Early intervention and Preschool

<https://fredskellerschool.com>

#### Rockland BOCES

Special Education -Elementary District Based Classrooms, Grades K-5

Various locations in Rockland county NY

<https://www.rocklandboces.org>

<https://vimeo.com/134095869>

#### Hawthorne School District

Locations in Hawthorne, NJ

Special education and inclusion – Preschool and Elementary – Grade 5

### **Navigating New York State (NYS) Teacher Certification:**

The Office of Teacher Education(OTE) is a valuable resource for students seeking teacher certification. Helpful information is available on the website, which includes the Student Teaching handbook. <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/office-of-teacher-education/> Each semester, students will also be enrolled in Student Teaching Practicum courses (HBSE 4704- Sections, 1,2,3, and 4). Throughout the courses, students will work towards obtaining the competencies and completing the requirements for initial NYS teacher certification.

#### Getting Started

Prior to the start of the first semester, students will receive notification from the college that they are required to obtain “clearance” from TC to begin student teaching through TC. However, since all graduate students in the ABA program are employees of the school and fulfilling a paid internship, students should begin their internship on the start date the assigned school provides. However, the TC requirements for clearance for student teaching must be met before you can begin accruing student teaching hours for NYS certification and course credit. Most of these requirements can be completed before students begin the internship but must be completed within the first week of hire. Refer to the OTE link for requirements via TC specific to the ABA program.

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/office-of-teacher-education/current-students/student-teaching/>

### New York State TEACH account

Upon entrance to Teachers College, all students are required to complete a NYS TEACH account. This allows you to track your progress towards teacher certification

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/teach/>

### Fingerprinting

All students are required to be fingerprinted through the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The ABA program internship placements are in New York/New Jersey State schools and are not part of New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). This means that students do NOT need to be fingerprinted at the city level (this is the pathway for most TC students since their student teaching placements are in NYC). ABA students should follow the New York State Education Department at the state level fingerprinting pathway for teacher certification. This should be completed prior to coming to TC if possible. Refer to the OTE certification link page above and select the last option - FINGERPRINTING for NEW YORK STATE ONLY (RARE)

If the assigned internship is at Rockland BOCES, students will be required to obtain fingerprinting through NYSED as part of the hiring process to obtain the required New York State Teacher Assistant License for employment. Students do not need to be fingerprinted again, but will need to submit proof to OTE (refer to OTE fingerprinting section. Please note, at our other sites, students will be asked to be fingerprinted for employment purposes, but this is a separate entity (i.e. FSK- NY State Office of Child & Family Services) and the fingerprints are not transferable to the New York State Education Department.

For students that have been fingerprinted prior to coming to TC at the NYSED level, please check with OTE to see if your fingerprints are valid.

### **During your internships**

#### Who is who?

**Mentee-** MA graduate students in the ABA programs. MA graduate students are also referred to as Student Teachers (Office of Teacher Education (OTE)) and Teaching Assistants (as employees of the school placement).

**Mentor-** All MA graduate students will be paired with a mentor (also known as a cooperating teacher via OTE ) each semester. This person is typically the lead teacher in your classroom who may also be a doctoral student in the ABA program. When the mentor is not a doctoral student, the mentor holds teaching certification and/or CABAS® Rank(s). Graduate students will work closely with their mentor to complete many of the components in your CABAS® Ranks, and course assignments. In some cases, this individual may serve as the BCBA/LBA Supervisor.

**Classroom Supervisor-** At each site, there are designated Classroom Supervisors that are employees of the school. These individuals are often PhD graduates from the ABA program that hold advanced CABAS® ranks. Classroom Supervisors also provide training and guidance with your coursework. In some cases this individual(s) may serve as a BCBA/LBA Supervisor

**BCBA Supervisor(s)-** This is the person who provides supervision for the BCBA and has signed the BCBA contract. Students may have more than one BCBA supervisor each semester (refer to the BACB for details on multiple supervisors). This person may be the mentor and/or classroom supervisor of the respective classroom assignment, which is determined at the beginning of each semester.

**Site Director(s)/Principal-** Individual(s) who oversees the day-to-day operations of the school. This person has direct communication with classroom supervisors and faculty and is also a resource for mentors and mentees.

**Field Supervisor-** Dr. Delgado is the field supervisor for Student Teaching. Each student will receive at least three observations each semester to fulfill the faculty required observations and evaluations for Student Teaching (HBSE 4704- sections 1-4).

**University Faculty/Consultants-** Full-time faculty may also be onsite functioning as consultants to the school. Many of our adjunct faculty are full-time employees (Classroom Supervisors) in the CABAS® schools.

### Additional Information

When working toward Teacher Certification, there are several requirements, such as completing a Record of Hours, completing workshops, and taking exams. This information is covered in the MA handbook. Below is information about applying for teacher certification, which is required of all PhD students in order to obtain a teaching position for internship.

### Applying for Initial Certification

Near the end of the MA program, students may apply for their initial certification through the Office of Teacher Education (OTE) at Teachers College. OTE will then recommend candidates for initial certification to the State Education Department of New York. In order to be recommended for certification, students must meet certification requirements, receive faculty recommendation and pass the teaching certification exams. You will receive guidance in your student teaching courses.

All students should complete the *Institutional Recommendation Data Form* (IRDF) during the fall of the second year in the MA program. This form is submitted to OTE and utilized to process your application for NYS certification from the college. The form can be located on the OTE website under the initial certification tab.

Ms. Faride Suarez, Associate Director for Certification Compliance, is the certification officer at TC. She will attend Student Teaching Seminars to disseminate information on preparing and applying for NYS teacher certification. She may also be contacted with any certification questions. Her email is: [suarez2@tc.edu](mailto:suarez2@tc.edu)

### Applying for Certification Out of NYS

If you plan to seek certification in a state other than New York, please visit that state's Department of Education website for any information you may need regarding certification requirements. Some states do have reciprocity with NYS. <https://teaching-certification.com/teaching/new-york-teacher-reciprocity/>

In addition, the Office of Teacher Education (OTE) is a good source of information regarding certification tests and requirements.

### Professional Certification

After three years of teaching experience (not including student teaching), you may apply for the NYS Professional Certification.

<https://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/advanceinitprof.html>

## BCBA/LBA Information

The BCBA and LBA are MA-level credentials. PhD students should apply for these credentials to be in a position to provide supervision to MA students.

### **BCBA:**

The link to the BCBA Experience Standards is here. Note that the BACB standards are subject to change at any moment. Only the material found on their website is current. Previously downloaded material may be out of date.

<https://www.bacb.com/bcba/>

Here is a link to a BCBA Tip Sheet, with important information before beginning your experience. Please review all items on this list:

<https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Fieldwork-Checklist-and-Tip-Sheet-210506.pdf>

*As part of accruing BCBA hours, one must enter into a contract with a supervisor. The contract will specify professional behaviors that must be met for the supervisor to sign off on hours.*

### **New York Licensed Behavior Analyst**

The link to New York State's website is here. Note that in recent years, New York has pivoted to where one submits their BCBA as evidence of qualifying for the NY LBA:

<https://www.op.nysed.gov/licensed-behavior-analysts>

## International Student Resources

International students have special circumstances that may require extra time to complete all paperwork. In these cases, you may need to begin your internship in a volunteer position until you can legally be paid.

International students will need to apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) in order to receive compensation from internship sites. Prior to applying for CPT, international students must complete a training. We encourage international students to complete the training in late

August so they can enroll in CPT immediately when starting the program. Here is a website with the schedule of trainings:

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/international/events-and-programs/>

Below is general information for the office dedicated to assisting international students.

Contact: Office of international Students and Scholars (OISS)

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/international/>

Phone: 212-678-3939 \* Email: [tcintl@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:tcintl@tc.columbia.edu)

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GUIDELINES FOR PAID EMPLOYMENT

For those on F-1 Visas

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/international/current-students/employment--taxes/f-1-visa-employment/f-1-practical-training/>

All students enrolled in the MA and PhD programs at Columbia University Teachers College are required to complete full-time internships in our Research and Demonstration CABAS® model schools. Our long-standing relationship with our schools has allowed us to secure paid full-time employment for all students provided that ALL policies and procedures are followed. Below are some guidelines to follow in order to make sure you do not violate any of the stipulations for paid work while you are in the US. In addition to the I-20 (student visa), in order to be paid for work you MUST apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization during EVERY semester you are enrolled, including Summer. Normally, the CPT will only be good within the dates of the respective semester, but because your employment is a requirement of the program, you may work during the gaps between semesters. Therefore, the dates on your CPT are very important. Again, you cannot be paid once a new semester begins until the CPT is approved by the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) at TC so please begin the process early.

Below are some helpful tips regarding registration and CPT applications:

As stated at the CPT portal on the TC website:

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

In order to be eligible for CPT, you must:

- Have a job offer directly related to your academic program
- Have been lawfully enrolled **full-time for one academic year**
- Be in lawful **F-1 status**
- Making **normal progress toward degree completion** and be in good academic standing

Following, we need to obtain the degree audit and submit the Request for Curricular Practical Training eForm via TC-Compass.

Once the OISS receives your application, it will be reviewed by an international student advisor within 14 business days. You will then receive an email communication notifying you that the I-20 is ready for pick up or to be mailed. You will then present your I-20 to your employer.”

1. The International student office requires about 2 weeks to process CPT applications. Please make sure you apply ahead of this deadline.
2. You must secure an employment offer letter from the employing school/agency. The letter needs to state the following:
  - a. name of applicant,
  - b. offer for a full-time position,
  - c. duties,
  - d. terms of the position (hours of employment, total hours of work per week,
  - e. annual full-time salary for a Teaching Assistant),
  - f. institution’s name and address,
  - g. and a signature of the director/responsible party

You do not need a new employment letter for the Spring or Summer semesters but you may need to upload the same letter.

3. You must be registered in either HBSE 4704 (3 credits, MA program), HBSE 4304 (0 credits, MA program), OR HBSE 6404 (0 credits, PhD program) during every semester you apply for CPT. Ask a faculty member which one you should register for if you are unsure.
4. You will also need to submit a copy of your Degree Audit signed by one of the program faculty.
5. Make sure the CPT begins on the very first day of the semester (see TC calendar under Academics on the TC homepage). One exception will be Fall, if your employment is set to begin before the first day of the semester. This employment start date would be reflected in your offer letter.
6. The end date for the CPT should be the last day before the start of the following semester. Again, see the TC calendar.
7. Because continuous enrollment in internship is required, you must maintain eligibility for CPT for the duration of time you are in the program. This means that you will continue to take courses through the first Summer session of your second year (June). Please make sure that your I-20 is extended and dated until the end of the June or even the end of the calendar year in which you are graduating. Please note that your



graduation (degree conferral) date will be October, although degree requirements will be met by June.

In order to be paid you will need a **Social Security card**. This can only be obtained **in person at a local SS office**. This process can take some time and again, you may not be paid until you have a social security number. See instructions here: <https://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/>

Please be patient. We are here to help but cannot speed up the process of securing legal permission to receive a salary while a TC student.

## Graduate Student Program Opportunities

Comprehensive Application of Behavior Analysis to Schooling (CABAS®) Website:  
[www.cabasschools.org](http://www.cabasschools.org)

Foundation for the Advancement of a Strategic Science of Teaching:  
<https://www.scienceofteaching.org/>

New York State ABA

<https://www.nysaba.org/>

ABAI

<https://www.abainternational.org/welcome.aspx>

## College Policies

TC Student handbook

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/student-handbook/>

TC Policy Library- Includes a list with respective links to University policies

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/>

Ombuds Office- An independent office for a confidential discussion of matters of concern

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/ombuds/>

Student Code of Conduct

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/student-conduct-code-academic-integrity-and-general-misconduct-1222590/>

## Grievance Procedure:

[https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/grievance-procedures-1232281/?\\_ga=2.148244407.1624392041.1730203885-1010240116.1655386878](https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/grievance-procedures-1232281/?_ga=2.148244407.1624392041.1730203885-1010240116.1655386878)

## Grading

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/grading-1222549/>

## Incomplete Grades

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/incomplete-grades-1222553/>

## Degree Requirements

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/degree-requirements-3643551/>

## Email Usage

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/email-use-1227361/>

## Acceptable Use of Technology

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/acceptable-use-of-information-technology-1227337/>

## TC- ID

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/campus-card-tc-id--1242127/>

## College Communication

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/college-communication-1222528/>

## Covid Vaccination Policy

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/covid-19-vaccination-policy-11319500/>

## Financial Aid

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/financial-aid-1222542/>

## Attendance

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/attendance-1222506/>

## Academic Standards

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/academic-standards-for-students-1222508/>

Gender-Based Misconduct

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/gender-based-misconduct-policy-for-students-1232278/>

Non-Discrimination <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/non-discrimination-1232282/>

Preferred Name <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/preferred-name-policy-6984102/>

Religious Observance

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/religious-observance-1242110/>

Remote Instruction

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/remote-instruction-policy-11319760/>

Student Psychological Wellbeing

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/student-psychological-wellness-3333823/>

## Helpful Links & Resources

Graduate Writing Center

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/graduate-writing-center/>

Columbia University Health Services-

<https://www.health.columbia.edu>

Office of Public Safety-

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/publicsafety/>

Office of the Registrar

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/registrar/>

Office of Doctoral Studies

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/doctoral>

Office of Student Support and Advocacy

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/studentsupportadvocacy/>

Office of Teacher Education

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/office-of-teacher-education/>

TC Next- Provides information regarding career pathways for current students/alumni

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/tcnext/>

## Tuition and Aid

The two main costs of attending the MA and PhD programs are tuition and housing. Enrolled students may choose to live in graduate student housing or find their own housing accommodations. The college may provide institutional support (financial aid) to students who apply by the priority deadline. The specific date of this deadline varies from year to year, but tends to be in mid-January (e.g., January 15th). We strongly encourage applicants to apply by the priority deadline.

Below is information about the cost of attending the MA and PhD programs at Teachers College, Columbia University:

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/admission/financial-aid/cost-of-attendance--tuition/your-cost-of-attendance/>

Note, students typically earn a significant salary from internship sites for their teaching position.

## Frequently Asked Questions

“I have been fingerprinted previously at another preschool. Does this suffice for New York state Certification? Can I transfer my fingerprints from another state?”

*Many schools require fingerprinting. However, in most cases (especially preschool), these are for different agencies. The fingerprints must be through New York State.*

*Check with the Office of Teacher Education. In terms of transferring fingerprints, NYS does not accept fingerprints from out of state.*

“Can I have multiple BCBA Supervisors? If so, who signs my paperwork?”

*Yes, please see the BACB handbook and relevant forms for multiple supervisors.*

“I need personal time for a few days for an event that was planned prior to enrolling at TC and will not be able to attend my internship. Who do I contact?”

*You should have informed your employer before you were hired. Contact your employer or remind them as soon as possible. Consult your employee manual. Note, this will likely be unpaid time and considered an unexcused absence. Continued unexcused absences will result in disciplinary action from your employer and will impact your coursework. If you are also missing your university courses, contact your professors. Religious observances are the exception.*

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/policylibrary/policies/religious-observance-1242110/>

“If CABAS® Schools are all located outside of NYC, how do I get to my internship site?”

*The college and program do not provide transportation to internship sites. If you have a car, you should consider bringing it. All of our internship sites are out of the city and are not easily accessible by public transportation. Carpools are usually available but not guaranteed and having a car will make your life much easier. Transportation is a personal expense whether you use mass transit, carpool, or drive. If you drive a carpool, you can share the commuting expenses (e.g., gas, tolls) with your riders.*

“Do I need to pass all the teaching exams to graduate?”

*No. The exams are a requirement for NYS initial teaching certification. However, students are encouraged to sit for exams prior to graduation.*

“When should I take the NYS teaching exams and BCBA exam?”

*You are encouraged to take the NYS teaching exams prior to graduation. Some students opt to sit for some of the exams in the summer between year 1 and 2. Most students sit for the exams in January during the second year and finalize the exams in their last semester.*

*You cannot sit for the BCBA exam until your MA degree is conferred in May. It is recommended that you sit for the BCBA exam during the summer after you graduate.*

**Table 1**

**MA Program in Teaching as Applied Behavior Analysis**  
**All course are Required**  
(47 Credits)

The MA program in Teaching as Applied Behavior Analysis is a 2-year cohort-model program. Below is a list of classes per semester:

**Fall Semester, Year 1 (9 credits)**

HBSE 4015: Applied Behavior Analysis 1

HBSE 4044: Methods 1

HBSE 4704: Student Teaching, section 1

**Spring Semester, Year 1 (12 credits)**

HBSE 4017: Applied Behavior Analysis 3

HBSE 4045: Methods 2

HBSE 4048: Working with Families of Children with Autism

HBSE 4704: Student Teaching, section 2

**Summer Semester (Summer A session), Year 1 (9 credits)**

HBSE 4047: Record-Keeping in Applied Behavior Analysis

HBSE 4049: Professional and Ethical Issues in Behavior Analysis

HBSK 4072: Theory and Techniques of Assessment and Intervention in Reading\*

**Fall Semester, Year 2 (9 credits)**

HBSE xxxx: ABA Strategic Teaching and Literacy Course, course # TBD

HBSE 4046: Methods 3

HBSE 4704: Student Teaching, section 3

**Spring Semester, Year 2 (9 credits + thesis/integrative project)**

HBSE 4016: Applied Behavior Analysis 2

HBSE 4704: Student Teaching, section 4

MSTM 5010: Mathematics in the Elementary School (or acceptable Math course)\*

HBSE 4000 001 Integrative Project Preparation (zero-credits)

### **Additional Information**

Students are required to earn a grade of B- for credits to apply toward graduation. If a student earns less than a B-, the student has to retake the course in order to graduate.

Our program has a breadth requirement (see \* above) that requires students to take two out-of-program courses. We list HBSK 4072 and MSTM 5010 as math and reading courses, respectively, that will provide you with a grounding in teaching and evidence-based practice for these academic content areas. There are additional reading and math courses one can enroll in, such as HUDK 4027 (Development of Mathematical Thinking), HBSK 4074 (Reading and Comprehension Strategies and Study Skills), and HBSK 5099 (Writing Interventions Theory and Practice). Faculty approval is required for alternative courses.

Our program requires two courses that deal with reading. We offer one course in Fall of 2nd year and students enroll in HBSK 4072 to meet this requirement.

Last, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) mandates teacher certification requirements that are needed for program completion and graduation which are listed in the Office of Teacher Education section of the catalog.

**Table 2**  
**PhD Program in Teaching as Applied Behavior Analysis**  
**Course Required Beyond the MA**  
(75 credits)

\*Note, these are courses on top of the MA courses (see Table 1)

\*Note, all Special Education and Applied Behavior Analysis courses run on a 2-year cycle to ensure the classes meet minimum enrollment guidelines. The exception is HBSE 7500 and HBSE 8900, which run every year.

**Behavior Analysis Courses:**

HBSE 6404: Advanced Internship: Behavior Disorders

\*students continually enroll in this zero-credit course

HBSE 5904: Problems in Special Education: Behavioral Disorders (Supervision)

HBSE 6008: Behaviorism (Philosophy of Science)

HBSE 6015: The Verbal Behavior Model

HBSE 6504: Advanced Seminar in Special Education

**Special Education Courses:**

HBSE 5010: Study of the Philosophic Foundations of Special Education

HBSE 6010: Advanced Study of Problems and Issues in Special Education

HBSE 6001: Research in Special Education: Research/Experimental Design (Group Designs)

HBSE 6031: Research in Special Education: Single-Case Design (Single-Subject Design)

\*\*also considered a behavior analysis course, but taken by students across Special Education

HBSE 7500: Dissertation Seminar in Special Education

\*\*also considered a behavior analysis course, enroll in section with your dissertation sponsor

HBSE 8900-8910: Dissertation Advisement in Special Education

**Non-Departmental Research Courses:**

HUDM 4122: Probability and Statistical Inference

HUDM 5122: Applied Regression Analysis