



MOUNT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST  
16300 OLD EMMITSBURG ROAD  
EMMITSBURG, MARYLAND 21727

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June 16, 2020

Dr. James D. Fielder  
Maryland Higher Education Commission  
6 North Liberty Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Dr. Fielder,

On behalf of Mount St. Mary's University, I am submitting to you a new major program proposal for a Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis (MS in ABA). Mount St. Mary's University is seeking approval from the Maryland Higher Education Commission to offer this program through our Schools of Education and Natural Science and Mathematics.

In addition to the proposal, the application also includes three letters of support from area partners. These letters are from Dr. Keith Harris, Executive Director of Accelerative Achievement and Equity in Frederick County Public Schools, Dr. Patrick Graveline, a BCBA in private practice and a coordinator of special education in Washington County Public Schools and Kristen Stricks, Director of Program Services at The Ivymount School.

Thank you in advance for your timely consideration of this proposal. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Boyd A. Creasman  
Provost

cc: Dr. Barbara Marinak, Dean, School of Education  
Dr. Kraig Sheetz, Dean, School of Natural Science and Mathematics  
Dr. Jon Slezak, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology  
Dr. Carolyn Cook, Chair, Department of Education  
Dr. Stacey Brown-Hobbs, Department of Education  
Dr. Caitlin Faas, Chair, Department of Psychology



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## Cover Sheet for In-State Institutions

### New Program or Substantial Modification to Existing Program

Office Use Only: PP#

Institution Submitting Proposal	Mount St. Mary's University
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***Each action below requires a separate proposal and cover sheet.***

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> New Academic Program | <input type="radio"/> Substantial Change to a Degree Program            |
| <input type="radio"/> New Area of Concentration       | <input type="radio"/> Substantial Change to an Area of Concentration    |
| <input type="radio"/> New Degree Level Approval       | <input type="radio"/> Substantial Change to a Certificate Program       |
| <input type="radio"/> New Stand-Alone Certificate     | <input type="radio"/> Cooperative Degree Program                        |
| <input type="radio"/> Off Campus Program              | <input type="radio"/> Offer Program at Regional Higher Education Center |

Payment <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes Submitted: <input type="radio"/> No	Payment <input type="radio"/> R*STARS Type: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Check	Payment Amount: \$850.00	Date Submitted: 6/16/20
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Department Proposing Program	School of Education and School of Natural Science and Mathematics		
Degree Level and Degree Type	Master of Science		
Title of Proposed Program	Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis		
Total Number of Credits	36		
Suggested Codes	HEGIS: 899.00	CIP: 422814.00	
Program Modality	<input type="radio"/> On-campus <input type="radio"/> Distance Education (fully online) <input checked="" type="radio"/> Both		
Program Resources	<input type="radio"/> Using Existing Resources <input checked="" type="radio"/> Requiring New Resources		
Projected Implementation Date	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Fall <input type="radio"/> Spring <input type="radio"/> Summer      Year: 2020		
Provide Link to Most Recent Academic Catalog	URL: <a href="https://catalog.msmmary.edu/index.php">https://catalog.msmmary.edu/index.php</a>		

Preferred Contact for this Proposal	Name:	Barbara A. Marinak, Ph.D.
	Title:	Dean, School of Education
	Phone:	(301) 447-5170
	Email:	marinak@msmary.edu

President/Chief Executive	Type Name:	Timothy E. Trainor, Ph.D.
	Signature:	 Date: 06-16-20
	Date of Approval/Endorsement by Governing Board:	6/15/20

Revised 11/2018



February 24, 2020

Dr. Barbara Marinak, Dean  
School of Education  
Mount Saint Mary's University  
16300 Old Emmitsburg Road  
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727

Dear Dr. Marinak:

I am enthused by the possibility of a Graduate Degree and Certification Program in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) as an offering through the Mount Saint Mary's University Graduate School. Understanding that you must gain approval for this program through the Maryland Higher Education Commission, please accept this wholehearted letter of support for this program.

I have worked in education for almost 30 years as a special education teacher, school-based administrator, and adjunct college professor at the graduate and doctoral levels. I hold certifications not only as a special education teacher and administrator, but also as a school system superintendent. In my current role with Frederick County Public Schools, I serve as an executive director/associate superintendent with responsibilities for Special Education, Gifted and Talented/Advanced Academics Programs, English Learner Programs, and Equity/Cultural Proficiency Programs. Up to this current school year, I also had responsibilities for Psychological and Behavioral Services. It has been my life's work to serve students with atypical learning, behavioral and developmental challenges, and other special needs.

According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)<sup>1</sup>, the number of students with autism spectrum disorders has continued to rise in recent years. This is not only a phenomenon nationally, but throughout Maryland the percentage of students identified with Autism is higher than many other states<sup>2</sup>. Specifically, in Frederick County, while the percentage of students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders have remained consistent over the past several years, the intensity of students has not. We have realized an increase in the intensity of need demonstrated by these students. There are times when students who have autism, with the added complexities of behavioral, social/emotional, and/or executive functioning needs, require out of county placements because we do not have the specific program of support or properly trained staff to meet these students' specific needs. As such, over the past few years in Frederick County, we have worked to expand our programming options and supports for this specific student population. While we have increased the number of staff members dedicated to supporting students with mental health and executive functioning needs, we have not increased the number of staff members dedicated to meeting the needs of students with autism spectrum disorders who also display these needs. It is not due to a lack of desire to have staff members trained in these areas, but due to the lack of available certification and specialization programs in our immediate vicinity. This is why the possibility of a Master's and Certification Program in ABA is so important.

In Frederick County Public Schools, and from my conversations with colleagues in other local school systems in central Maryland, there are staff desiring to receive certification in ABA. However, there are minimal local certification programs designed to meet the needs of school-based employees available at this time. Oftentimes, ABA certifications

<sup>1</sup>"CDC Findings Suggest That ASD Is More Prevalent than Indicated by the Latest 1 in 59 CDC Estimate." Autism Speaks. Accessed February 28, 2020. <https://www.autismspeaks.org/press-release/cdc-findings-suggest-asd-more-prevalent-indicated-latest-1-in-59-cdc-estimate>.

<sup>2</sup>"A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Maryland." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, August 27, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/addm-community-report/maryland.html>.



are gained through private or professional organizations, not through a university setting. This presents several challenges. First, these programs are expensive. Staff have to pay out of pocket to go through these programs since they are not connected with a credentialed program that leads towards fulfilling requirements for continuing teacher and administrative certifications. However, should a program be offered through a local university, as Mount Saint Mary's, our partnership would allow teachers to not only receive credit towards continuing teacher and administrative certification, but staff would also have the opportunity to be reimbursed as part of employees' contractual benefits for enrollment in a degree or certification program through a local university. Not having an ABA certification program offered through a local university presents a second problem. With certification programs for ABA, practicum experiences are required. Several of our staff members have had difficulties enrolling in programs because there is no one close enough in proximity to supervise the practicum experience for those seeking certification. Additionally, when candidates seeking ABA certification do not have a long-term and established relationship with the private and professional organization, these organizations are less willing and likely to provide oversight and supervision for the candidate. This has been the experience for a few Frederick County Public School employees who have tried to seek ABA certification. However, if a certification program was offered through a university, as part of requirements for the degree or certification program, a supervised practicum would be an embedded part of the experience. Mount Saint Mary's University, being a partner university with Frederick County Public Schools, eliminates any concern with the relationship between employees and the university. Finally, many of the private and professional organization programs offering ABA certification are not feasible for school system employees with full-time responsibilities, families, and other outside commitments. However, staff are used to the framework of graduate school and would be less challenged by the structure of such a program and logistical requirements, such as travel and the financial burden, that are presented with some private and professional organization programs.

An important consideration for having an ABA Master's Degree and Certification Program at the university is the increased demand for ABA Therapy from our parents. It is often the case that parents may seek ABA support for their child outside of the school day and setting. While students are in school, there are often different strategies and techniques used to meet the needs of students. This may create confusion for students as they try to learn strategies learned from their private ABA therapist and their special education and classroom teachers in the school setting. Having trained school system staff in ABA would allow for a more consistent and comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of students than currently exist.

It has been, and continues to be, a challenge to find ABA certified staff to support students with challenging behaviors and the need for consistent intervention support. Despite their desires and attempts, Frederick County Public School employees have had difficulty in finding ABA certification programs that are practical, feasible, and considerate of the full-time working adult. Parents have expressed a desire for the school system to have ABA certified staff to work with their children in order to bridge the gap between learning and application of skills between the school and home environments. With the number and intensity of students presenting with autism spectrum, social skills, executive functioning and other mental health and behavioral needs growing, we must increase the number of our staff with specialized training and certification, like ABA, within our school system. Fiscally, it would serve to benefit us as a school system as this program would allow us to increase our programming options for students with these types of needs, thereby reducing our costs of having to send students to non-public school placements. Having an ABA Master's Degree and certification program at Mount Saint University would meet all of these needs. As such, you have my full support as you explore approval for this degree program and certification.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me should you have additional questions regarding our needs to serve our students, staff, and families in Frederick County Public Schools.

Thank you,



Keith Harris, Ed.D.  
Executive Director

February 17, 2020

Barbara Marinak, Ph.D.  
Kraig Sheetz, Ph.D.  
Mount St. Mary's University  
16300 Old Emmitsburg Road  
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727

Drs. Marinak and Sheetz,

I am writing to express support for the proposed Master's Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis at Mount St. Mary's University. As a licensed psychologist and board certified behavior analyst – doctorate providing clinical services in Western Maryland, I have seen firsthand the increased demand for board certified behavior analysts within the region and the struggle to find qualified professionals to meet the demand. Thus, the addition of a graduate program offering the essential coursework towards board certification is a vital component to meeting the local community's needs.

Board Certified Behavior Analysts are independent practitioners who deliver services in a range of settings including in-home or center-based programs for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder or other developmental disabilities, private and public schools, and residential/supported employment services for adults with developmental disabilities. The services offered within in-home or centered-based programs often focus on addressing language deficits and/or challenging behaviors (i.e. food refusal, head-banging, eye-poking), at times, associated with developmental disabilities. The services provided inside school settings include, but not limited to; consulting around classroom management, participating in functional behavior assessments, and developing student specific behavior intervention plans. The services delivered in adult residential/supported employment programs include, but not limited to; conducting functional behavior assessments, developing individualized behavior intervention programs, performing treatment integrity checks, and facilitating staff training. These services are delivered in a safe, proactive, and person-centered manner as a way to support children and adults make meaningful gains in essential areas towards independence.

As of February 17, 2020, based upon data from the Behavior Analysis Certification Board's website, [www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com), there are forty-six board certified behavior analysts in the Western Maryland counties of Cumberland, Garrett, Frederick, and Washington. This is less than ten percent of the board certified behavior analysts in Maryland. As a result, a family living in Western Maryland with a child diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder or other developmental disability runs the risk of being placed on a waitlist to receive treatment from local agencies or required to seek medically-necessary treatment from board certified behavior analysts in Baltimore, Carroll, Howard, or Montgomery Counties. Commuting this distance for

treatment adds additional stress to families, takes away from time that could be spent addressing the child's needs, or creates an insurmountable barrier towards accessing treatment. In addition, agencies and schools seeking to hire board certified behavior analysts often have these positions unfilled for extended periods of time due to lack of qualified applicants.

I fully believe Mount St. Mary's University offering a graduate degree in Applied Behavior Analysis would be a great addition to their program offerings and help meet a professional and service delivery need within the regional community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Graveline', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Graveline, Psy.D., BCBA-D



Dr. Barbara Marinak  
Mount St. Mary's University  
16300 Old Emmitsburg Rd  
208 Archbishop Borders Hall  
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

May 18, 2020

Dear Dr. Marinak,

Thank you for contacting The Ivymount School regarding Mount St. Mary's University's proposed Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) course sequence. We are enthusiastic about the work you propose to do.

The Ivymount School serves about 200 students, many of whom have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Ivymount School is a non-profit school providing quality educational programs and therapeutic services, including ABA, to people with autism and developmental disabilities from 4 to 21 years of age. Since its founding in 1961, Ivymount has helped more than 8,000 young people, from throughout the Washington, DC metropolitan area to lead independent and fulfilling lives as productive members of their communities.

We believe that your M.S. and certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) course sequences may very well enhance our current efforts to optimize the education for students with autism and other developmental disabilities and are pleased to support your endeavor. Many practices within the field of ABA are considered established evidence-based practices by large scale systematic reviews, and we are pleased that another local program may be training practitioners in ABA.

We understand that if approved, the M.S. and certificate course sequences would begin as soon as possible. We would be pleased to be considered as a potential placement for ABA practicum supervision hours as well as a potential place of employment for graduates from your program. We are looking forward to continuing to collaborate with you and the staff within your program, and are pleased to extend our support of your work.

Sincerely,

*Kristen Stricks*

Kristen Stricks, M.A., CCC-SLP, BCBA, LBA  
Director of Program Services

## **A. Centrality to Institutional Mission and Planning Priorities:**

1. Provide a description of the program, including each area of concentration (if applicable), and how it relates to the institution's approved mission.

### **Brief Description of the Program**

The new Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis (M.S. in ABA) will be an inter-disciplinary degree housed jointly between the Department of Psychology in the School of Natural Science and Mathematics and the School of Education. This new program aligns with the growing demand for skilled professionals in Education and the health professions. In addition, the program recognizes the need to support these providers long before they enter the profession. Though little definitive data is available, preliminary studies suggest that burnout in the ABA community exists and that turnover rates range from 30 – 70%. Consequently, in addition to training analysts in accordance with the standards of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board's Verified Course Sequence (VCS), the program will also include the integration of self-care, contemplative practices, collaboration, and advocacy in order to ensure that ABA candidates acquire the resilience and persistence necessary to sustain in the profession.

### **Relationship to the Mission of Mount St. Mary's University**

Mount St. Mary's is a Catholic university committed to graduating ethical leaders who are inspired by a passion for learning and lead lives of significance in service to God and others (Mission Statement, 2019)

This advanced certificate aligns with the Department of Psychology and the School of Education's missions to prepare students for a career as a nationally certified applied behavior analyst by engaging them in rigorous graduate studies that include foundational and applied coursework as well as carefully selected and supervised practicum experiences. The proposed Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis advances both the University's mission and the Schools' missions by providing a challenging and relevant academic experience that prepares graduate students to think creatively, reason logically, communicate effectively, and lead ethically.

More specifically, though a conflict could be perceived between radical behaviorism (a philosophical framework underlying the science) and the Catholic view of the human person, this conflict is merely apparent. As Catholics, we recognize every person has inherent dignity as a whole, both body and soul. Because the body is part of the natural world, we use natural methods to understand the body. Like other natural sciences, behavior analysis has discovered the influence of variables at multiple levels. And, just as the body and soul cannot be separated in a human, we cannot separate the influence of our genes and physiology (phylogeny), what we experience over our lifetime (ontogeny), and what we experience as part of the human community (culture).



In addition, behavior is best understood by analyzing the variables of which it is a function. In doing so, we are seeking truth about God's creation. In seeking truth about God's creation, we have developed and refined empirical science. Although there are multiple ways for understanding behavior, natural scientists have found that understanding functional variables has brought us closer to the truth about behavior. With the advent of a natural science of behavior, we have been able to produce meaningful changes in the lives of individuals with severe intellectual disabilities. As with other natural sciences, behavior analysis seeks to understand the natural world - to pursue the truth of God's creation. Behavior analysts seek to understand each organism as an individual with a unique history and make-up. We extend this to all humans.

2. Explain how the proposed program supports the institution's strategic goals and provide evidence that affirms it is an institutional priority.

The M.S. in ABA supports numerous strategic priorities and goals of the 2018-2023 Mount St. Mary's University Strategic Plan. Student Success is a priority of the strategic plan. More specifically, the Mount "prepares a diverse student body to be ethical leaders who lead lives of significance in service to God and others. We do this by immersing students in a rigorous intellectual, social and spiritual experience, grounded in the Catholic intellectual tradition. The Mount prepares graduates for excellence in their lifelong pursuits through cultivating a zeal for learning." The M.S. in ABA is consistent with the Student Success priority of the Mount. As a result of a carefully integrated course sequence, training in the model code of conduct, and rigorous practicum experience, behavior analyst candidates will be prepared to assume the mantle of ethical leader in the profession.

The Mount's Strategic Plan also includes a goal to "develop new academic programs and systematically review existing programs in order to meet the needs of society." The M.S. in ABA is clearly consistent with this goal. There is a demand for ethical, highly trained and resilient behavior analysts in many sectors. According to the most recent report of the US Employment Demand for Behavior Analysts, annual demand for BCBAs has increased about 800% from 2010 to 2017. This new program, by virtue of the interdisciplinary nature, will prepare behavior analysts for positions in education, hospital-based mental health, and community-based mental health.

3. Provide a brief narrative of how the proposed program will be adequately funded for at least the first five years of program implementation. (Additional related information is required in section L).

Mount St. Mary's is committed to adequately funding the proposed program for at least five years. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis, marketing, instruction, infrastructure and assessment resources will be shared between the Department of Psychology and School of Education. In addition, the University will support the program director, highly qualified adjunct faculty and BCBA supervisors necessary to teach the core courses and provide clinical supervision. As evidence of the University's commitment to launching the program, a full-time BCBA Program Director will be hired in AY 19-20 with employment commencing AY 20-21. This position will be a joint appointment between the Department of Psychology and the School of Education.

4. Provide a description of the institution's commitment to ongoing administrative, financial, and technical support of the proposed program.
  - a) This new M.S. in ABA will receive administrative support from the chairs of two departments and the two deans. The Dean of the School of Education and the Dean of the School of Natural Science and Mathematics lead their respective units to prepare professionals in accordance with state and national standards. Both deans work closely with their faculty and boards of advisors in order to enact a mission and vision that aligns to the University mission and strategic plan. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this degree, the deans will work together to lead collaborative planning sessions designed to support the ABA cohorts. The chairs of Education and Psychology and Deans of Natural Science and Mathematics and Education will collaborate on scheduling. The Director of Teacher Education will assist the chair of Psychology in collecting and analyzing data from key assessments as well as securing practicum placements. Three administrative assistants will provide the administrative support necessary for the program.

The financial support to ensure viability of the M.S. in ABA will be provided to each dean by the University. This includes a dual appointment BCBA lecturer, shared between Education and Psychology, as well as the necessary funds for program maintenance including practicum fees, mentor stipends, and mileage reimbursement. The Department of Communications and Marketing will provide the funds necessary to market the program.

The School of Education is home to the Center for Instructional Design and Delivery (CIDD). CIDD will provide students and faculty with support in instructional design and delivery including training in Canvas, the University learning management system. The Informational Technology Support Center will provide student and faculty with hardware support as well as assistance with login, multifactor authentication, email, etc.

- b) Continuation of the program for a period of time sufficient to allow enrolled students to complete the program.

The School of Education has clearly demonstrated the ability to design, implement and sustain graduate programs. The M.Ed. in both reading and technology facilitation has been awarded at the institution for over 20 years. In addition, a recently launched M.Ed. in Instructional Leadership currently has four active cohorts. The President's signature on the proposal cover sheet indicates the University's confidence of the program's viability. University procedures for the discontinuation of programs, when necessary, include the preparation of teach-out plans and individual student program plans to ensure enrolled students have a pathway for program completion.

## **B. Critical and Compelling Regional or Statewide Need as Identified in the State Plan**

1. Demonstrate demand and need for the program in terms of meeting present and future needs of the region and the State in general based on one or more of the following:
  - a) The need for the advancement and evolution of knowledge

Market analysis indicates that the need for national licensed behavior analysts is growing in Maryland, regionally and nationally. Behavior analysts provide a therapeutic environment for individuals struggling to control their behavior. In addition to providing direct, therapeutic intervention to a child, adolescent or adult, behavior analysts also train parents, teachers, and other professionals on how to implement support plans for challenging behavior.

According to EAB in partnership EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists International), this increase in regional and statewide demand for master's-level ABA professionals indicates a strong job market for program graduates. Employer demand for master's-level ABA professionals in the mid-Atlantic region increased from 312 to 681 postings over the last two years (i.e., a 118 percent increase.) In addition, statewide demand for master's-level ABA professionals rose from 26 to 55 postings during this period (i.e., a 112 percent increase).

- b) Societal needs, including expanding educational opportunities and choices for minority and educationally disadvantaged students at institutions of higher education

Behavior analysts are critical allied health professionals in the search for deeper understanding of mental health and behavioral patterns. Behavior analysts typically work with individuals whose disability is comprised of a complex constellation of symptoms including delays/disorders in executive function, self-regulation, anger management, problem-solving, expressive and reception language, and pragmatics. More specifically, BCBAs work with children and adults diagnosed with autism and emotional/behavioral disorder. Individuals diagnosed with both disorders are on the rise. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is up 15% from 2012 to 2014. The new estimate represents 1 in 59 children being diagnosed in 2014, up from 1 in 68 two years prior. Three out of every 100 adults in any community are affected by ASD. Emotional/behavioral disorders include anxiety, depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, bipolar disorders, etc. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), emotional and behavioral disorders affect 10-15 percent of children globally. Approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. (46.6 million) experiences mental illness in a given year. And approximately 1 in 25 adults in the U.S. (11.2 million) experiences a serious mental illness in a given year that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities. BCBAs are increasingly being used in a preventative capacity. They provide job-embedded coaching to educators (PK-12 and high education) and focus on analyzing the behavioral environment and training teachers and professors in positive, supportive interactions that enhance learning and reduce classroom anxiety.

- a. The need to strengthen and expand the capacity of historically black institutions to provide high quality and unique educational programs

N/A

- 2. Provide evidence that the perceived need is consistent with the Maryland State Plan for Post-Secondary Education.

The M.S. in ABA is consistent with all priorities of the Maryland State Plan including: Access: Ensuring equitable access to affordable and quality post-secondary education for all Maryland residents; Success: Promoting and implementing practices and policies that will ensure student success; and Innovation: Fostering innovation in all aspects of Maryland higher education to improve access and student success.

Access: The M.S. in ABA affords access by ensuring equal educational opportunities for all Marylanders. Mount St. Mary's University will work with each student individually to construct a completion plan that aligns to their goals and financial resources. This plan will include, but not be limited to, seeking scholarships and graduate assistant opportunities, working with employers who fund higher education, etc.

Success: The M.S. in ABA will meet the needs of both traditional and non-traditional students. All courses will be offered in a distance education modality and practicum experiences will be individually arranged based on the needs of the graduate students. This advanced degree also

addresses a work force shortage in the areas of special education and applied behavior analysis. Students in the M.S. in ABA will be supported in a career pathway that is enriched by the integration of two departments. The School of Education will provide advising and practicum counseling in PDS and partner schools for individuals seeking employment in P-12 schools. The Department of Psychology will provide advising and practicum counseling in the numerous health care venues employing BCBAs including, but not limited to community-based behavior intervention facilities, hospitals, infant development programs, therapeutic preschool programs, etc.

Innovation: The M.S. in ABA will establish and sustain a wide variety of partnerships critical to recruiting and graduating students who are well prepared to sit for the national licensure examination and work effectively in their chosen education or health care discipline. These partnerships include highly qualified BCBA supervisors, practicum site mentors in education and the health professions, highly qualified lecturers and adjunct faculty, and an advisory council comprised of key stakeholders. The M.S. in ABA will seek national accreditation, invest in ongoing content and pedagogical training for all instructors and supervisors, and utilize open access resources in order to lower the cost of materials. The Deans of the School of Education and Natural Science and Mathematics will seek funding to expand support for research and research partnerships. These two academic leads will collaborate and share resources to improve the scholarship of both the faculty and graduate students in the ABA program.

### **C. Quantifiable and Reliable Evidence and Documentation of Market Supply and Demand in the Region and State:**

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, positions as behavior analysts are projected to grow 14% in the next 10 years, which is faster than the economy is projected to grow as a whole.

In addition, an analysis of the market supply and demand was collected and made available through EAB's partnership with EMSI, a labor market analytics firm serving higher education, economic development, and industry leaders in the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Describe potential industry or industries, employment opportunities, and expected level of entry (*ex: mid-level management*) for graduates of the proposed program.

1. Present data and analysis projecting market demand and the availability of openings in a job market to be served by the new program.

Mount St. Mary's University is located in proximity to several states experiencing shortages in both educators and allied health professionals. Across the mid-Atlantic region, school districts cannot hire enough teachers to fill all open positions. In the 2017–2018 school year, 46 states reported needs in special education. At the same time, fewer aspiring educators are enrolling in teacher preparation programs as well as advanced degrees and credentials. In addition to shortages in education and special education, significant demand is also reported in health care.

Eighty-five percent of job postings for BCBAs are seen in the categories of health care, educational services, and social assistance industries. Job postings consistently call for experience working with autism and developmental disabilities. In addition to behavior-analytic experience, each industry requires the skill sets mastered by the BCBA including treatment planning, therapy, and case management skills.



2. Discuss and provide evidence of market surveys that clearly provide quantifiable and reliable data on the educational and training needs and the anticipated number of vacancies expected over the next 5 years.

The demand for BCBA positions is calculated in market demand studies under the larger umbrellas of psychology and education. Both are projected to grow significantly. Specifically, the demand for BCBAs working in psychology and allied health is projected to grow 14% in the next 10 years. The demand for BCBAs working in education is expected to grow 6-8 % in the next ten years, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. These projections are informed by the rapid growth in demand for BCBAs over the past three years. Across all employment disciplines, the national market has seen an increased demand of 995%. More specifically, regional demand for BCBAs increased 118 % over the last three years. Across the same period, statewide demand increased 112%. Below is a table displaying the number of job postings for the nation, region and state from 2016-18 based on EAB data.

	2016	2017	2018
National	95	unavailable	1040
Regional	312	620	681
Maryland	26	55	60

3. Provide data showing the current and projected supply of prospective graduates.

Market surveys by EAB and Glass Door indicate that the demand for credentialed behavior analysts is increasing. Demand for behavior analyst positions more than doubled between 2012 (1,414 postings) and 2014 (3,083 postings) and this trend is expected to continue. This is a national trend, as demand increased in almost every state. Demand is highest in three states, California, Massachusetts, and New Jersey. However, 18 states had 40 or more job postings in 2014 –more than double the number of states as 2012.

There are currently 519 registered BCBAs in Maryland (EAB, 2019). With statewide demand for BCBAs rising 112% over the past two years, the demand for behavior analysts is not being met by the current supply. The current and future demand can be attributed to the rise in individuals being diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders and other behavior disorders and the regulation that behavior analysis and behavior plans be provided and covered by a number of insurance plans. By law, Maryland mandates that treatment for autism spectrum disorders is covered by these plans:

- Insurance company plans
- Non-profit health service plans
- Individual insurance plans
- Health maintenance organizations (HMOs)

This covers infants, children, and young adults up to the age of 19. BCBAs are also eligible for reimbursement through the state's federally supported Value Options (Maryland Department of Health).

One of the biggest increases in autism treatment coverage came with the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010. This opened the door for coverage under the state's new health care marketplace, the Maryland Health Benefits Exchange. Any insurance plans through this exchange are now required to include autism coverage.

As of 2017, Medicaid insurance plans also cover autism treatment provided by applied behavior analysts.

BCBAs in Maryland have a wide variety of professional settings within which to work, ranging from school districts and community health providers to private practice. BCBAs with 10 years of work experience can earn around \$63,644 annually in Maryland. That represents more than a thousand-dollar-per-year increase from the entry-level median wage in the state. Both these figures are some of the highest for any state in the nation.

#### **D. Reasonableness of Program Duplication**

1. Identify similar programs in the State and/or same geographical area. Discuss similarities and differences between the proposed program and others in the same degree to be awarded.

There are two programs in the region that allow students to take the coursework necessary to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). These two programs do not facilitate the practicum experience necessary to sit for the BCBA examination. The proposed program will include both the coursework and supervised practicum experiences necessary to sit for the BCBA examination.

Johns Hopkins University School of Education has a post-master's certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis. The course sequence is a verified course sequence (VCS) by the Association of Behavior Analysis International (ABAI). The program is offered online. Shippensburg University offers post-master's coursework in Harrisburg, PA that is also VCS by ABAI.

There are three Master's programs in the mid-Atlantic regions that provide the required course sequence and practicum experience. In Maryland, University of Maryland Baltimore County has a MA in Applied Behavior Analysis. The program is ABAI-BAAB accredited and is on campus. In Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University Harrisburg offers an MA in Applied Behavior Analysis with a VCS by ABAI. The program is on campus. In Virginia, Shenandoah University offers a MS in Applied Behavior Analysis with a VCS by ABAI. The program is on campus.

The proposed program will be unique compared to the above three programs in that 1) the majority of courses will be offered fully online, 2) the program will be interdisciplinary in nature with important contributions from psychology and education, and 3) the important focus on self-care, advocacy, and collaboration—all critical to professional sustainability.

2. Provide justification for the proposed program.

The justification for the new M.S. in ABA at the Mount is supported by the EAB market demand for a master's-level applied behavior program in the mid-Atlantic. The following is the executive summary of the EAB report.

An increase in regional and statewide demand for master's-level ABA professionals indicates a strong job market for program graduates. Employer demand for master's-level ABA professionals in the Mid-Atlantic region increased from 312 to 681 postings over the last two years (i.e., a 118 percent increase.) In addition, statewide demand for master's-level ABA professionals rose from 26 to 55 postings during this period (i.e., a 112 percent increase). Regional and statewide employers commonly seek to fill 'behavioral specialist' and 'behavior analyst' roles. An increase reported master's-level ABA completions nationwide suggests rising student interest in ABA programs. Total reported master's-level ABA completions rose 287 percent nationwide, from 207 completions to 802, between 2012 to 2016 (i.e., the most recent five years of available data). The number of national institutions that reported master's-level ABA completions increased from 210

percent across this five-year period (i.e., from 10 institutions in 2012 to 31 institutions in 2016). In addition, no institution in Maryland reported master’s-level ABA completions in 2016 (i.e., completions classified with CIP code 42.2814 Applied Behavior Analysis), which further suggests an opportunity for market entry. However, the University of Maryland-Baltimore County lists a master’s degree in ABA on the institution website, indicating some ABA degrees are conferred using other CIP codes.

**E. Relevance to High-demand Programs at Historically Black Institutions (HBIs)**

N/A

**F. Relevance to the identity of Historically Black Institutions (HBIs)**

N/A

**G. Adequacy of Curriculum Design, Program Modality, and Related Learning Outcomes (as outline in COMAR 13B.02.03.10):**

1. Describe how the proposed program was established, and also describe the faculty who will oversee the program.

The proposed program was established based on the Mount’s mission to nurture ethical leaders in current and emerging fields. The M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) was selected as a focus for graduate program growth after careful consultation with our psychology and education partners as well as market analysis. Both indicate significant demand for board-certified behavior analysts in education and allied health. The program will also enrich the Mount’s graduate offerings by providing an option based on the market demand and regional needs.

The faculty and administrators responsible for planning, implementation, and evaluation of the M.S. in ABA are listed below. Due to the highly specialized nature of launching a M.S. in ABA, the program director, adjuncts, and supervisor are TBD. Searches are currently underway for the program director and adjuncts are being vetted.

<b>Deans</b>			
Barbara Marinak	PhD	Education	Full-time
Kraig Sheetz	PhD	Science and Mathematics	Full-time
<b>Department Chairs</b>			
Caitlin Faas	PhD	Psychology	Full-time
Carolyn Cook	PhD	Education	Full-time
<b>Faculty</b>			
Program Director	BCBA, PhD	Applied Behavior Analysis	Full-time
Adjunct	BCBA, MS or PhD	Applied Behavior Analysis	Part-time
Adjunct	BCBA, MS or PhD	Applied Behavior Analysis	Part-time
Jonathan Slezak	PhD	Behavior Analysis	Full-time
<b>Supervisors</b>			
TBD	BCBA		
TBD	BCBA		

<b>Evaluation</b>			
Stacey Brown-Hobbs	Ph.D.	Director of Teacher Education	Full-time
<b>Consultant</b>			
Joshua K. Pritchard	PhD, BCBA-D	Applied Behavior Analysis	

**2. Describe educational objectives and learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor, breadth, and (modality) of the program.**

The Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) is the governing board for establishing standards for educational objectives and learning outcomes. These objectives and outcomes serve as the foundation for the Board Certification examination allowing one to practice as a BCBA. The objectives are divided into two sections: Foundations (basic skills and underlying principles and knowledge) and Applications (practice-oriented skills). Under each section are specific learning outcomes. These outcomes, to which courses will be aligned can be found at <https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/170113-BCBA-BCaBA-task-list-5th-ed-.pdf>

**3. Explain how the institution will:**

- a) provide for assessment of student achievement of learning outcomes in the program

Each course will have tailored learning outcomes based upon the above mentioned objectives developed by the ABAI. Each instructor will provide the appropriate assessment tool with continuous oversight by the program director, who will monitor objectives and assessment at a global level across the entire curriculum. In addition to the aforementioned learning outcomes, there will be pre/post exam that is intended to mock-up the national board exam. Each of the task items on the exam will be assigned per course, and measured as SLOs within the course. The courses will have final exams which incorporate assessments of the task items to demonstrate mastery through the curriculum. Passing of the post-mock exam will be required for graduation for up to three attempts (measures will be taken to facilitate passing each additional attempt).

- b) document student achievement of learning outcomes in the program

Student achievement of learning outcomes will be documented by scores on various assessment tools as deemed appropriate by each faculty member. In addition, we will document graduation rates, program completion time, attrition rates, and success rates for the board certification examination from which the learning objectives are based.

**4. Provide a list of courses with title, semester credit hours and course descriptions, along with a description of program requirements:**

MSABA 602: Behavior Theory and Philosophy (3 credits) - Meets 45 of the 90 hour requirement for philosophical underpinnings; concepts and principles. This course will provide students with an understanding of behavior analytic philosophy and conceptual issues such as those found in radical behaviorism which underlies the science and profession. Field hours will be required.

MSABA 603: Principles and Concepts of Behavior Analysis (3 credits) – Meets 45 of the 90 hour requirement for philosophical underpinnings; concepts and principles. This course will provide students with an introduction to the basic concepts and principles of our science, including the concepts and principles derived from the experimental analysis of behavior and how they are integral to both applied behavior analysis (ABA) and the professional practice of ABA. Field hours will be required.

MSABA 600: Collaboration in Professional Settings: (1 credit) – This one credit course focuses on the skills necessary to collaborate in professional settings. This course is not required in the VCS sequence; however it will serve as a differentiator of the program and assist our students with experiences to guide personal and professional growth and communication.



MSABA 604: Ethical and Professional Conduct (3 credits) – Meets the 45 hour requirement for BACB compliance code and disciplinary systems; professionalism. This course will prepare students to engage in ethical decision making for their supervision, practice, and research. It will examine ethical, professional and conduct issues relevant to BCBA certificants and their supervisors. It will provide an overview and framework with which to use the Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts to engage in ethical conduct. Field hours will be required.

MSABA 605: Behavior Assessment (3 credits) – Meets the 45 hour requirement for behavior assessment. This course provides students with an overview of the research literature and assessment techniques and approaches in applied behavior analysis including descriptive functional assessments, and their utility in research and professional practice. Field hours will be required.

MSABA 606: Behavior Change I (3 credits) – meets 45 of the 60 hours for behavior-change procedures; selecting and implementing interventions. This course provides students with an overview of the research, strategies, and techniques to change behavior both in terms of skill acquisition and behavior reduction. For example, this course will provide students the ability to use reinforcement, extinction, punishment, stimulus control, and management of schedules of reinforcement to develop behavioral repertoires. Field hours will be required.

MSABA 601: Advocacy in Professional Settings (1 credit) – This one credit course focuses on the skills necessary to advocate for best practices in professional settings. This course is not required in the VCS sequence; however, it will serve as a differentiator of the program and will support students as they hone their professionalism.

MSABA 607: Research Design, Measurement and Data Analysis (3 credits) – Meets the 45 hour requirement for measurement, data display and interpretation, and experimental design. This course is designed to provide graduate students with an understanding of behavioral measurement, graphing, and single-case designs of the sort found in the research and practice of behavior analysis. Students will learn baseline logic and the strengths and limitations of various research designs that are prevalent within the field. Field hours will be required.

MSABA 608: Introduction to Organizational Behavior Management & Supervision (3 credits) - meets 15 of the 60 hours for behavior-change procedures; selecting and implementing interventions. Meets 30 of the 30 hours of personnel supervision and Management. This course will provide students an overview of Organizational Behavior Management, and an examination of how to change behavior of supervisees in various types of organizations. Additionally, it will provide an overview of the research literature and techniques in performance management of employees and supervisees. Field hours will be required.

MSABA 603: Mindfulness and Contemplative Practices (1 credit) – This one credit course focuses mindfulness and contemplative practices. This course is not required in the VCS sequence; however, it will serve as a differentiator of the program and assist our students with experiences designed to nurture professional resiliency.

MSABA 609: Practicum (1-12 credits)- The practicum will be comprised of 12 credits total. The practicum facilitates the 1500-2000 hours of practicum experiences required by identifying placements and BCBA supervisors within the community. The programs ensures oversight and quality control via the program coordinator, supervisors and mentors. A research capstone experience will occur in the final practicum course designed to demonstrate application of ABA principles.

**5. Discuss how general education requirements will be met, if applicable.**

N/A

**6. Identify any specialized accreditation or graduate certification requirements for this program and its students.**

The core course sequence will be a verified course sequence (VCS) and will be approved by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI). Secondly, we will be prepared to meet criteria for the ABAI accreditation of the degree program.

**7. If contracting with another institution or non-collegiate organization, provide a copy of the written contract.**

N/A

**8. Provide assurance and any appropriate evidence that proposed program will provide students with clear, complete, and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, assumptions about technology competence and skills, technical equipment requirements, learning management system, availability of academic support services and financial aid resources, and costs and payment policies.**

Clear, complete, and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, assumptions about technology competence and skills, technical equipment requirements, learning management system, availability of academic support services and financial aid resources, and costs and payment policies will be provided to students in the Graduate Catalog. Additional information will be available on the Mount's website and be available in marketing materials. Creation of all Graduate Catalog and marketing content is under the supervision of the ABA Program Director, Department Chairs in Psychology and Education and the Deans of Natural Science and Mathematics and Education.

**9. Provide assurance and any appropriate evidence that advertising, recruiting, and admissions materials will clearly and accurately represent the proposed program and the services available.**

All electronic and print advertising, recruiting, and admissions materials clearly and accurately represent the program and services available. The admissions and recruitment staff are all extremely knowledgeable about the programs. All materials are reviewed by program coordinator/department chairs/deans prior to dissemination and list clearly the program, admissions requirements and contact information.

**H. Adequacy of Articulation**

N/A

**I. Adequacy of Faculty Resources** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.11).

1. Provide a brief narrative demonstrating the quality of program faculty. Include a summary list of faculty with appointment type, terminal degree title and field, academic title/rank, status (full-time, part-time, adjunct) and the course(s) each faculty member will teach (in this program).

Due to the highly specialized nature of launching a M.S. in ABA, the program director, adjuncts, and supervisor are TBD. Searches are currently underway for the program director and adjuncts are currently being vetted.

<b>Deans</b>	Degree	School	Status
Barbara Marinak	PhD	Education	Full-time
Kraig Sheetz	PhD	Science and Mathematics	Full-time
<b>Department Chairs</b>			
Caitlin Faas	PhD	Science and Mathematics	Full-time
Carolyn Cook	PhD	Education	Full-time
<b>Faculty</b>			
Program Coordinator TBD	BCBA, PhD	Applied Behavior Analysis	Searching Full-time
Adjunct TBD	BCBA, MS or PhD	Applied Behavior Analysis	Searching Part-time
Adjunct TBD	BCBA, MS or PhD	Applied Behavior Analysis	Searching Part-time
Jonathan Slezak	PhD	Behavior Analysis	Full-time
<b>Supervisors</b>	BCBA, MS or PhD	Applied Behavior Analysis	Searching Part-time
<b>Evaluation</b>			
Dr. Stacey Brown-Hobbs	PhD	Education	Full-time
<b>Consultant</b>			
Joshua K. Pritchard	PhD, BCBA-D	Applied Behavior Analysis	

2. Demonstrate how the institution will provide ongoing pedagogy training for faculty in evidenced-based best practices, including training in:
  - a) Pedagogy that meets the needs of the students

The Center for Instructional Design and Delivery will provide training in effective pedagogy for advanced programs of study. This training will be conducted in collaboration with the ABA Program Director to ensure that content and pedagogy are appropriately integrated for this highly specialized course of study.

- b) The learning management system

The Mount utilizes Canvas as the learning management system. The Center for Instructional Design and Delivery will provide mandatory Canvas training, including compliance and accessibility, with all instructors in the program.

- c) Evidenced-based best practices for distance education, if distance education is offered.

The Mount is NC-SARA accredited. In accordance with SARA, the Center for Instructional Design and Delivery will provide pedagogical oversight to ensure best practices for delivering advanced programs in a distance education format are followed. This will include pedagogical training of all instructors, pre-course review and post-course evaluations. In addition, the ABA Program Director will monitor all courses for content efficacy. The final layer of oversight related to best practices for distance education delivery will be completed by the Dean of the School of Education and the Dean of the School of Natural Science and Mathematics in accordance with NC-SARA standards.

**J. Adequacy of Library Resources** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.12).

Mount St. Mary's University's Phillips Library has adequate resources to support the introduction and continuation of the Applied Behavior Analysis program. Because this program is to be implemented within existing institutional resources, no additional library acquisitions are required. The Phillip's Library maintains a collection of 218,000 volumes with over 25,000 print and electronic journals. The Mount St. Mary's print collection in LC Class Q contains 8,330 titles and in R 2,013 titles.

Mount St. Mary's is a founding member of the Maryland Interlibrary Consortium of academic libraries with over one million titles that are easily accessible to faculty and students of each member institution. The Consortium developed a policy to avoid duplicate orders and each partner school is responsible for specific title development. Paper materials are delivered to our users within 24 hours, as the Consortium members use a common library system, Voyager, and a daily courier service.

Additionally, Mount St. Mary's is a member of the Maryland Digital Library and Maryland Interlibrary Consortium which further expands resources to include a vast library of full-text electronic journals and books. The library's Consortium partners recently purchased the ESCO Discovery Service to provide simultaneous Google-like searching for all databases.

Mount St. Mary's also has an agreement with the National Cancer Institute (NCI)- Frederick campus wherein any Mount St. Mary's student or faculty member visiting the NCI-Frederick library has full access to all NCI-Frederick holdings, either in person or by interlibrary loan using OCLC.

Mount St. Mary's University has full-text online access to 103 journals on psychological and biological sciences and related topics. Mount St. Mary's University subscribes to the following library resources:

- PsycINFO® database, American Psychological Association's (APA) renowned resource for abstracts of scholarly journal articles, book chapters, books, and dissertations, is the largest resource devoted to peer-reviewed literature in behavioral science and mental health. It contains records and summaries dating as far back as the 1600s with one of the highest DOI matching rates in the publishing industry. Journal coverage, which spans from the 1800s to the present, includes international material selected from periodicals in dozens of languages;



- PsycARTICLES®, also from the American Psychological Association (APA), is a definitive source of full-text, peer-reviewed scholarly and scientific articles in psychology. It contains articles from journals published by the American Psychological Association (APA), its imprint the Educational Publishing Foundation (EPF), and from allied organizations including the Canadian Psychological Association and the Hogrefe Publishing Group. It includes all journal articles, book reviews, letters to the editor, and errata from each journal. Coverage spans 1894 to the present and nearly all APA journals go back to Volume 1, Issue 1.
- HighWire, which provides access to over 4,500 PubMed journals
- JSTOR, which provides access to 3,400 bioscience journals
- AccessScience from McGraw-Hill (over 8,500 online encyclopedic bioscience entries)
- ScienceDirect from Elsevier, which includes access to the full text of over 200 journal titles in the areas of science, technology, business, and medicine. Additionally, abstract and bibliographic information is available for the entire database of 2500 journal titles, eBooks, reference works, handbooks, and book series.

**K. Adequacy of Physical Facilities, Infrastructure and Instructional Equipment** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.13)

The M.S. degree in Applied Behavior Analysis will be implemented as a primarily distance education program.

1. Provide an assurance that physical facilities, infrastructure and instruction equipment are adequate to initiate the program, particularly as related to spaces for classrooms, staff and faculty offices, and laboratories for studies in the technologies and sciences. If the program is to be implemented within existing institutional resources, include a supportive statement by the President for adequate equipment and facilities to meet the program's needs.

Existing infrastructure, instructional equipment, faculty and staff offices are adequate to initiate the program. There will be no impact on physical facilities due to delivery being distance education.

2. Provide assurance and any appropriate evidence that the institution will ensure students enrolled in and faculty teaching in distance education will have adequate access to:
  - a) All faculty, staff and students will have access to Outlook, the University's email platform. In addition, all faculty, staff and students will have access to Portal, the University's platform for housing FERPA protected data.
  - b) Mount St. Mary's University uses Canvas as the LMS. All faculty, staff and students will have access to and be trained in Canvas.

**L. Adequacy of Financial Resources with Documentation** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.14)

1. Complete [Table 1: Resources and Narrative Rationale](#). Provide finance data for the first five years of program implementation. Enter figures into each cell and provide a total for each year. Also provide a narrative rationale for each resource category. If resources have been or will be reallocated to support the proposed program, briefly discuss the sources of those funds.

**TABLE 1: RESOURCES**

Resources Categories	Year 1 (2020-2021)	Year 2 (2021-2022)	Year 3 (2022-2023)	Year 4 (2023-2024)	Year 5 (2024-2025)
1. Reallocated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Tuition/Fee Revenue (c+g)	\$168,750	\$183,510	\$374,040	\$381,600	\$388,620
a. # F.T. Students	15	15	30	30	30
b. Annual Tuition/ Fee Rate (Discounted rate)	\$11,850	\$12,075	\$12,305	\$12,539	\$12,777
c. Annual Full Time Revenue (a x b)	\$177,750	\$181,125	\$369,135	\$376,158	\$383,321
d. # Part Time Students	0	0	0	0	0
e. Credit Hour Rate	\$625	\$638	\$650	\$663	\$677
f. Annual Credit Hours	18	18	18	18	18
g. Total Part Time Revenue (d x e x f)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Grants, Contracts, & Other External Sources	\$0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0
4. Other Sources	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL (Add 1-4)</b>	<b>\$177,750</b>	<b>\$181,125</b>	<b>\$369,135</b>	<b>\$376,158</b>	<b>\$383,321</b>

Credit Hour Rate: We project a credit-hour rate increment of 2% per year which is a typical amount of increase at MSMU. Row 2.b. includes both standard tuition plus a \$300 fee per 3 credits of practicum (12 practicum credits required overall).

- Complete [Table 2: Program Expenditures and Narrative Rationale](#). Provide finance data for the first five years of program implementation. Enter figures into each cell and provide a total for each year. Also provide a narrative rationale for each expenditure category.

**TABLE 2: EXPENDITURES**

Expenditure Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1. Faculty (b+c below)	\$110,800	\$112,880	\$128,602	\$130,766	\$132,974
a. # FTE	1.1	1.1	1.25	1.25	1.25
b. Total Salary	\$86,800	\$88,400	\$103,632	\$105,297	\$106,995
c. Total Benefits	\$24,000	\$24,480	\$24,970	\$25,469	\$25,978
2. Admin. Staff (b+c below)	\$3,250	\$3,315	\$3,381	\$3,449	\$3,518
a. # FTE	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
b. Total Salary	\$2,500	\$2,550	\$2,601	\$2,653	\$2,706
c. Total Benefits	\$750	\$765	\$780	\$796	\$812
3. Support Staff (b+c below)					
a. # FTE					
b. Total Salary	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
c. Total Benefits					
4. Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Library	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. New or Renovated Space	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Other Expenses (see Table 3)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>8. TOTAL (Add 1 – 7)</b>	<b>\$129,050</b>	<b>\$131,195</b>	<b>\$161,983</b>	<b>\$164,215</b>	<b>\$166,492</b>

Faculty: In years 1 and 2, we anticipate single annual cohorts of 15. Instruction will be accomplished by one director and two adjunct sections. Starting in year 3, we anticipate increasing to two rolling cohorts of 15 and will thus require four additional adjunct sections.

Admin Staff: We estimate a time commitment equivalent to 5% of a person's workload in the Communications Office for marketing and promotion. A salary of \$50,000 was assumed and benefits are 30% of the salary. The salary was incremented by 2% per year.

Support Staff: This section captures the supervisor stipends for the practicum portion of the program. Although students have flexibility in when they conduct their 12-credit practicum requirement, on average it will equate to three credit hours per student per semester. Practicum supervision stipend is estimated at \$500 per student per semester.

**M. Adequacy of Provisions for Evaluation of Program** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.15).

1. Discuss procedures for evaluating courses, faculty and student learning outcomes.

First, the courses will go through professional credentialing to be a Verified Course Sequence (VCS) by the Association of Behavior Analysis International (ABAI). The VCS is updated annually and goes through re-approval each year. Each course will have tailored learning outcomes based upon the above mentioned objectives developed by us to meet the ABAI requirements (and BACB 5<sup>th</sup> edition task list). Each instructor will provide the appropriate assessment tool with continuous oversight by the program director, who will monitor outcomes of objectives and assessment at a global level across the entire curriculum. In addition to the aforementioned learning outcomes, there will be pre-exam upon program entry and then a post-exam prior to exit, both of which are intended to mock-up the national board exam. Although there will be assigned task lists per course, the program director will also ensure that the program as a whole provides coverage of all the task lists and work with each instructor to make certain that the requisite task list items are represented in assessments within each course, and measured both in a format representative of the national exam, but also any other SLOs within the course. The courses will have final exams which incorporate assessments of the task items to demonstrate mastery through the curriculum. Passing of the post-mock exam will be required for graduation for up to three attempts (measures will be taken to facilitate passing each additional attempt). Faculty will have met certain requirements to teach in a VCS curriculum approved by ABAI. Thereafter, faculty performance will be reviewed by the appropriate coordinator and department chair on a biannual basis.

2. Explain how the institution will evaluate the proposed program's educational effectiveness, including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, student and faculty satisfaction, and cost effectiveness.

As alluded to above, students will take a baseline mock BCBA exam upon entry and then will be required to pass another mock exam after the VCS sequence as the final step for graduation from the program. This contingency serves three functions: a) it will provide a measure of the growth of the student due to the VCS b) it will provide the student with experience on a high-stakes exam in a situation made similar to the BCBA exam and thusly will c) increase the likelihood that our students will be prepared for and pass the Board Certification. This latter point will be most critical as the BACB releases program pass rates, and high rates will likely result in an increased future student enrollment. All student learning outcomes (as defined for ABAI) will be dispersed throughout the VCS. Student retention will be evaluated by the appropriate coordinator and department chairs. To facilitate student retention, we are embedding Intra/Interpersonal Skills Development Courses that will not only promote professional development, but also personal development by offering one-credit courses on self-care, advocacy and collaboration.

Student satisfaction will be assessed by post-class feedback surveys. Students fill these out after each class (or week) and it asks a pretty basic question set: a) on a 1-10 scale, how was this class/week?; b) what was the best thing about this week/class?; c) what would you think about changing to improve this class/week?; d) any other comments/feedback you want to share. This feedback flows into a database system for the director, who aggregates and pushes reports to the faculty on their scores. Training is provided to faculty to ensure they adjust their material/style \*only\* when warranted, not simply as a means to customer satisfaction over/against student outcome (e.g. if students provide feedback that there is a lot of reading...instead of reducing reading, the instructor should spend some time at the beginning of the next class explaining why the reading is

critical). Faculty satisfaction will be facilitated by one-on-one meetings with coordinators and department chairs. Cost effectiveness will be facilitated by the Deans of Education and Science and Mathematics in consultation with the Mount St. Mary's finance department.

**N. Consistency with the State's Minority Student Achievement Goals** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.05).

The proposed M.S. in Applied Behavior Analysis is offered within the Mount St. Mary's University. The Mount has a long-standing commitment to diversity and equality.

**O. Relationship to Low Productivity Programs Identified by the Commission:**

If the proposed program is directly related to an identified low productivity program, discuss how the fiscal resources (including faculty, administration, library resources and general operating expenses) may be redistributed to this program.

N/A

**P. Adequacy of Distance Education Programs** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.22)

1. Provide affirmation and any appropriate evidence that the institution is eligible to provide Distance Education.

Mount St. Mary's University is NC-SARA approved. See Appendix A.

2. Provide assurance and any appropriate evidence that the institution complies with the C-RAC guidelines, particularly as it relates to the proposed program.

Mount St. Mary's University, as per full NC-SARA accreditation, complies with all C-RAC guidelines. See appendices. Appendix A is our NC-SARA acceptance email, and Appendix B is our Five-Year Strategic Plan for Distance Education.

## Appendix A

**From:** NC-SARA <[info@nc-sara.org](mailto:info@nc-sara.org)>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 23, 2019 11:09 AM  
**To:** Frazier, Laura <[frazier@msmary.edu](mailto:frazier@msmary.edu)>  
**Subject:** SARA Annual Membership Approval: Payment and Verification

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Congratulations!

Mount St Mary's University has been approved for participation in SARA! In order to complete the process and ensure participation, **please use the link below to verify information and for payment of the NC-SARA annual fee:**

Payment registration  
<http://ncsara.force.com/institutions/InstitutionPaymentForm?id=001360000078Z6o&contactid=0031R00002ABlrL>.

If you have any questions or issues, please don't hesitate to contact us at [info@nc-sara.org](mailto:info@nc-sara.org)

Have a great day!

NC-SARA staff

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## Appendix B

### Five-Year Online Strategic Plan

#### Our Vision:

The vision of online learning at Mount St. Mary's University aligns to the vision of the University.

*By effectively, efficiently, and ethically leveraging the power of online learning, Mount St. Mary's University will be the No. 1 regional university in the Northeast by 2023, recognized for a relentless commitment to student success, financial sustainability and stewardship, and a faith- and values-based campus environment (that includes both F2F and online or distance education that inspires graduates to lead lives of meaning and purpose.*

#### Our Mission:

The mission of online learning at Mount St. Mary's University aligns to the mission of the University.

As a Catholic university, Mount St. Mary's graduates ethical leaders who are inspired by a passion for learning *in all forms* and lead lives of significance in service to God and others.

#### Our Values:

As members of the Mount St. Mary's community, we deeply value:

- **A Student-Centric Focus:** Students, and their future success, are the reason our institution exists and are the focal point of all that we do. *We recognize that students possess a wide variety of learning modalities and needs. As such, our student-centric focus informs the courses and programs that can be delivered online most effectively.*
- **Our Catholic Identity:** In a dynamic higher education environment, an enduring commitment to our Catholic mission inspires a fearless engagement with the world and a hospitality to all regardless of religious background. *Our Catholic identity ensures that appropriate community will be constructed and maintained in online learning environments and that all participants are treated with dignity at all times.*
- **Academic Excellence:** Through the Catholic intellectual tradition we educate students, in all learning environments, to advance human understanding of our world and the human condition while cultivating in them an excellence in a chosen profession and a zeal for lifelong learning. *Academic excellence is a strategic priority for all learning at Mount St. Mary's University. Excellence online is ensured through effective planning (selecting only those courses and programs anticipated to be most successfully delivered online), frequent evaluation (by faculty, students, and administration), and through on-going professional development of the faculty who teach online.*

**A Transformative Learning Environment:** Together we create the caring and intellectually stimulating environment that inspires our students' desire to lead lives of meaning and purpose. *At Mount St. Mary's University, we are committed to providing expertly constructed courses online that contribute to a learning environment that is transformative for both students and faculty.*

**Inclusion:** We harness the energy created by diversity of thought and engendered by a richly diverse staff, faculty, and student body to ensure that all feel welcome and included at Mount St. Mary's University. *By utilizing the most effective learning management technologies, Mount St. Mary's University ensures that our online learning environments are fully inclusive for and accessible to all students.*

**Honesty and Integrity:** Our respect for others leads us to respond with honesty and integrity in our daily interactions. *Academic integrity in online learning environments is achieved and maintained through careful interactions with students and by utilizing appropriate verification, monitoring and assessment applications.*

### **Strategic Priorities, Objectives and Tactics**

Mount St. Mary's strategic priorities articulate what we will do to achieve our vision and mission. To provide context for our strategic priorities, we have provided detailed objectives and strategies that are concrete and tactical in nature. We have not listed everything that we intend to do in the next five years. In fact, our need to be able to adjust to our rapidly changing environment dictates that we set unit-based and functional strategies annually in support of our strategic plan and review the progress and accuracy of these quarterly.

#### **Strategic Priority 1: Student Success**

Mount St. Mary's University prepares a diverse student body to be ethical leaders who lead lives of significance in service to God and others. We do this by immersing students in a rigorous intellectual, social and spiritual experience, grounded in the Catholic intellectual tradition. The Mount prepares graduates for excellence in their lifelong pursuits through cultivating a zeal for learning.

**1.1 Objective:** Embrace an unwavering commitment to academic quality, student learning, and Mount St. Mary's academic priorities in online learning.

#### **Example Tactics**

- Engage the Center for Instructional Design and Delivery (CIDD), the deans and provost in the construction of a joint learning strategy that addresses issues related to quality of online program development and delivery, the online student experience, and professional development
- Improve faculty onboarding and provide support services in collaboration with academic partners
- Assure high-quality instruction through rigorous faculty development programs, such as courses and mentoring programs, integrating with or augmenting other faculty development efforts
- CIDD will lead the effort to adopt online course design standards
- Continue to advance effective and innovative online design models through emerging tools and instructional design methodologies



**1.2 Objective:** Grow online offerings at Mount St. Mary's University by 30% in the next five years.

**Example Tactics**

- Decrease time-to-market offering by working closely with faculty to create and obtain approvals for new online courses and programs.
- Explore opportunities to significantly scale enrollments in high-interest programs with attention to effective faculty-student engagement.
- Significantly expand corporate alliance partnerships to include corporate and government partners.
- Expand regional marketing to achieve significant growth in high-demand regions.
- Explore an international strategy by targeting specific markets and pursuing partnerships with select global partners.
- Build a deeper partnership with the military to grow active military and veteran enrollment.

**1.3 Objective:** Monitor and continuously improve student-faculty engagement.

**Example Tactics**

- Maintain flexibility regarding program and course delivery with the goal being maximum student-faculty engagement. This could include entire courses delivered asynchronously while in other cases they may be a mix of asynchronous and synchronous via Chat. This could also involve scheduled video conference sessions or the entire course delivered entirely via video conference at a distance.
- Through the CIDD, remain agile in programming and continue visioning flexibility for students. For example, we foresee situations where some students will choose to come and sit in class or participate at a distance as suits their needs.
- Continue to improve non-course learning and other supports including learning services via phone, academic counseling via video conferencing, etc.

**Strategic Priority 2: Faith– and Values–Based Campus Environment**

Mount St. Mary's University is deeply passionate about cultivating an environment rooted in our values to create a welcoming and engaged community. As the oldest independent Catholic university, we are steadfast in our mission, inviting all people of faith to embark on their spiritual journeys. We continuously strive to provide an exhilarating academic and social university experience, focused on education, teamwork and inclusion. Fostering a culture of service in all that we do, we are energized to serve one another with love, dignity and respect. We recognize the importance of enhancing our student quality of life and the responsibility of maintaining a safe and secure environment for our students, faculty, staff and visitors.

**2.1 Objective:** Continue to grow our community by offering online academic opportunities to Catholic high school students.

**Example Tactics**

- Continue to offer Mount St. Mary's courses to academically talented Catholic high school students via distance learning and online.

### Strategic Priority 3: Financial Sustainability and Stewardship

The Mount's institutional culture of stewardship manifests as disciplined people, thought and action to ensure the efficient and effective use of time, talent, treasure and environment. Comprehensive financial and human resource plans provide the framework for priorities and decision making. As stewards we generate and deploy resources to serve students and to reinvest in the long-term excellence of the Mount.

3.1 Objective: Support the financial sustainability of online learning at Mount St. Mary's University by engaging in ongoing research and continuous improvement.

#### **Example Tactics**

- A portion of student revenue will be allocated to ongoing research in effective pedagogy regardless of modalities and delivery systems.