

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Behavior Analysis Master's Program

James E. Carr

- *Program Mission and Overview*

The department of psychology at Western Michigan University offers a 2-year master's degree program in behavior analysis that is accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis. The program combines advanced course work in behavior analysis, practicum opportunities, and mentored research experience to prepare students for doctoral study or for employment at the master's level. All students take courses in the basic (e.g., conditioning and learning), conceptual (e.g., Skinner's behaviorism), and applied aspects (e.g., behavioral approaches to treatment) of the discipline and are offered 20 courses in behavior analysis and therapy from which to choose. Students also complete either a research thesis or an empirical application project. The program's main specialty areas are developmental disabilities, basic operant research with humans and nonhumans, organizational behavior management, behavioral community psychology, behavioral pharmacology, behavioral gerontology, and behavioral medicine. Currently, 8 faculty members mentor approximately 40 students in the behavior analysis master's program.

The program's missions are to (a) provide students with a strong foundation in behavior analysis, including its concepts and principles, theoretical systems, research methods, and behavior-change strategies, and (b) provide students with the specific skills necessary for them to be successful practitioners and researchers.

- *Training Model*

The program operates using a mentorship model under which students work closely with a major professor responsible for their program of study. For those students who have clinical and applied interests (e.g., developmental disabilities, behavioral medicine, organizational behavior management), their training follows a scientist-practitioner model. Students are provided with multiple, supervised practicum opportunities in which they can acquire repertoires in the ethical application

of behavioral technology and in the empirical evaluation of treatment outcomes. These students complete an applied behavior-analytic research thesis or project. For students whose primary interest is the experimental analysis of behavior, their time is generally spent conducting research with their major professor.

- *Unique Aspects of Program*

The most unique aspect of our program is that it is housed within a department that has had a pervasive behavioral orientation since the late 1960s (Michael, 1993). In addition to the master's degree in behavior analysis, the department offers a master's degree in industrial/organizational psychology and doctoral degrees in clinical psychology (APA accredited) and behavior analysis—all offered from a behavioral perspective. The psychology department was recently ranked 5th out of 53 institutions for scholarly productivity in behavior analysis from 1992 to 2001 (Shabani et al., 2004). One of the benefits of a consistent departmental worldview is the ease with which students can “cross-train” with students and faculty from other programs. For example, it is not uncommon for clinical and behavior analysis students to work together acquiring applied skills, or for students who specialize in developmental disabilities or behavioral medicine to obtain a secondary specialization in organizational behavior management.

- *Student Placement*

Approximately one third of our students enter doctoral programs after graduation. Common doctoral programs include behavior analysis, clinical psychology, school psychology, and special education. The remaining students accept employment with individuals and organizations in developmental disabilities, mental illness, substance abuse, community mental health, education, government, business, and industry. In recent years, the program's student placement rate has been 100%. The program's core curriculum has been approved by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board (www.bacb.com), which facilitates subsequent certification in behavior analysis.

- *Contact Information*

More information on our program can be found on our Web site (www.wmich.edu/psychology/BA) and in our entry in the Association for Behavior Analysis Graduate

Training Directory (www.abainternational.org/start/findgtd.asp). An application packet can be obtained from the program Web site, from our graduate-training secretary (linda.rowen@wmich.edu), or by calling the department: (269) 387-4500.

Reference

Shabani, D., Carr, J., Petursdottir, A., Esch, B., & Gillett, J. (2004). Scholarly productivity in behavior analysis: The most prolific authors and institutions from 1992 to 2001. *The Behavior Analyst Today*, 5, 235-243.

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Psychological Sciences Program (Clinical Concentration)

Steven W. Evans and Gregg R. Henriques

- *Program Mission and Overview*

The clinical concentration in the psychological sciences at James Madison University's (JMU) master's program represents a unique set of training opportunities for students interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in clinical or school psychology with an emphasis on clinical research. The core of the psychological sciences program is a sequence of courses in statistics, measurement and research design, core content areas, a research apprenticeship, and a thesis. The core provides students with a strong foundation in the psychological sciences. This training equips them to contribute as an active member of a research team by participating in a variety of activities such as serving as a project coordinator, reading and discussing the research literature, working on empirical studies, presenting at professional conferences, and publishing in peer-reviewed journals.

Students in the clinical concentration receive training consistent with a scientist-practitioner orientation to the field of behavioral health. Faculty emphasize empirical approaches to treatment, methods of studying treatment outcome, and other clinical topics. All students in the clinical concentration are expected to present their research at professional conferences and to publish. Completion of core courses, a research apprenticeship, and a research paper