



November 7, 2022

Teachers College, Columbia University
528 West 121st St., 5th Floor
New York, NY 10027

Dear Dr. Daniel Fienup,

On behalf of the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) Accreditation Board, I write to inform you that the Board has deferred its decision on the re-accreditation of the Teaching as Applied Behavior Analysis Ph.D. program, pending the receipt of evidence that the program has made specific improvements within three years.

The Board agreed with the site visit reports, there are commendable aspects to the doctoral program, especially as the program has historically been an effective training program with excellent scholarly productivity. There are three areas in which improvements are needed, two overlap with the master's program.

- Standard 3 – Outcomes Assessment. Specifically for item 3-100, the program needs to verify accuracy of the reported data and clarify the duration for degree completion information as it relates to the information reported in item 2-104.
- Standard 4 – Administration. Specifically for item 4-103, there were concerns that the program will need additional resources to sustain and support the program administrator. The Board acknowledges the program recently opened a search for one tenure-line faculty position. Further, the Board appreciates the site visitors' recommendations that the program could benefit from an additional tenure-track faculty line and recommends the program consider qualified individuals other than those produced by the Teachers College program. With the planned retirement of one prominent faculty member and the current disproportion of tenured and non-tenured faculty, it will be imperative that the program adequately meets this standard area with sufficient faculty resources before the end of the three-year deferral.
- Standard 9 – Degree Program. The HBSE 4017 (ABA 3) course does not meet the requirement for 90 hours in Basic Behavior Analysis coursework, therefore the doctoral program remains deficient in this area. Again, the Board acknowledges that historically the program attempted to address the basic contents in different arrangements. The basic coursework is intended to develop competence in understanding how principles of behavior are discovered and described in the context of basic research. As such the focus of the coursework must be on



experimental research designed to discover, characterize, or clarify fundamental principles of behavior. As you develop appropriate basic courses, you may wish to submit draft syllabi to the Board for review. This would help ensure that the courses you ultimately offer will meet Standard 9-107.

The site visitors also offered recommendations that you may consider as part of your ongoing efforts at improving the program but are not required to be formally addressed within the scope of the deferral decision. The Board appreciates the collegial nature of your response to the site visit report. Further, the Board looks forward to the university's continued support of the program.

In accordance with item 3-1-103, from the ABAI Accreditation Handbook, the previous grant of accreditation of the doctoral program is automatically extended during the deferral period. **The self-study application must be submitted by April 1, 2025, and the site visit, report, and program response must conclude by December 31, 2025.**

The Board understands that this is not the decision you sought. The Board respects the programs at Teachers College, Columbia University, and its success in training quality graduates. By extending the accreditation of the doctoral program during the deferral period, the Board believes it has acted as generously as its governance document allows.

As the doctoral program remains accredited, the program is required to pay an annual sustaining fee as described in Title VII Section 7-1-104 of the *Accreditation Handbook*, and to remain in compliance with the Board's policies and procedures. I would like to call special attention to three important policies related to public disclosure. Your program is required to:

1. share the program's accreditation status and display the Board's doctoral-level accreditation seal on the program's web site. (See the Board's *Policy on Public Disclosure of Accreditation Status*.) The program is compliant with this requirement.
2. display on your website a prominent link to the aggregate report of the program's student outcomes that is posted on the Board's website. The link to your program's page and aggregate report is:
<https://accreditation.abainternational.org/apply/accredited-programs/teachers-college-columbia-university.aspx> (See Title IX, Chapter 3 of the *Accreditation Handbook*.)



3. submit an annual report and annual fee, normally due April 1 of each year, as described in Title VII of the *Accreditation Handbook*, using the form posted at <https://forms.gle/hjStiMjAu2FduRp79>. We received your 2021 annual report information – thank you. ABAI will issue the invoice for the 2022 annual sustaining fees.

The aforementioned policies can be found via the “Documents” tab at <https://accreditation.abainternational.org>. As program administrator, you should familiarize yourself with the materials in this section of the Board’s website.

If your program assigns a new program administrator during this period, please notify me immediately so I can update our records. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me – I am available to help. I will be glad to discuss the Board’s requirements with you and, if you would like, we can include Mike Perone, the Board Coordinator, in the discussion.

We look forward to the continued developments and improvements of the program.

Sincerely,

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Jenna Mrljak, Ph.D., BCBA
Director of Education
Association for Behavior Analysis International
ABAIaccreditation@ABAIInternational.org

cc: Michael Perone, Ph.D., ABAI Accreditation Board Coordinator