Texas State University offers a graduate-level concentration in behavioral disorders/positive behavioral supports (BD/PBS). The task of educating students who exhibit challenging behaviors or students who have mental health disorders poses significant challenges for teachers and administrators. These students benefit from the comprehensive array of research-based interventions that have been shown to effectively improve learning and behavioral outcomes. Such strategies are grounded in positive behavioral supports and applied behavior analysis and emphasize positive, proactive approaches to improving behavioral, social and academic skills.

The master’s of education in special education with a concentration in BD/PBS provides advanced, specialized training in understanding emotional and behavioral disorders and designing educational programs based on positive behavioral supports. This is a demanding concentration, but one with many opportunities for students, including publications or conference presentations with faculty, preparation for doctoral programs, and exposure to policy-makers and researchers in the field of behavioral disorders.

This program integrates the latest in evidence-based practices in academic, social, and behavioral interventions, and is designed for behavior specialists, behavior teachers, behavior consultants, PBS coaches and specialists, and others who provide direct or consultative services in the areas of behavioral disorders or positive behavioral supports. Students in this program will work with program faculty who are nationally and internationally recognized for their expertise in emotional/behavioral disorders, positive behavioral supports and applied behavior analysis.

“"The excellence of the training I received in BD/PBS at Texas State is clearly apparent to those I now work with. In fact, I have been asked to guest lecture on these topics at the university where I am now a doctoral student, as well as speak at our state PBIS training institute.”

— Tichelle Bruntmyer  SPECIAL EDUCATION ALUMNA
What type of graduate student is a good fit for this program?
This is a competitive program that requires highly competent and determined graduate students. We are seeking graduate students who are motivated to be specialized practitioners, researchers, or scientist-practitioners. Applicants should have a strong commitment to academic excellence and motivation to improve the quality of life and educational services for children and youth with emotional/behavioral disorders. Many of our graduates have been awarded full scholarships with stipends to pursue doctoral degrees in top-ranked university programs, have become leaders in BD/PBS programs in school districts and other programs, or are teaching students with emotional/behavioral disorders.

BD/PBS Program Options
Students may choose from three BD/PBS program options:

• M.Ed. in special education with concentration in BD/PBS — This 36-hour (12 courses) program can include the Texas State University certificate in BD/PBS.

• Texas State University certificate in BD/PBS — This certificate requires 21 hours in special education (seven courses).

• M.Ed. in special education with concentration in BD/PBS, plus special education teaching certification — Students interested in this program select BD/PBS as their special education concentration. In addition, these students will be in our graduate special education teaching certification program, Career Alternatives in Special Education (CASE). This program typically requires 48 hours and culminates in teaching certification in EC-6 ESL and all-level special education, as well as the M.Ed. in special education. Students may attend full time or part time, and summer courses are optional.

Course Work
Sample special education courses in this major include:

• Introductory and advanced courses in Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
• Principles and Practices in Effective Instruction for Students with Disabilities
• Advanced Intervention Practices for Challenging Behavior
• Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in Schools
• Applied Behavior Analysis
• Design in Special Education
• Practicum in Behavioral Disorders/Positive Behavior Supports

Admission Policy
In addition to the general requirements for admission to the Texas State University Graduate College, the special education program requires a minimum GPA of 2.75 on the last 60 hours of undergraduate work leading to a bachelor’s degree, a minimum verbal GRE score of 151, and a minimum quantitative GRE score of 149.

Interested individuals should submit the following to the Graduate College:

• an official Graduate College application through ApplyTexas
• one official transcript from each four-year college or university attended, including community colleges
• official results of the verbal/quantitative GRE (for students seeking a master’s degree)

Additional Application Requirements

• department application
• letter of intent stating career goals
• résumé

• two letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicants professional work, including at least one supervisor
• copies of certifications or licensures (optional)

Visit www.gradcollege.txstate.edu for more information and an online application. Applications are due June 15 for fall semester, October 15 for the spring semester, and April 15 for summer sessions.

Applicants seeking teaching certification should also apply for an EC-6 ESL and special education teaching certification plan through the Office of Educator Preparation: www.education.txstate.edu/oep/.

Financial Assistance
For information about scholarships and financial aid, visit the Graduate College website at www.gradcollege.txstate.edu and click on Financing Your Graduate Education.

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