
Psychology

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Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental life. The discipline is broad, with different fields of study that range from conducting basic research in laboratory or field settings, to meeting the needs of individuals or groups in clinical settings, to addressing philosophical questions of the discipline. The Department represents these various orientations, encouraging students to engage in the analysis of psychological phenomena from diverse perspectives.

Psychology majors must take a minimum of 10 courses in psychology. The first course taken by majors is Introductory Psychology (Psychology 100). Then, typically in their second year, students begin an in-depth examination of the process of psychological inquiry by taking a course in statistics (Statistics—Psychology 200) and a course in methodology (Research Methods in Psychology—Psychology 201). In the third year, students explore the historical and philosophical roots of psychology by taking History and Theory of Psychology (Psychology 205). Majors are also required to explore fundamental areas of the discipline by completing one course from each of the four following categories: Biological Psychology (Physiological Psychology, Evolution of Behavior, or Learning), Cognitive Psychology (Sensation and Perception, Cognition and Memory, or Psychology of Language), Developmental Processes (Developmental Psychology, Psychology of Adolescence, Psychology of Aging, or Culture and Development), and Individual and Social Processes (Abnormal Psychology, Personality, or Social Psychology). Additionally majors must take at least one advanced-level course in psychology and an elective. These courses should be chosen in accordance with a student's own developing interests and curricular needs. An advanced course is any 300 level course, including seminars and lab classes. An elective course is any non-required course that does not fulfill a fundamental area requirement.

Note that majors must fulfill the college's common requirement in the social sciences by taking at least one social science course outside the Psychology Department. Similarly, majors must fulfill the common requirement in the natural and mathematical sciences by taking at least one natural science or mathematics course outside the Psychology Department. Academic advisors can assist students in selecting common requirement courses that help provide a coherent, well-integrated program of study.

There is ample opportunity for students to pursue advanced study (Directed Readings—Psychology 470) and research (Research Projects—Psychology 480) under the individual direction of their professors. These courses may be used to fulfill the elective requirement of the major. Our faculty is actively engaged in research on a variety of topics, including the effects of hormones and drugs on behavior, individual differences in animal intelligence, cognitive development in children, interpersonal coordination, sleep, the neuropsychological basis of language and reading, social and cultural psychology,

health psychology, and grief and bereavement. Many of the department's majors have presented papers at regional and national undergraduate and professional meetings and have published their work in professional journals. The undergraduate liberal arts degree in psychology also provides students with many advanced-study and career options and has led to students being placed in graduate programs in psychology and medicine as well as a wide variety of workplaces.

Advanced Placement Credit: Students with AP credit in psychology (a score of 4 or 5) are awarded advanced placement in the curriculum and forfeit that credit if they take Psychology 100, Introductory Psychology. AP credit counts toward the minimum number of courses required in the major. Students with AP credit in psychology who would like to be psychology majors should consider taking Psychology 200 and 201 in their first year. Interested students should contact the chair of the department.

Biological Psychology Concentration

The Psychology Department, in cooperation with the Biology Department, offers an interdisciplinary concentration that concerns the study of neuroscience and behavior. The concentration requires an understanding of various fields including biology, psychology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and computer science. Concentrators majoring in either biology or psychology are exposed to original research throughout the concentration and may elect to spend their fourth year engaged in a thesis project. Admission to the concentration is by application. Interested students should consult with the Concentration Director, Prof. John Axelson, prior to enrolling in second-year courses.

Courses

Psychology 100 — Introductory Psychology

Fall, spring

An introduction to the principles of psychology as emerging from the areas of physiological, sensation and perception, developmental, learning, cognition and memory, social, personality, and abnormal. Required for the psychology major. One unit.

Psychology 140 — Human Nature, Ethics, and Society

Fall, spring

Explores a number of fundamental philosophical and psychological questions concerning the human condition: What is human nature? What are the desired ends of human life? Given our nature—which will be no easy task to determine—what kinds of personal commitments and social arrangements will best promote these ends? At a most basic level, this course seeks to foster reflection and discernment regarding who and what we are and ought to be. At the same time, the course is outward looking and seeks to help students find an appropriate balance between realism about the human condition and hope about our prospects for fashioning a better, more just world. Fulfills the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Enrollment is limited to first year students. One unit.

Psychology 200 — Statistics

Fall

An introduction to descriptive and inferential statistical methods in analysis and interpretation of psychological data. Required for the psychology major. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One and one-quarter units.

Psychology 201 — Research Methods in Psychology

Spring

A thorough survey of methods and techniques employed in psychological research is covered. Topics include observational research, surveys, case studies, experimental designs, and ethical issues in research. Emphasis is on critical evaluation of research. Students develop the skills to design an experiment, statistically analyze and interpret the results, and to present the findings in a written and oral report. Required for the psychology major. Prerequisite: Psychology 200. One and one-half units.

Psychology 205 — History and Theory of Psychology

Fall, spring

An examination in historical perspective of what are considered to be the major systems (e.g., psychoanalysis, behaviorism, existential psychology) of psychology. The course begins by using a number of philosophical questions regarding the status of psychology as a scientific discipline, moves on to a comprehensive treatment of the systems themselves, and finally, returns to initial questions to determine the extent to which they have been answered. Required for the psychology major. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 220 — Sensation and Perception

Annually

The two major contemporary theories of perception are discussed for each of the sensory/perceptual systems

(e.g., vision, audition, and haptics). For both theoretical approaches, a critical examination is made of the relation of sensory processes, perceptual abilities, and action systems with the goal of explaining how we are able to perceive the world. Fulfills the Cognitive Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 221 — Physiological Psychology

Fall, spring

The structure and function of the nervous system is studied to provide an appreciation of the biological basis of behavior. The first half of the course emphasizes neuroanatomy, basic cell physiology, effects of drugs on behavior, and the autonomic nervous system. Later topics include physiological influences on sleep-wake and circadian rhythms, reproductive behavior, eating and drinking, learning and memory, emotions, and mental illness. Fulfills the Biological Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 223 — Learning

Annually

An intensive evaluation of how behavior is acquired and maintained. Focuses on Pavlovian and operant conditioning in animals and human subjects. Special topics include the application of these principles to psychotherapy, drug addiction, self-control, and biological influences and constraints on learning. Fulfills the Biological Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 225 — Developmental Psychology

Annually

A survey of theory and research pertaining to both cognitive and social development. Special topics include prenatal development, early experience, perception, memory, intelligence, socialization, moral development, sex-role development, and patterns of child-rearing. Fulfills the Developmental Processes Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 226 — Personality

Annually

Covers several major conceptions of personality such as the psychoanalytic, humanistic, cognitive, trait, and behavioral approaches. The theories of such psychologists as Freud, Maslow, Kelly, Allport, and Skinner are presented to attain a broad understanding of human personality. Fulfills the Individual and Social Processes Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 227 — Social Psychology

Annually

An overview of the methods and research findings of social psychology. Emphasis is on the experimental analysis of topics such as person perception, interpersonal attraction, prosocial behavior, aggression, social exchange, and group behavior. Fulfills the Individual and Social Processes Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 228 — Psychology of Adolescence

Annually

A survey of research and theories related to physical, social and cognitive development during adolescence with a particular emphasis on identity and school, family, and peer contexts. Topics include puberty and brain development, social transitions and culture, peer pressure, motivation and achievement, identity formation, extracurricular involvement, autonomy and moral development, sexuality, problem behaviors, eating disorders, and emerging adulthood. Fulfills the Developmental Processes Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 229 — Abnormal Psychology

Annually

Examines mental illness throughout the life span, with discussions of the developmental, biological, behavioral, psychosocial, cultural, and other theories that attempt to explain emotional and behavioral problems. One goal for the course is to develop an understanding of how information about mental illness and mental health is obtained, and the problems associated with the evaluation and interpretation of this information. Fulfills the Individual and Social Processes Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 236 — Cognition and Memory

Annually

Examines current perspectives on how a physical system can have intelligence and know its world. Historical, cognitive science (computer metaphor) and connectionist perspectives will be surveyed. Of interest is how we can model cognitive 'machinery' and how this machinery produces such phenomena as attention, pattern recognition, and information storage. Fulfills the Cognitive Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 237 — Psychology of Language

Alternate years

An overview of the psychology and neuropsychological bases of language. Language is defined through the evaluation of human and animal communication. Topics such as Chomsky's linguistic principles, speech

perception, speech production, language acquisition, reading and bilingualism are included. These basic concepts of language are then applied to an understanding of different forms that language can take: spoken, written, and sign, and language disorders (e.g. aphasia, dyslexia). Fulfills the Cognitive Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 239 — Psychology and Aging

Alternate years

An overview of behavioral changes in adulthood and unique psychological aspects of later-life. The first half of the course describes research methods in lifespan developmental and aging, examines biological processes that are associated with aging, and explores cognitive, emotional, personality and social changes that characterize successful aging. The second half examines abnormal aging; in particular, the assessment and treatment of common problems in later life, e.g., depression, Alzheimer's Disease, bereavement. This course is required for students enrolled in the Gerontology Studies Program. Fulfills the Developmental Processes Fundamental Area Requirement.. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 242 — Clinical Psychology

Alternate years

A general introduction to the origin, development, and techniques of clinical psychology is covered in this course. Included is a survey of treatment issues, interviewing, importance of assessment and diagnosis. Importance of specific areas, e.g., behavior therapy, to the modern-day approach to clinical psychology is stressed. Fulfills the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 229. One unit.

Psychology 244 — Health Psychology

Alternate years

An introduction to the major concepts in health psychology and the role of psychologists in health research and health care. Explores psychosocial influences on illness and health; the psychological sequence of illnesses such as cancer, AIDS, and heart disease; illness prevention and health promotion; pain and pain management; and psychological issues in chronic and terminal illness. Fulfills the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 253 — Evolution of Behavior

Annually

Explores the origins and nature of human nature. Focuses on the evolutionary origins of human nature as revealed through the available fossil record and through analysis of other primate species, particularly chimpanzees. Topics include sex differences, language development, the origins of psychiatric disorders, and the evolutionary basis for human social behavior and human intelligence. Fulfills the Biological Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 254 — Psychology and Law

Alternate years

Examines aspects of psychology that have relevance for the legal system, focusing primarily on applications from social and cognitive psychology. Topics include jury behavior, persuasion and influence in the courtroom, eyewitness reliability, the detection of deception, and capital punishment. The course also considers psychology's influence on the legal system both in terms of research that has been used in landmark courtroom decisions and psychologists serving in the roles of consultant and expert witness. Fulfills the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 261 — Culture and Development

Annually

Examines the diversity of ways in which humans grow and change throughout life. The varied socio-cultural environments to which humans adapt are explored, highlighting both the universals and the variations that characterize development from birth to old age. Fulfills the Developmental Processes Fundamental Area Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 100. One unit.

Psychology 299 — Special Topics in Psychology

Annually

A first-time course offering. From time to time courses on particular topics will be offered. Fulfills an Elective Course Requirement. One unit.

Psychology 315 — Biology of Mental Disorders

Alternate years

An in-depth consideration of the historical and philosophical basis of biological psychiatry. A thorough overview of the major neurotransmitter systems and behavioral genetics precedes course topics that examine the current understanding of the biological aspects of major psychological disorders, including anxiety disorders, psychosomatic disorders, affective disorders (unipolar and bipolar depression), schizophrenia, and Alzheimer's disease. For each of these disorders, the current state of knowledge concerning modes of treatment are reviewed, with an emphasis on the relative efficacy of pharmacotherapeutic agents, including minor tranquilizers, antidepressants, and antipsychotics. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 221 or Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 316 — Drugs of Abuse*Alternate years*

Drug addiction is the central theme of this course. Understanding drug action begins with a consideration of how drugs affect the brain. A basic working knowledge of brain chemistry is established with emphasis on information concerning the various major neurotransmitter systems that are affected by drugs of abuse. Considered next are the different addictive drugs, including alcohol, cannabis, heroin, cocaine and amphetamines, and the hallucinogens, and specific issues pertaining to the drug addict. The impact of drugs and addiction on society is the subject of the last part of the course. Issues with regard to prevention and treatment are considered. The ultimate goal of this course is to provide sound biological and psychological information from which a rational drug policy can be formed. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 221 or Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 318 — Seminar: Advanced Statistics*Alternate years*

Several advanced techniques in inferential statistics are covered, including multivariate analysis of variance, multiple regression, factor analysis, path analysis, and structural equation modeling. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. One unit.

Psychology 321 — Neuroanatomy and Behavior*Alternate years*

Open to third- and fourth-year students interested in a comprehensive study of brain and spinal cord anatomy and function. Structure is studied to provide a foundation for understanding clinical applications of nervous system injury and disease. Begins with study of gross anatomy of the sheep brain. Topics include motor and sensory systems, limbic system, cranial nerves, cerebral cortex, and blood supply to the brain. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 325 — Cognitive Development*Alternate years*

Focuses on the various facets of children's thinking, from perceptual processes to complex problem-solving and reasoning. Important theoretical perspectives, including those of Piaget and Vygotsky, are considered. In addition, empirical findings that describe how children think and the forces that influence the development of cognition are discussed. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Psychology 225 and permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 342 — Seminar: Gender-Role Development*Alternate years*

Provides an examination of the role that gender plays in psychological development. Topics include depression and self-esteem, aggression, emotion control and emotion expression, and social interaction. Theoretical perspectives as well as the empirical literature on gender development will be explored to assess the nature of gender-patterned behaviors. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor; Psychology 225 recommended. One unit.

Psychology 343 — Seminar: Psychodiagnosis*Alternate years*

An advanced seminar focusing on philosophical, historical, and methodological aspects of diagnosing mental illness. The centerpiece of this course is an in-depth analysis of a series of clinical cases. Students develop a thorough understanding of reliable and valid diagnostic criteria and interviewing procedures. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 344 — Seminar: Theories of the Person*Alternate years*

Explores classic and contemporary approaches to understanding personality. Questions considered include: How much of personality is determined (by one's genes, childhood, or environment)? Do people have enduring traits or dispositions, or is personality a function of the situation? Have personality types changed through history, and do they vary across cultures? Can people be classified into "types" or can you only really know a person in her uniqueness? Do different personality theories generate different conceptions of what is normal and abnormal? What are the social consequences of using different theories to classify human beings? Course addresses these issues through reading and discussion of works by psychoanalytic, humanistic, cognitive, behaviorist, and social constructionist theorists. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 345 — Seminar: Face Perception*Alternate years*

Investigates the vast amount of information available from faces, such as age, gender, emotions, traits, and aesthetics. Discussion focuses on how we encode and remember faces and how we use information from faces in social interactions. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 350 — Seminar: Sleep and Behavior*Annually*

Focuses on the complex relation between sleep, circadian rhythms, and behavior across the lifespan. Topics include: sleep architecture, developmental changes in sleep, “normal sleep,” sleep deprivation, and sleep disorders. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor; Psychology 221 recommended. One unit.

Psychology 351 — Seminar: Rational Choice/Irrational Mind*Alternate years*

Examines the psychology of choice and decision making with a focus on broad questions about the extent to which human behavior can be considered rational. Examples of questions that will be addressed include: What is the source of people’s sense of happiness and subjective well-being? How do people understand risk and uncertainty? How do emotions influence the decision making process? Do people have stable, well-defined preferences that can be accurately known? To what extent do considerations such as fairness, social norms, or the need for control influence people’s decisions? The course will also explore the social context of decision making in relation to topics such as altruism and cooperation and consider the evolutionary origins of human decision making capabilities. Readings will include original research and other primary sources from psychology, economics and other disciplines. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 352 — Seminar: Modern Interpersonal Relationships*Annually*

Provides a forum to systematically ask focused questions about, investigate, and discuss matters related to the development, maintenance, and problems of intimate relationships. By examining a variety of historic paths and human factors, we can attempt to describe and explain the current state of significant relationships, the personal and institutional problems that have arisen over the past 50 years, and ways in which the psychological health community currently attempts to remedy and prevent these problems. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor; Psychology 227 or 229. One unit.

Psychology 355 — Seminar: Resilience and Development*Annually*

Covers risk and resiliency from early childhood through adulthood and focuses on defining resilience; sources of risk and protection within families, schools, and communities; and prevention programs. Special topics will include strengths-based models of resiliency, child maltreatment and health, problem-solving and creativity, resiliency across cultures, mentoring, and school- and community-based prevention and intervention. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 366 — Seminar: Mind, Body, Health and Medicine*Annually*

Examines a range of topics related to mind-body interaction, health care, and life style. Topics include nutrition and diet, stress and stress-reduction therapy, and a critical analysis of complementary and alternative medicine. This course should be of particular interest to premedical students considering a career in health care. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 370 — Seminar: Cognitive Disorders*Annually*

Focuses on the identification, evaluation, and biological bases of several cognitive disorders including Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Disorder, Downs Syndrome, Williams Syndrome, and Fragile X. How alterations in underlying biological structures result in the cognitive deficits that characterize these disorders will also be examined as well as treatments and educational remediation. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor; Psychology 236, Psychology 221, or Psychology 237. One unit.

Psychology 399 — Seminar Special Topics*Annually*

A first-time course offering. Seminars are offered in a variety of topics within psychology, are smaller than lecture courses, and provide an opportunity for more student participation and discussion. Fulfills the Advanced Course Requirement or the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 470 — Directed Readings*Fall, spring*

A reading program conducted under the supervision of a faculty member, generally focusing on an area of psychology not covered in-depth in course offerings. Fulfills the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.

Psychology 480 — Research Projects*Fall, spring*

Students may undertake an independent research project under the direction of a particular faculty member. Fulfills the Elective Course Requirement. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. One unit.