Psychology, B.S.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences align with several of the learning goals from the American Psychological Association’s guidelines for undergraduate psychology education. These learning outcomes expand and deepen students’ foundational knowledge obtained through the GE CLAS Core program.

Psychology majors will:
- understand psychology as an empirical science;
- graduate with a knowledge base in psychology, including an understanding of the major principles and theories in the field’s main content areas;
- have learned how to use scientific reasoning to understand psychological phenomena and how to interpret and conduct psychological research; and
- be able to apply their knowledge of psychology to real world situations and recognize the importance of ethical standards and diversity in psychology.

Overview

Psychology is one of the largest undergraduate majors, both nationally and at the University of Iowa, and an undergraduate degree in psychology provides students with skills that are relevant to many career paths. The major in psychology is designed to contribute to students’ general liberal arts and sciences education and to provide a foundation for postbaccalaureate training in psychology and closely related disciplines as well as in areas such as business, law, communication, medicine, and the allied health sciences. Students who intend to enter the job market immediately after completing an undergraduate degree should complement their psychology major with substantial preparation in another program more closely tied to the world of work (e.g., education, social work, business, journalism, nursing). Almost all vocational opportunities in psychology require advanced degrees.

The psychology major for the Bachelor of Science is intended for students who plan to pursue advanced work in psychology or in a related discipline. It requires a specific grade-point average for admission and certain courses in experimental psychology, mathematics, and natural science. The program leaves time for students to supplement the psychology major with another program of study.

Students who change to a psychology major after two years of undergraduate work may find they do not have sufficient background for the B.S. program.

Students begin with a general introductory course, followed by a behavioral neuroscience course, methodology and data analysis courses, and introductory courses in several broad areas: developmental science, clinical psychology, cognitive psychology, and social psychology. These courses are followed by upper-level psychology course work selected by each student. For additional information regarding the undergraduate major and career information, visit Undergraduate Program on the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences website.

The department maintains excellent facilities to support teaching and research on human and animal behavior. All faculty members are directly engaged in research, and they bring to their undergraduate teaching the excitement that such activity generates. Many opportunities exist for interested and capable students to participate in current research projects in the department.

The department has an active undergraduate organization, the Iowa Students Psychology Association, which is open to all interested students. The group sponsors speakers, films, career days, and student symposia.

Admission to the Major

Admission to the major is selective. To be eligible for admission to the B.S. program, students must have completed 30 s.h. of college course work (excluding any credit by exam) and must have a cumulative g.p.a. of 2.67 or higher. There is no limit on the number of qualified students admitted to the B.S. program. Students who do not meet the minimum admission requirements may petition the department in writing, presenting additional evidence of their qualifications.

Entering first-year and transfer students who have completed less than 30 s.h. of course work and are interested in entering the B.S. program are admitted to the B.A. program until they satisfy the admission requirements for the B.S. program. New transfer students who meet the admission requirements for the B.S. program may choose to enter the B.S. or the B.A. program.

Students in the B.A. program may switch to the B.S. program if they meet admission requirements at the time of the request. Students may switch from the B.S. to the B.A. program at any time.

Requirements

The Bachelor of Science with a major in psychology requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including 55-57 s.h. of work for the major, with at least 41 s.h. in psychology courses. Students must maintain a g.p.a. of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. They also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core. Transfer credits must be approved by the department, and transfer students must complete at least 18 s.h. of psychology courses at the University of Iowa.

The major for the B.S. emphasizes research methodology, so the B.S. may be the degree of choice for students who plan to do graduate work in psychology and related research fields. However, a Bachelor of Science is not required for graduate study in psychology. Choice of a degree program should be dictated by a student's personal career goals.

B.A. and B.S. students complete the same psychology core and psychology electives. The major for the B.S. also requires a pair of natural science courses, one semester of calculus, and an additional mathematics course.

Students are advised to take PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology as the first course in the major; however, if a student must take PSY:1001 for the first time after completing another psychology course with a higher number, the student may do so. Students may retake PSY:1001 for a second-grade-only option; however, this must be completed before taking any upper-level psychology courses (PSY:3000-3800). Students may not retake PSY:1001 after taking an upper-level psychology course; this is considered regression and no credit will be awarded.

The B.S. with a major in psychology requires the following courses or their equivalents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSY:1001</td>
<td>Elementary Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY:2301</td>
<td>Introduction to Clinical Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY:2401</td>
<td>Introduction to Developmental Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY:2501</td>
<td>Introduction to Social Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY:2601</td>
<td>Introduction to Cognitive Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY:2701</td>
<td>Introduction to Behavioral Neuroscience</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY:2811</td>
<td>Research Methods and Data Analysis in Psychology I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY:2812</td>
<td>Research Methods and Data Analysis in Psychology II</td>
<td>3</td>
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### Additional Requirements

#### Psychology Topics Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both of these: PSY:4020 Laboratory in Psychology 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY:4090 Psychology Seminar 3</td>
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#### Natural Science Courses

Students are required to complete one of the following pairs of specified natural science courses (7-8 s.h.). All of these combinations can be used to fulfill the GE CLAS Core natural sciences requirement. Students should consult with their advisors concerning specific courses that satisfy these requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>CHEM:1070 &amp; BIOL:1141 General Chemistry I - Introductory Animal Biology 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHEM:1110 &amp; BIOL:1141 Principles of Chemistry I - Introductory Animal Biology 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHEM:1110 &amp; BIOL:1411 Principles of Chemistry I - Foundations of Biology 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Or one of these pairs (one semester each of chemistry and physics): CHEM:1070 &amp; PHYS:1400 General Chemistry I - Basic Physics 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHEM:1070 &amp; PHYS:1511 Principles of Chemistry I - College Physics I 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM:1110 &amp; PHYS:1400 Principles of Chemistry I - Basic Physics 7-8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM:1110 &amp; PHYS:1511 Principles of Chemistry I - College Physics I 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Or this pair (two semesters of chemistry): CHEM:1110 &amp; CHEM:1120 Principles of Chemistry I-II 8</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Or this pair (two semesters of physics): PHYS:1511-1512 College Physics I-II 8</td>
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#### Calculus and Additional Mathematics

Students must complete at least one semester of calculus; in most cases, students also must have completed at least one precalculus mathematics course.

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATH:1380 Calculus and Matrix Algebra for Business 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>MATH:1460 Calculus for the Biological Sciences 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>MATH:1550 Engineering Mathematics I: Single Variable Calculus 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>MATH:1850 Calculus I 4</td>
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Students also complete at least one additional course in advanced mathematics, statistics, or computer science chosen from the following lists.
Teacher Licensure

Majors interested in earning licensure to teach in elementary and/or secondary schools must complete the College of Education’s Teacher Education Program (TEP) in addition to the requirements for the major and all requirements for graduation. The TEP requires several College of Education courses and student teaching. Contact the Office of Student Services for details.

Students must satisfy all degree requirements and complete TEP licensure before degree conferral.

Honors

Honors in the Major

Students majoring in psychology have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. Departmental honors students must complete PSY:4090 Psychology Seminar and write an honors thesis, which is based on an approved original honors research project that a student has conducted under the guidance of a faculty member. Interested students should contact the department’s honors advisor.

Departmental honors students must maintain a cumulative University of Iowa g.p.a. of at least 3.33.

National Honor Society

The department sponsors a chapter of Psi Chi, the national honor society in psychology and affiliate of the American Psychological Association. Students who have a g.p.a. of at least 3.00 overall and in psychology course work and who have completed 9 s.h. of psychology courses may request a membership application form. Consult the department’s academic coordinator for more information.

University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the University’s honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the psychology major.

Academic Plans

Four-Year Graduation Plan

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the University’s Four-Year Graduation Plan. Courses in the major are those required to complete the major; they may be offered by departments other than the major department.

The psychology major for the B.S. is open only to students who have earned 30 s.h. and have a g.p.a. of at least 2.67. Students must complete a natural science sequence, either as part of the GE CLAS Core or in addition to it. Students also must complete a semester of calculus and an advanced math, statistics, or computer science course, which may require some preliminary work.

Before the third semester begins: PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology and PSY:2701 Introduction to Behavioral Neuroscience

Before the fifth semester begins: calculus and three additional courses in the major, including PSY:2811 Research Methods and Data Analysis in Psychology I and PSY:2812 Research Methods and Data Analysis in Psychology II

Before the seventh semester begins: two more courses in the major, one course for the major’s natural science requirement, and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree

Before the eighth semester begins: the advanced mathematics/statistics/computer science course and two more courses in the major

During the eighth semester: enrollment in all remaining course work in the major, all remaining GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

Psychology, B.S.
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level 4 - 5
Proficiency or elective course  
Elective course 3
Elective course 3

| Hours | 16-18 |

Second Year
Fall
PSY:2811 Research Methods and Data Analysis in Psychology I 3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level 4 - 5
Proficiency or elective course  
Elective course 3
Elective course 2 - 3
GE: Natural Sciences without Lab 3

| Hours | 15-17 |

Spring
PSY:2812 Research Methods and Data Analysis in Psychology II 3
Major: lower-level psychology course 3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Fourth Level 4 - 5
Proficiency or elective course  
Elective course 3
GE CLAS Core: Historical Perspectives 3

| Hours | 16-17 |

Third Year
Fall
PSY:2701 Introduction to Behavioral Neuroscience 4
Major: lower-level psychology course 3
Major: lower-level psychology course 3
GE CLAS Core: Values and Culture 3
Elective course 3

| Hours | 16 |

Spring
Major: Choose an additional course in mathematics, statistics, or computer science from an approved list. 3 - 4
Major: upper-level psychology course 3
GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts 3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences with Lab 4
Elective course 2 - 3

| Hours | 15-17 |

Fourth Year
Fall
PSY:4020 Laboratory in Psychology 4
Major: upper-level psychology course 3
GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues 3
Elective course 3
Elective course 2

| Hours | 15 |

Spring
PSY:4090 Psychology Seminar 3
Major: upper-level psychology course 3
Major: calculus course 4
Elective course 3

| Hours | 15 |

Career Advancement
The major in psychology is designed to contribute to students' general liberal arts and sciences education and to provide a foundation for postbaccalaureate training in psychology and closely related disciplines as well as areas such as business, law, communication, medicine, and the allied health sciences.

Undergraduate psychology students who do not intend to enroll in graduate school immediately after earning their bachelor’s degree frequently earn a second major in a discipline that has broad opportunities for employment, such as education, social work, business, journalism, or nursing.

Learn more about careers in psychology at the American Psychological Association website.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.