
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 Introduction to Psychology (Psychology 100). Introduction to Psychology or its equivalent is required for all courses at the 200 level and beyond. 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, Psychology of Language, or Cognitive Neuroscience), 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). Majors shall take at least two additional courses in psychology of which at least one must be a 300 level course. These courses should be chosen in accordance with a student's own developing interests and curricular needs.

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.

The Psychology Department provides students with ample opportunity to work independently under the individual direction of their professors, including courses for advanced study (Directed Readings—Psychology 470) and research (Research Projects—Psychology 480). 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, 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, Introduction to 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 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. Gregory DiGirolamo, prior to enrolling in second-year courses.

Courses

Psychology 100 — Introduction to 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 200 — Statistics

Fall

An introduction to descriptive and inferential statistical methods in analysis and interpretation of psychological data. Required for the psychology major. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. One unit.

Psychology 225 — Developmental Psychology

Annually

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

Psychology 229 — Abnormal Psychology

Fall, spring

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. One unit.

Psychology 232 — Developmental Science and Education

Annually

This course considers the ways in which the scientific research in developmental psychology has relevance for practice in educational settings. The course focuses primarily on research on cognitive development and how it helps us to understand children's literacy, mathematical reasoning, and scientific thinking. Other topics include motivation, social cognition, and special topics such as ADHD. One unit.

Psychology 235 — Cognitive Neuroscience

Fall, spring

This course is a topical introduction to the field of cognitive neuroscience, in which we look specifically at the neural substrates of cognitive function: from how we remember and see, to how we control our own actions and thoughts and have conscious awareness. We will cover the experimental toolkit of cognitive neuroscience (ranging from reaction time tests to functional MRI), and the results of recent research into perception, attention, learning and memory, and their neurological underpinnings. Throughout the course, special attention is given to dysfunctions of cognitive functioning resulting from brain damage or psychopathologies. Fulfills the Cognitive Fundamental Area Requirement. 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. 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. One unit.

Psychology 239 — Psychology and Aging

Annually

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 development, 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. Fulfills the Developmental Processes Fundamental Area Requirement. 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. 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. 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. One unit.

Psychology 256 — Cultural Psychology

Alternate years

Exploration of the role that culture plays in human psychological functioning. Specific areas of focus include identity, how culture organizes the environments we live in, the construction and use of signs, the ways in which culture influences the structure and dynamics of families, forms of marriage, and social conduct. 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. One unit.

Psychology 277 — Darwin, God and Human Nature

Alternate years

Can there be a purely scientific understanding of human nature? This question is the focal point of this seminar. Approaches to human nature that derive from Darwin and modern evolution theory's purely scientific stance are assessed, as are approaches that include a role for God that derive from modern forms of intelligent design. 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. 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. 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. 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. One unit.

Psychology 338 — Consciousness and Control

Annually

This seminar focuses on the neurobiological mechanisms underlying cognitive control and consciousness and its disturbances following brain injury or psychiatric illness. We define cognitive control as the ability to flexibly adapt behavior to current demands, by promoting task-relevant information and behaviors over temporally-extended periods and in the face of interference or competition. Consciousness we define as a subjective awareness of the world and free will. These abilities seem central to most higher cognitive functions, and contribute to the unique character of human behavior. Our goals are to define the neural mechanisms that underlie cognitive control and consciousness, to understand how these mechanisms govern behavior, and to use this knowledge to improve our understanding of the relationship between brain and behavior in psychiatric disorders and neurological damage. One unit.

Psychology 339 — Adult Psychopathology

Annually

This advanced psychology seminar addresses some of the more common mental disorders of adulthood. As an advanced seminar, students are asked to play an active role as we consider the diagnostic criteria, epidemiology and etiology, and evidence-based treatments for each disorder. One unit.

Psychology 340 — Mental Health and Culture

Alternate years

An advanced seminar that explores the impact of cultural constructs (e.g., gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation) on the prevalence, diagnosis, nature, and treatment of mental illness. Students examine topics such as the following: psychiatric illnesses that disproportionately affect members of one gender or ethnic group; differences in help-seeking behavior across ethnic groups; diversity and multicultural competence in psychotherapy research and clinical practice. 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. 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. 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. One unit.

Psychology 345 — Seminar: Face Perception

Annually

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. One unit.

Psychology 348 — Science and Politics of IQ

Alternate years

This seminar focuses on the social and biological bases of human intelligence. As this topic is one of the most controversial in modern psychology, our approach will be to survey the various positions on the origins of intelligence and read widely from many different perspectives. Among the specific issues in the course the following questions will be taken up: Do adopted children grow up to resemble more their biological or adoptive parents in intelligence? Is there a single overall intelligence or is human intelligence best considered as consisting of multiple intelligences? Are there group differences in intelligence across cultures and racial/ethnic groups? One unit.

Psychology 349 — Psychology of Music

Annually

This course explores the psychological foundations of musical experience and behavior and why music has the importance in people's lives that it seems to have. Topics include the evolutionary origins of music, the processes involved in perceiving musical structure, the development of musical ability and its relationship to other skills, performing and composing music, understanding emotion and meaning in music, and the neural processing of music. One unit.

Psychology 350 — Sleep and Behavior

Alternate years

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. 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. One unit.

Psychology 353 — Language Thought and Culture

Alternate years

Do language and culture affect how people perceive their physical and social world? This seminar will examine a variety of topics relevant to this question. Specific topics will include cross-linguistic differences in areas ranging from color categorization to person perception; the universal and culture-specific effects of status on interpersonal communication; gender differences in communication style; cultural differences in the understanding of the self and their effect on basic psychological processes; and expert-novice differences in perception, categorization, and communication. One unit.

Psychology 355 — Seminar: Resilience and Development

Alternate years

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. One unit.

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

Alternate years

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. One unit.

Psychology 371 — Fascination with Mental Illness: Memoir to Film

Alternate years

By exploring the intersection between mental illness and the media, this seminar will challenge your assumptions about mental illness. Our task in this seminar will be to examine how the definitions and experiences of mental illness (or mental health) are continuously (re)produced and reified in our discourse. We will examine mental illness as seen through the eyes of the film audience and the mental health professional. This course will first examine the myriad of cultural, political, and historical forces that have shaped our understanding and treatment of mental illness over the last few centuries. We will then look at the depictions

of mental illness in the movies, television, novels, and personal narratives. 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. One unit.

Psychology 450 — Biological Psychology Concentration Seminar

Fall, spring

This seminar is a requirement for biological psychology concentrators for every semester in their third and fourth years. We will meet once a week for one hour to discuss issues of common interest to the concentration. We may discuss recent publications that touch on concentrators' areas of research interest, as well as discuss other curricular activities that will serve to enrich the concentrator's experience in this program of study. The course is for no credit and is not graded, though it does appear on the transcript. No Credit.

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. One unit.

Psychology 480 — Research Projects

Fall, spring

Students may undertake an independent research project under the direction of a particular faculty member. One unit.