PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR, B.A.

Contact Information

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In the undergraduate study of psychology the emphasis is on a broad acquaintance with the behavioral sciences, not specialization. The subject matter is preparatory to a career in psychology either in basic research and teaching, or in any number of professional applications to various human problems. A psychology major may prove valuable to those planning other professional careers such as medicine, law, education, or business, as well as to those who seek a broad cultural background in the behavioral sciences.

Department Programs

Majors

• Psychology Major, B.A. (p. 1)
• Psychology Major, B.S. (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/psychology-major-bs)

Minors

• Cognitive Science Minor (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/cognitive-science-minor)
• Neuroscience Minor (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/neuroscience-minor)

Graduate Programs

• M.A. in Psychology (http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/psychology-neuroscience)
• Ph.D. in Psychology (http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/psychology-neuroscience)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the psychology program (B.A., B.S.), students should be able to:

• Knowledge Base: Demonstrate knowledge of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology, including its links to other social science disciplines
• Research Methods: Apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation
• Critical Thinking Skills: Demonstrate critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes
• Application: Apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues
• Values: Demonstrate use of empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinning of psychology as a science

Requirements

In addition to the program requirements listed below, students must

• attain a final cumulative GPA of at least 2.0
• complete a minimum of 45 academic credit hours earned from UNC–Chapel Hill courses
• take at least half of their major course requirements (courses and credit hours) at UNC–Chapel Hill
• earn a minimum of 18 hours of C or better in the major core requirements (some majors require 21 hours).

For more information, please consult the degree requirements section of the catalog (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/general-education-curriculum-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext).

Gateway Course

PSYC 101 General Psychology (with a grade of C or better) 3

Core Requirements

PSYC 210 Statistical Principles of Psychological Research 3
PSYC 270 Laboratory Research in Psychology 4

One course below 400 from four of the five following psychology program areas:

Behavioral Neuroscience:
PSYC 220 Biopsychology
PSYC 222 Learning
PSYC 225 Sensation and Perception 1, H

Clinical:
PSYC 242 Introduction to Clinical Psychology  H
PSYC 245 Abnormal Psychology H

Cognitive:
PSYC 225 Sensation and Perception 1, H
PSYC 230 Cognitive Psychology H

Developmental:
PSYC 250 Child Development H

Social:
PSYC 260 Social Psychology H

Two additional psychology courses numbered between 400 and 650; may not include PSYC 493
One additional psychology course above 101; may include three hours of PSYC 395 or PSYC 693H or PSYC 694H; may not include PSYC 190

**Additional Requirements**

- BIOL 101 Principles of Biology
- & 101L and Introductory Biology Laboratory
  
One other physical and life sciences course, which must be from a department other than psychology

- COMP 101 Fluency in Information Technology
- COMP 110 Introduction to Programming
- COMP 116 Introduction to Scientific Programming
- MATH 130 Precalculus Mathematics
- MATH 152 Calculus for Business and Social Sciences
- MATH 231 Calculus of Functions of One Variable I
- MATH 241 BioCalculus I

**Total Hours**

3-4

H Honors version available. An honors course fulfills the same requirements as the nonhonors version of that course. Enrollment and GPA restrictions may apply.

I PSYC 225 can meet either the behavioral neuroscience or cognitive requirement, but not both.

Except for PSYC 101, no psychology courses may be used by psychology majors to satisfy the General Education Approaches requirement.

A student may submit a maximum of 45 hours of credit in psychology courses (including PSYC 101) toward the completion of the B.A. degree.

All majors must complete PSYC 101 and at least six psychology courses above PSYC 101 with a grade of C (not C-) or better.

Students planning to enter graduate programs in psychology are urged to include a research-intensive course such as PSYC 395, PSYC 530, or PSYC 693H and PSYC 694H in their program and as many courses numbered 400 and above as possible.

**Special Opportunities in Psychology**

**Honors in Psychology**

Any major in the program with an overall grade point average of 3.3 or higher, a psychology grade point average of at least 3.5, and prior research experience in a faculty lab (e.g., PSYC 395) is eligible for enrollment in the departmental senior honors program. Each candidate for honors participates in a two-semester course sequence (PSYC 693H and PSYC 694H) and carries out independent research in an area of the student’s choice under the guidance of a psychology faculty member. Please see the department Web site for the application form (http://psychology.unc.edu/undergraduate-studies/honors-program) and additional information.

**Departmental Involvement**

Membership in the Psychology Club is open to any interested psychology major. There is no minimum grade point average requirement. The club meets frequently to discuss psychology-related topics and learn about careers in psychology.

The Carolina Neuroscience Club (http://carolinaneuroscience.web.unc.edu) brings together students who have an interest in the brain and nervous system. Club members meet regularly to discuss courses, research articles, and post-college neuroscience opportunities. Membership is open to anyone interested in neuroscience.

The Undergraduate Minority Psychology Student Association (https://unstudentorgs.collegiatelink.net/organization/minoritypsych) provides a supportive and educational environment where minority psychology students can gain the tools necessary to advance competitively in the field of psychology. Club members use mentoring, informational sessions, networking, and advocacy to create an environment in which minority students can succeed at UNC–Chapel Hill and beyond.

**Experiential Education**

Several opportunities for experiential education are available. The Karen M. Gil Internship Program (http://psychology.unc.edu/undergraduate-studies/gil-internship) offers both course credit and a monthly stipend to selected psychology majors who are placed in approved internship sites in the community. Interns are selected through a competitive process (minimum grade point average is 3.4). Other experiential education opportunities include PSYC 395; PSYC 294; PSYC 424; APPLES, performed either through the APPLES program or in conjunction with a specific psychology class; and other classes for which service learning is a central focus. See course listings for details.

**Undergraduate Awards**

The David Bray Peele Award, the Lindquist Undergraduate Research Award (both administered in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience), and several fellowships and grants administered through the UNC Office for Undergraduate Research or the UNC Honors Carolina Office are available to students who conduct research in psychology. Each year, the Dashiel-Thurstone Prize is awarded for the best undergraduate research project. An additional honor is election to Psi Chi, the national honor society for psychology undergraduates. Psychology majors who have completed at least three courses in psychology and who have a grade point average of at least 3.2 at UNC–Chapel Hill will be invited to join Psi Chi. In the spring of each year, one graduating senior who has conducted excellent research that contributes to psychological knowledge about diversity will be chosen to receive the J. Steven Reznick Award for Outstanding Research That Enhances Diversity. In addition, a second student will receive the Susan M. McHale Award for Outstanding Research by a Student Who Enhances Diversity. For each of these awards, diversity is broadly defined, including but not limited to diversity based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religious affiliation, and socioeconomic status.

**Undergraduate Research**

Qualified students interested in doing independent research under the direction of a faculty member may enroll for independent research credit (PSYC 395). Students interested in this option should speak directly with psychology faculty members regarding opportunities in their laboratories. Additional information is available on the department’s Web site (http://psychology.unc.edu/undergraduate-studies/undergraduate-research). Many other psychology courses also include heavy research components. See the research methods, research intensive, and research exposure courses at the Office for Undergraduate Research (http://our.unc.edu/students/courses).