

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Major in Psychology

Psychology is the science of human behavior and mental processes. The Psychology major at Bryant University offers a strong theoretical foundation in psychology, while also emphasizing practical applications. Students engage in active research and scientific inquiry while acquiring real life experiences through various psychology courses, fieldwork, student/faculty-led research opportunities, and internships. Psychological principles are investigated and applied to a variety of domains including clinical settings, neuroscience, sports, legal systems, education, business, health promotion, decision-making, testing, the environment, and many others. Psychology majors are provided ongoing, individual academic advising and career guidance by a full-time Bryant psychology faculty member. Students will have the opportunity to work closely with psychology faculty freshman through senior year, culminating in the Senior Capstone experience of the internship or research seminars.

Psychology Concentration

The six-course psychology concentration enriches students understanding of the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. The concentration's breadth includes theoretical and applied aspects of psychology, as well as research-intensive course work. The value of a solid understanding of psychological principles and human behavior is evident, in that most careers require working with people in order to be successful.

Psychology Minor

The four-course psychology minor enhances students understanding of the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. The minor serves as an excellent complement to many majors and concentrations, as understanding people and psychological principles is critical to being successful in any career.

Faculty

Department Chair

Heather Lacey

Professor

Allison Butler

Professor

Ronald J. Deluga

Professor

Heather Lacey

Associate Professor

Kristin Scaplen

Assistant Professor

Melanie Maimon

Lecturer

Lindsay Amper

• Bachelor of Science with a Major in Psychology

• Psychology Concentration

• Psychology Minor

Courses

PSY 260. Introduction to Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will address the major principles, theories and research methods used to understand mental processing and behavior. An extensive survey of topics on human behavior across a variety of contexts will be made, as well as the ethical history and implications of the field.

PSY 263. Honors: Core Concepts in Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will address the major principles, theories and research methods used to understand mental processing and behavior. An extensive survey of topics on human behavior across a variety of contexts will be made, as well as the ethical history and implications of the field. Students will have the opportunity to contribute directly to the teaching of the course material. Students receiving credit for PSY 260, Introduction to Psychology, may not receive credit for this class.

Prerequisites: Honors Program.

PSY 301. Sensation and Perception. 3 Credit Hours.

This course introduces the biological and psychology processes through which we perceive and interpret the world around us. We will explore major sensory and motor systems by evaluating how sensory stimuli are transformed into meaningful signals to which the brain can interpret and respond. We will discuss the structures in the brain that process sensory information, how learning augments this process, and how these systems integrate information to construct stable representation of a variety of rich perceptual experiences.

Pre/Corequisites: PSY 374

Prerequisites: PSY 260, Sophomore Standing.

PSY 353. Psychology of Personality. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will examine the major historical and contemporary approaches to understanding personality and its development. Cross-cultural and gender influences on personality will be incorporated. Students will be expected to apply their understanding of personality theory to themselves, case studies and/or historical figures.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 355. Introduction to Psychopathology. 3 Credit Hours.

As an introduction to the processes and treatment of psychopathology, this course emphasizes contemporary approaches to understanding the causes and treatments of various psychological and psychiatric disorders.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 360. Child and Adolescent Development. 3 Credit Hours.

Human development is examined from the prenatal period through adolescence. Current research methods and relevant theories will be used to address the multiplicity of factors contributing to children's development.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 361. Adult Development and Aging. 3 Credit Hours.

The nature of psychological and physical change as well as stability throughout adulthood will be examined. A special emphasis is placed on understanding the experiences of aging individuals in the context of an aging society.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 362. Lifespan Development. 3 Credit Hours.

This course explores human development across the lifespan, highlighting how biological, psychological, social, and cultural factors shape growth and development. Students will examine major life stages—including infancy and childhood, adolescence, emerging adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood—and connect core developmental theories to real-world contexts, considering the influence of family, culture, technology, and historical change. Through experiential projects, interactive lectures, and class discussions, students will apply developmental science to understand both individual differences and shared human experiences.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 Introduction to Psychology

Session Cycle: Alternate Spring Semesters.

PSY 365. Environmental Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course uses an interdisciplinary perspective to investigate the role of the environment on behavior. Attributes of environmental settings which are associated with human performance and functioning will be analyzed.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 371. Applied Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

In this overview course, the practical applications of psychological research to issues and problems facing the world will be addressed. Students will learn and be actively engaged in how psychological findings can be used in a large variety of contexts. These contexts include biomedical, educational, end user behavior, industrial/organizational, sports, legal system, physical surroundings, product design, aviation, animal training, paranormal phenomenon, elderly, and similar human factor environments.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 372. Positive Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course focuses on the current findings from positive psychology including (1) antecedents of subjective well being happiness from birth through death (2) optimal human functioning and human excellence across the life span, (3) development of positive individual traits including virtue, interpersonal strength, self-determination, wisdom, altruism, optimism, and integrity, and (4) the study of collective or societal wellbeing.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 373. Cognitive Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an overview of the primary areas within cognitive psychology. Topics include cognitive neuroscience, perception, attention, memory, language, mental imagery, categorization, decision-making and problem solving. Current, as well as classic theoretical perspectives and experiments, will be emphasized throughout the course.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 374. Introduction to Neuroscience. 3 Credit Hours.

This course provides a foundational overview of the structure and function of the human nervous system. Topics include the function of neurons and neural communication, the organization of the brain, sensory systems, and the neural basis of behavior. Students will explore how neurons process and transmit information, how brain regions are anatomically and functionally organized, and how neural systems contribute to perception, cognition, and behavior. Although the focus is on the human brain, comparative examples from animal research will be incorporated to illustrate key principles.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 375. Health Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an overview of the primary areas within Health Psychology. These include an overview of the history of health psychology, methodological issues in health psychology research, the biopsychosocial model of health and illness, basic systems of the body, stress, illness, and coping, lifestyle enhancement and illness prevention, health promotion, dealing with chronic illness, proper utilization of the health care system, pain, life threatening health problems, and future issues for health psychology.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 376. Research Methods in Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an introduction to experimental methods in psychology. The goals of this course are for you to learn how research is planned, carried out, communicated, and critiqued. This course will focus on developing general psychological research skills, including knowledge of experimental design, statistics, report writing, and ethical standards of research. In addition, this course will emphasize critical evaluation of scientific evidence. Mastery of the material covered should enable you to evaluate the adequacy of research findings reported by others, design research studies of their own, collect and analyze data, and write APA style research reports.

Pre/Corequisites: MATH 201

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 377. Educational Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course explores psychological principles, theories and methodologies as they apply to issues of teaching and learning in diverse educational and community settings. Topics covered include theories of learning and motivation, developmental characteristics of learners, individual differences, teacher behavior, assessment, and socio-cultural influences on learning and schooling.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 378. Industrial and Organization Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an introduction to Industrial and Organizational (I/O) Psychology which focuses on human behavior in the workplace. I/O psychologists assist institutions in effectively hiring, managing, developing, and supporting employee careers. I/O psychologist efforts in aligning worker efforts with organizational needs contribute to the achievement of strategic goals. For employees, these goals include reduced turnover, increased productivity, enriched engagement, and enhanced subjective well-being.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 379. Neural Circuits and Systems. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will examine how neural circuits and systems function to produce sensation, action, and more complex behaviors, such as attention, executive function, language, emotion, motivation and sleep. We will also explore how disruptions to large-scale circuits or systems can result in mental illness. We will build on concepts learned in PSY374 and make use of modern methods and recent research in humans as well as animal models to inform our study.

Prerequisites: PSY 374 and Sophomore Standing.

PSY 386. Research Methods in Psychology II: Psychological Research and Statistics. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is the second course in the required research methods sequence for psychology majors, focusing on the design, implementation, and analysis of psychological research. Psychology students are expected to be well-versed in the conduct and interpretation of psychological research in preparation for further study at the graduate level, the workplace, and in life. This course will focus on the major subjects of research design, implementation, and data analysis and interpretation.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and Math 201 and PSY 376 and sophomore standing.

PSY 391. Psychology Internship. 3 Credit Hours.

Students engage in individually supervised work-study arrangements and learn to apply psychological theory and principles in a work environment (e.g., youth recreation center or mental health clinic). Students must work at least ten hours per week on the internship (120 hours minimum), meet periodically with a supervising faculty member, research literature related to the field of the internship, and prepare a substantive report on their internship experience and the studies involved. This course is limited to juniors and seniors and requires the approval of a supervising faculty member and the department chair.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263.

PSY 401. Neurobiology of Learning and Memory. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will offer an opportunity to explore the field's current understanding of learning and memory processes gained largely from both human and animal research. We will discuss how science is performed, learning is measured, and memory is studied. Comparisons will be made between different types of learning and a variety of memory systems. We will evaluate the mechanisms that are thought to underlie these processes and how they can be disrupted.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 and PSY 374.

PSY 402. Human Bots: The Intersection of Artificial and Human Intelligence. 3 Credit Hours.

This course explores the relationship between human cognition and artificial intelligence, focusing on how AI systems support, extend, or complicate human thinking. Students will examine essential topics in human memory, attention, decision-making, and problem solving, alongside foundational concepts in contemporary AI. Emphasis is placed on comparing the strengths and limitations of human and machine intelligence, evaluating the cognitive and ethical risks of AI-assisted judgment, and developing best practices for responsible human-AI collaboration. Through case studies, hands-on activities, and critical analysis, students will gain the skills needed to understand and navigate the expanding role of AI in personal, academic, and professional contexts.

Pre/Corequisites: PSY 260: Introduction to Psychology and Junior Standing

Session Cycle: Every Fall Semester.

PSY 440. The Design Thinking Process. 3 Credit Hours.

In this hands-on course, you will have an opportunity to learn and apply the design thinking process while simultaneously developing an understanding of the psychological (cognitive, behavioral) principles that underlie innovative thinking, problem-solving, and gamification. This course builds explicitly upon the introduction to design thinking that you received during the IDEA program. We will learn how design thinkers embrace a "test and learn" and "build to think" philosophy toward innovation.

Prerequisites: IDEA 101 and either PSY 260 or MGT 302.

PSY 465. Cross-Cultural Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course involves an in-depth examination of culture's role in socialization and behavior. The rationale and methodology of cross-cultural psychology are extensively addressed early in the semester. Thereafter, specific topics such as life transitions or cognitive styles are analyzed in a seminar format.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and junior standing.

PSY 470. Social Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines the factors impacting human relationships. Emphasis is placed on interpersonal attraction, attitude formation, social perception and cognition, altruism, aggression, small group behavior, and social identity and influence.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and junior standing.

PSY 471. Gender in Childhood. 3 Credit Hours.

In this course the meaning of gender and how it shapes children's experiences, perceptions, identities, and behavior will be addressed. The confluence of biology and socio-cultural factors on gender development will be considered. A variety of research approaches will be discussed as well as used by students.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and Junior standing.

PSY 472. Child Psychopathology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will focus on major forms of atypical development in childhood and adolescence. Students will learn about the defining characteristics, possible causes, diagnosis, theoretical formulations, research evidence, and current approaches to intervention and prevention for child and adolescent disorders. These include behavioral disorders, mood disorders, developmental and learning problems, and problems related to physical and mental health. Psychopathology will be examined within the context of normal developmental processes and the larger systems in which children live.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and sophomore standing.

PSY 480. Counseling Theory and Practice. 3 Credit Hours.

This course reviews the major contemporary theories and techniques of counseling. Students have opportunities to observe counseling situations and to practice counseling techniques. Cross-cultural issues will be addressed.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and junior standing.

PSY 481. Exercise and Sport Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

Exercise and Sport Psychology is the field of study whereby the educational, research, and professional contributions of psychology are used to promote, enhance, and maintain exercise and sport behavior across the lifespan. The course will emphasize the practical applications of these principles.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and junior standing.

PSY 482. Forensic Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an introduction to the field of forensic psychology. Its content coverage will include the examination of the current issues, theories, and interface between psychology and the legal system. Students will explore a range of topics including criminal profiling, the reliability of hypnosis, lie detection, eyewitness testimony, trial preparation and jury selection, the insanity defense, domestic violence and sexual abuse cases, and death penalty trials and appeals.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and junior standing.

PSY 483. Drugs and Behavior. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an overview of the primary topics related to understanding drugs and their effects on human behavior. Topics include historical and methodological perspectives, basic principles of drug action, basic neurobiology, and the physiological and behavioral effects of drug use and abuse, including stimulants, depressants, narcotics, hallucinogens, designer drugs, inhalants, alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine. The course will also cover the psychopharmacology and behavioral effects of prescription psychiatric medications, including anti-depressants, anti-psychotics, anxiolytics, mood stabilizers, and hypnotics (sleep agents). Additional readings and exercises will be assigned to enhance exposure to various topics beyond the text. Current as well as classic theoretical perspectives will be emphasized throughout the course.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and junior standing.

PSY 484. Psychological Testing and Assessment. 3 Credit Hours.

This course explores the goals and principles of psychological and educational assessment. Topics covered include the fundamentals of measurement theory and testing-related statistics; test construction and administration; and a review of the major types of psychological and educational tests. Contemporary issues in assessment such as bias, laws, and ethical concerns will also be discussed.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and MATH 201 and junior standing.

PSY 486. Judgement and Decision Making. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will examine the research on human judgment and decision making, and will explore the influence of these processes in real-life areas such as health decisions, financial decisions, legal judgment, political decisions, and personal relationship choices.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and junior standing.

PSY 490. Senior Research Seminar. 3 Credit Hours.

In this course, students will integrate the knowledge they have accumulated in their first three years as an applied psychology major through the development and investigation of their own applied psychology hypothesis. In collaboration with the instructor and with their classmates, students will proceed through the stages of research from hypothesis development, to literature review, to proposing their research methods, to data collection, with the project culminating in written and oral presentations of their findings. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to influence their classmates' projects, and have them influence their project, as they discuss and evaluate each other's work. After completing the course, students will be qualified to evaluate others' research as well as conduct their own research, a skill crucial to many applied psychology careers.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263, PSY 371, PSY 376, Applied Psychology major, senior standing or permission of the instructor.

PSY 491. Senior Internship Seminar. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will serve to integrate and apply knowledge derived from prior coursework. This course has two major components: the field placement and the classroom seminar. The field placements are expected to be diverse and selected based on student interest and preparation. The seminar portion of the course will involve faculty lectures, class exercises, student-to-student discussions and written assignments based on assigned reading materials and field experiences.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263, PSY 376, Psychology major, senior standing or permission of the instructor

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

PSY 497. Directed Study in Psychology. 3 Credit Hours.

This course involves independent and in-depth study of a specific topic in psychology. Students work on an individually supervised research project with a member of the psychology faculty. Instructor and department chair permission is required.

Prerequisites: PSY 260 or PSY 263 and junior standing.

PSY ST385. Special Topic: Head, Hand, and Hertford Programme in Leadership Innovation. 3 Credit Hours.

Travel to Oxford to participate in the Head, Hand, and Hertford Programme at Hertford College. Students study in residence at historic Oxford for two weeks, where they will develop skills in leadership, communication, and innovation alongside Oxford students. Within a rigorous academic environment, this program is led by Hertford College Principal Tom Fletcher. Students participate in workshops taught mostly by Oxford faculty. Through an engaging one-of-kind cultural immersion program, students will build upon skills that they have learned at Bryant to take their leadership skills to the next level. With an enhanced global perspective, appreciation for sociohistorical context, and personal growth and character development, students will leave this course with the intellectual and practical skills of a truly innovative leader.