

# PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, B.A.

**Begin Campus:** Any Penn State Campus

**End Campus:** Abington

## Program Description

Building on the interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary strengths of Penn State Abington, the Psychological and Social Sciences B.A. is designed to respond to the demand for a program emphasizing the social and behavioral sciences leading to an understanding of human behavior and its influence upon society as well as the influence of social forces on individuals. The program is distinguished by its interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary coursework and required field experience. The B.A. provides a broad theoretical foundation in social and psychological theory as well as the opportunity to engage in supervised field experience. The major offers students a choice of course clusters focused on specialized areas such as social psychology, developmental studies, organizational behavior and leadership, bio-behavior and diversity, and counseling. The major is designed to prepare students for a variety of career fields including human resources, business administration, mental health, and social work as well as for continued study in graduate or professional school.

## What is Psychological and Social Sciences?

Psychological and Social Sciences fosters an understanding of human behavior, thoughts, feelings, and relationships, as well as societal influences on individuals and groups. It includes the disciplines of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and human development and family studies.

## You Might Like This Program If...

- You are curious about people's behavior.
- You are interested in knowing why people behave the way they do.
- You possess a keen interest in how culture and society impact individuals.
- You are a critical thinker and want to develop strong research and communication skills.
- You are interested in a career in mental health or counseling, market research, consulting, occupational therapy, or research oriented careers.
- You want to go to graduate school (Masters or Ph.D. level).

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (<https://www.abington.psu.edu/academics/majors-at-abington/pss-degree/>)

## Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

## Degree Requirements

**For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychological and Social Sciences, a minimum of 121 credits is required:**

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	5-6
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	46-47

**3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and 0-12 credits are included in Electives if world language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.**

## Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>).

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
ANTH 45N	Cultural Diversity: A Global Perspective	3
PSYCH 100	Introductory Psychology	3
PSYCH 200	Elementary Statistics in Psychology	4
<b>Additional Courses</b>		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
BBH 301W	Values and Ethics in Biobehavioral Health Research and Practice	3
or HDFS 301	Values and Ethics in Health and Human Development Professions	
HDFS 129	Introduction to Human Development and Family Studies	3
or PSYCH 212	Introduction to Developmental Psychology	
HDFS 312W	Empirical Inquiry in Human Development	3-4
or PSYCH 301W	Basic Research Methods in Psychology	
SOC 1	Introductory Sociology	3
or SOC 5	Social Problems	
Select 3 credits from the following:		3
ANTH 495	Internship	
HDFS 495A	Internship: Advanced Experience	
PSYCH 495	Internship	
SOC 495	Internship	

## Supporting Courses and Related Areas <sup>1</sup>

*Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better*  
Select 6 credits from any HDFS and PSYCH courses on the department approved list 6

Select 6 credits from any of the SOC and ANTH courses on the department approved list	6
Select 9 credits from any ANTH, HDFS, PSYCH, SOC courses on the department approved list that are not used in the Supporting Courses above	9

<sup>1</sup> At least 15 credits must be at the 400-level.

## General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

### Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

### Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

### Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

### Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

## University Degree Requirements

### First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

## Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

## Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

## Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

## Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

## Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

## B.A. Degree Requirements

**World Language** (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one world language in addition to English. This proficiency must be demonstrated by either examination or course work. See the Placement Policy for Penn State World Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

**B.A. Fields** (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, World Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; world language credits in this category must be in a second world language in addition to English or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language). Credits must be selected from the list of approved courses.

**World Cultures** (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the University Cultural Diversity (US/IL) requirement.

## Program Learning Objectives

- **Critical Thinking and Scientific Reasoning:**
  - Understand and utilize the scientific method and basic research methods.
  - Demonstrate critical thinking in the analysis and evaluation of information to distinguish the scientific from the nonscientific.
- **Effective Communication (Writing and Speaking):**
  - Communicate social scientific knowledge orally in a clear and accurate manner.

- Communicate social scientific knowledge in writing in a clear and accurate manner.
- **Ethics and Diversity:**
  - Evidence knowledge of and appreciation for cultural diversity and relativity in human experience, and for the complexity of human behavior and interactions.
  - Acquire an ethical lens that applies to concrete professional situations and broader issues in society and culture.
- **Knowledge and Application:**
  - Describe key psychological and sociological concepts and theories.
  - Apply concepts and theories to empirical and real life situations.

## Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

## Abington

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## Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2025-26 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

## Psychological and Social Sciences, B.A. at Abington Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

### First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15 or 30H	3 PSYCH 212 or HDFS 129*	3
PSYCH 100*	3 World Language level 2	4

World Language level 1	4 MATH 21 (Based on Math Placement Test)	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
<b>16</b>		<b>16</b>

### Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 200*	4 ANTH 45N*†	3
World Language level 3	4 PSYCH 301W*	4
General Education Course	3 ENGL 202A	3
CAS 100A or 100B	3 SOC 1 or 5*	3
General Education Course		3
<b>14</b>		<b>16</b>

### Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
HDFS 301*	3 Elective (US;IL)	3
Major Selection 400 level* <sup>1</sup>	3 Major Selection any level* <sup>1</sup>	3
General Education Course	3 Major selection any level* <sup>1</sup>	3
General Education Course	3 Bachelor of Arts Requirement	3
General Education Course (GHW)	3 Humanities (US;IL)	3
<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>

### Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
Major Selection 400 level* <sup>1</sup>	3 Major Selection 400 level* <sup>1</sup>	3
Major Selection 400 level* <sup>1</sup>	3 Major Selection 400 level* <sup>1</sup>	3
Bachelor of Arts Requirement	3 Bachelor of Arts Requirement	3
General Education Course	3 Elective	2
XXX 495 Internship* <sup>1</sup>	3 Elective (OC)	3
<b>15</b>		<b>14</b>

### Total Credits 121

\* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

### Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in World Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as World Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-cultures/>).

- <sup>1</sup> At least 15 of 21 required major selection credits must be at the 400 level.  
6-15 credits of major courses are required in courses designated PSYCH and/or HDFS.  
6-15 credits of major courses are required in courses designated SOC and/or AHTH.  
0-9 credits of major courses are required in courses designated as other Social Sciences from the approved PSS program list.

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<https://www.abington.psu.edu/academics/majors-at-abington/pss-degree> (<https://www.abington.psu.edu/academics/majors-at-abington/pss-degree/>)

## Advising Notes

### PSYCH and/or HDFS courses for Major Requirements:

PSYCH 221, 281, 407, 412, 415, 416, 420, 422, 423, 424, 426, 438, 441, 470, 478, 479, 481, 484, 485, 496B, 497, HD FS 229, 239, 249, 250, 315, 432, 433, 445, 468

### SOC and/or ANTH courses for Major Requirements:

SOC 003, 030, 035, 103, 109, 110, 309, 403, 405, 406, 409, 416, 429, 430, 455, 456, 462, 471, 497, ANTH 002, 011, 022, 040, 146, 197, 199, 216, 321W, 380, 395, 448, 464

### Other Social Sciences courses for Major Requirements:

BBH 302, 315, CAS 352, 415, 455, CN ED 404, 407, EDPSY 014, COMM 100N, 120, 411, WMNST 471

Courses cross-listed with the above may be petitioned to meet the 400-level requirement.

## Career Paths

A bachelor of arts degree in Psychological and Social Sciences is designed to prepare students for a variety of career fields including human resources, business administration, mental health, and social work or continued study in graduate and professional schools.. The Penn State Abington Center for Career & Professional Development supports and serves students in all areas related to career development and preparation including career counseling and coaching, internships, resume creation, interview training, and job search strategies.

## Careers

With a bachelor of arts degree in Psychological & Social Sciences, you will be prepared for careers in child and geriatric care; counseling, clinical, and social work; education; human resources; marketing/marketing research; occupational therapy; and research.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES PROGRAM (<https://www.abington.psu.edu/academics/majors-at-abington/pss-degree/>)

## Opportunities for Graduate Studies

A baccalaureate degree in Psychological and Social Sciences prepares students to earn graduate degrees in a variety of fields or obtain admission to MBA programs and law schools, among other post-graduate opportunities.

## Contact

### Abington

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