PSYCHOLOGY, B.A. (ALTOONA)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Altoona

Program Description

The Psychology major will combine the knowledge, skills, and values of psychology with a liberal arts foundation. Students should:

- develop a knowledge base consisting of concepts, theory, empirical findings, and trends within psychology;
- understand and apply basic research methods in psychology;
- use critical thinking and the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes;
- apply psychological principles to personal and social issues;
- and be able to understand the gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, culture, and class issues in psychological theory, research, and practice.

Students should also develop information and computer competence, communication skills, and develop realistic ideas about how to implement their psychology education in occupational pursuits in a variety of settings. The major may lead to either a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree. The B.A. degree incorporates a broad exposure to the many facets of the field of psychology, in addition to the B.A. requirements. The B.S. degree provides the same exposure to the field of psychology and adds options in Science and Business to prepare students for more specific career directions. Students in both degree programs may also prepare for graduate school; research experience with faculty members is encouraged for such students.

What is Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of thought, behavior, and experience. Many people associate psychology with psychological therapy and the practice of clinical psychology. There are also many other important areas of scientific psychology, such as cognitive, developmental, industrial/organizational, and social psychology. What these subfields of psychology have in common is the use of the scientific method to understand human behavior and apply that understanding to the development of theory and practice. Psychologists are increasingly making use of neuroscience methods and theories to understand psychological phenomena. As a profession, psychology is related to fields such as health, education, marketing, human resources, social work, and more. The principles of psychology are relevant to almost all areas of human endeavor, and the career paths of psychology students reflect this wealth of possibilities.

You Might Like This Program If...

You are interested in people and in learning to use science to better understand them. As a major, you’ll have opportunities to do research with faculty and to work in career-relevant settings.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PSYCHOLOGY (https://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/psychology/)

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/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology, a minimum of 124 credits is required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>14-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>41</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

0-4 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes 0-4 credits of General Education GQ courses.

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 foreign 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/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 100</td>
<td>Introductory Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 301W</td>
<td>Basic Research Methods in Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 200</td>
<td>Elementary Statistics in Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or STAT 200</td>
<td>Elementary Statistics</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Select 18 credits of the following, with a minimum of 3 credits from each of the following six categories: 

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<th>Learning and Cognition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 256</td>
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<td>PSYCH 268</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 426</td>
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<td>PSYCH 427</td>
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<td>PSYCH 458</td>
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<td>PSYCH 221</td>
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<td>PSYCH 231</td>
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<td>PSYCH 438</td>
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<td>PSYCH 479</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biological Bases of Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 253</td>
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<td>PSYCH 269</td>
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<td>PSYCH 441</td>
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<td>PSYCH 475</td>
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<td>PSYCH 478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Psychology</td>
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<td>PSYCH 212</td>
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<td>HDFS 445</td>
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<td>PSYCH 474</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied and Clinical Psychology</td>
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<td>PSYCH 243</td>
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<td>PSYCH 244</td>
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<td>PSYCH 270</td>
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<td>PSYCH 281</td>
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<td>PSYCH 370</td>
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<td>PSYCH 404</td>
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<td>PSYCH 408</td>
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<td>PSYCH 443</td>
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<td>PSYCH 444</td>
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<td>PSYCH 445</td>
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<td>PSYCH 470</td>
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<td>PSYCH 482</td>
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<td>PSYCH 484</td>
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<td>PSYCH 485</td>
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</table>

**Capstone Experience**
- PSYCH 439 History and Systems of Psychology
- PSYCH 490 Senior Seminar in Psychology
- PSYCH 493 Senior Thesis
- PSYCH 494 Research Projects
- PSYCH 495 Internship
- PSYCH 496 Independent Studies

Select 12 credits of additional Psychology courses from any offered for a total of 30 credits of Psychology courses beyond PSYCH 100 and PSYCH 301W

At least 15 of these 30 Additional Courses 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/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

B.A. Degree Requirements

Foreign Language (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one foreign language. See the Placement Policy for Penn State Foreign 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, Foreign Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; foreign language credits in this category must be in a second foreign language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language)

Other 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 General Education US/IL requirement.

Program Learning Objectives

• Knowledge Base in Psychology: Students should demonstrate fundamental knowledge and comprehension of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, historical trends, and empirical findings to discuss how psychological principles apply to behavioral problems. Students completing Foundation courses should demonstrate breadth of their knowledge and application of psychological ideas to simple problems; students completing a baccalaureate degree should show depth in their knowledge and application of psychological concepts and frameworks to problems of greater complexity.
  • Describe key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in psychology
  • Develop a working knowledge of psychology's content domains
  • Describe applications of psychology

• Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking: The skills in this domain involve the development of scientific reasoning and problem solving, including effective research methods. Students completing Foundation courses should learn basic skills and concepts in interpreting behavior, studying research, and applying research design principles to drawing conclusions about psychological phenomena; students completing a baccalaureate degree should focus on theory use as well as designing and executing research plans.
  • Use scientific reasoning to interpret psychological phenomena
  • Demonstrate psychology information literacy
  • Engage in innovative and integrative thinking and problem solving
  • Interpret, design, and conduct basic psychological research
  • Incorporate sociocultural factors in scientific inquiry

• Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World: The skills in this domain involve the development of ethically and socially responsible behaviors for professional and personal settings in a landscape that involves increasing diversity. Students completing Foundation courses should become familiar with the formal regulations that govern professional ethics in psychology and begin to embrace the values that will contribute to positive outcomes in work settings and in building a society responsive to multicultural and global concerns. Students completing a baccalaureate degree should have more direct opportunities to demonstrate adherence to professional values that will help them optimize their contributions and work effectively, even with those who don't share their heritage and traditions. This domain also promotes the adoption of personal and professional values that can strengthen community relationships and contributions.
  • Apply ethical standards to evaluate psychological science and practice
  • Build and enhance interpersonal relationships
  • Adopt values that build community at local, national, and global levels

• Communication: Students should demonstrate competence in writing, oral, and interpersonal communication skills. Students completing Foundation courses should write a cogent scientific argument, present information using a scientific approach, engage in discussion of psychological concepts, explain the ideas of others, and express their own ideas with clarity. Students completing a baccalaureate degree should produce a research study or other psychological project; explain scientific results, and present information to a professional audience. They should also develop
flexible interpersonal approaches that optimize information exchange and relationship development.

- Demonstrate effective writing for different purposes
- Exhibit effective presentation skills for different purposes
- Interact effectively with others

**Professional Development:** The emphasis in this goal is on application of psychology-specific content and skills, effective self-reflection, project-management skills, teamwork skills, and career preparation. Foundation outcomes concentrate on the development of work habits and ethics to succeed in academic settings. The skills in this goal at the Baccalaureate level refer to abilities that sharpen student readiness for post-baccalaureate employment, graduate school, or professional school. These skills can be developed and refined both in traditional academic settings and extracurricular involvement. In addition, career professionals can be enlisted to support occupational planning and pursuit. This emerging emphasis should not be construed as obligating psychology programs to obtain employment for their graduates, but instead encourages programs to optimize the competitiveness of their graduates for securing places in the workforce.

- Apply psychological content and skills to career goals
- Exhibit self-efficacy and self-regulation
- Refine project-management skills
- Enhance teamwork capacity
- Develop meaningful professional direction for life after graduation

**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/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

**Altoona**

Brad Pinter
Associate Professor of Psychology, Department Chair
Smith Building C128A
3000 Ivyside Park
Altoona, PA 16601
814-949-5507
tbp1@psu.edu

**Beaver**

Kevin Bennett
Assistant Teaching Professor of Psychology
100 University Drive
Monaca, PA 15061
724-773-3904
klb48@psu.edu

**Berks**

Erin Johnson, Ph.D.
Program Chair, Associate Teaching Professor
137 Franco Building
Reading PA 19610
610-396-6143
BKPsychology@psu.edu

**Brandywine**

Joshua Marquit
Assistant Teaching Professor Psychology
25 Yearsley Mill Road
Media, PA 19063
610-892-1409
jdm53@psu.edu

**Fayette**

Elaine Barry
Associate Professor
2201 University Drive
Lemont Furnace, PA 15456
724-430-4284
esb12@psu.edu

**Greater Allegheny**

Advising Office
Academic Affairs
101 Frable Building
4000 University Drive
McKeesport, PA 15132
412-675-9140
GA-Academics@lists.psu.edu

**Hazleton**

Lisa Goguen
Associate Professor of Psychology
Memorial 103
Hazleton, PA 18202
570-450-3023
lms42@psu.edu

**Lehigh Valley**

Kevin Kelley
Psychology Program Coordinator
2809 Saucon Valley Road
Center Valley, PA 18034
610-285-5062
kjk13@psu.edu

**Mont Alto**

Robin Yaure
Associate HDFS Professor and Program Coordinator of HDFS & Psychology
112 Weistling Hall
Mont Alto, PA 17237
717-749-6210
r2y@psu.edu

**New Kensington**

Richard Harnish
Associate Professor
Suggested Academic Plan
The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 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. (Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

Psychology, B.A. at Altoona 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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year</td>
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<td>PSYCH 200-Level- Category Selection*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENGL 15 or 30H‡</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 CAS 100‡</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PSU 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>General Education Course (GQ)‡</td>
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<td>General Education Course</td>
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<td>B.A. Requirement Course</td>
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<tr>
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<td>PSYCH 200-Level- Category Selection*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSYCH 301W</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>General Education Course</td>
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<td>General Education Course</td>
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<td>B.A. Requirement Course (World Language Level 3 recommended)</td>
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<td>B.A. Requirement Course (World Language Level 3 recommended)</td>
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<th>Third Year</th>
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<td>PSYCH 400-level Course</td>
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<tr>
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<td>ENGL 202A‡</td>
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<td>General Education Course</td>
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<td>PSYCH Capstone</td>
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<td>Elective (if needed)</td>
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| Total Credits 123-129 | |

* 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

University Requirements and General Education Notes:
US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).
W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain
attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

**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 Other Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as Other Cultures courses (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-other-cultures/).

**Career Paths**

Graduates of our program enter the workforce or pursue additional education in a variety of programs, including both Master's and Ph.D. programs in experimental, counseling, school, and clinical psychology.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM (https://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/psychology/handbook/)

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (https://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/psychology/handbook/)

**Professional Resources**

- American Psychology Association (https://www.apa.org)
- Association for Psychological Science (https://www.psychologicalscience.org)
- Psi Chi (https://www.psichi.org)

**Contact**

**Altoona**
DIVISION OF EDUCATION, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Elm Building 103
3000 Ivyside Park
Altoona, PA 16601
818-949-5756
alg177@psu.edu

https://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/psychology/contact-information

**Berks**
DIVISION OF HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Franco Building
Reading PA 19610
610-396-6143
BKPsychology@psu.edu

https://berks.psu.edu/academics/babs-chemistry (https://berks.psu.edu/academics/babs-chemistry)

**Brandywine**
25 Yearsley Mill Road
Media, PA 19063
610-892-1409
jdm53@psu.edu

https://www.brandywine.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/psychology (https://www.brandywine.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/psychology/)

**Fayette**
2201 University Drive
Lemont Furnace, PA 15456
724-430-4284
esb12@psu.edu

https://fayette.psu.edu/academics/baccalaureate/psychology (https://fayette.psu.edu/academics/baccalaureate/psychology/)

**Greater Allegheny**
101 Frable Building
4000 University Drive
McKeesport, PA 15132
412-675-9140
GA-Academics@lists.psu.edu

https://greaterallegheny.psu.edu/academics/degree-programs/psychology (https://greaterallegheny.psu.edu/academics/degree-programs/psychology/)

**Hazleton**
Memorial 103
Hazleton, PA 18202
570-450-3023
lms42@psu.edu

https://hazleton.psu.edu/psychology-degrees (https://hazleton.psu.edu/psychology-degrees/)

**Lehigh Valley**
2809 Saucon Valley Road
Center Valley, PA 18034
610-285-5062
kjk13@psu.edu

https://lehighvalley.psu.edu/academics/degrees/psychology (https://lehighvalley.psu.edu/academics/degrees/psychology/)

**Mont Alto**
112 Wiestling Hall
Mont Alto, PA 17237
717-749-6210

https://beaver.psu.edu/academics/majors/psychology (https://beaver.psu.edu/academics/majors/psychology/)
r2y@psu.edu

https://montalto.psu.edu/academics/bachelors/psychology-degree
(https://montalto.psu.edu/academics/bachelors/psychology-degree/)

New Kensington
3550 Seventh Street Rd.
New Kensington, PA 15068
724-334-6735
rjh27@psu.edu

https://newkensington.psu.edu/academics/4-year-psychology/ba-degree-information
(https://newkensington.psu.edu/academics/4-year-psychology/ba-degree-information/)

Schuylkill
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
A201C 200 University Drive
Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972
570-385-6066
crs15@psu.edu

https://schuylkill.psu.edu/academics/bacc-degrees/psychology
(https://schuylkill.psu.edu/academics/bacc-degrees/psychology/)

Scranton
113 Dawson Building
Dunmore, PA 18512
570-963-2715
trw115@psu.edu

https://scranton.psu.edu/academics/degrees/bachelors/psychology-degree
(https://scranton.psu.edu/academics/degrees/bachelors/psychology-degree/)

York
210 Grumbacher Building (GISTC)
York, PA 17403
717-771-4028
mac13@psu.edu

https://www.york.psu.edu/academics/baccalaureate/psychology
(https://www.york.psu.edu/academics/baccalaureate/psychology/)