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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>14-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>Requirements</td>
<td></td>
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<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 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/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prescribed Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 100</td>
<td>Introductory Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 301W</td>
<td>Basic Research Methods in Psychology</td>
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<td>Additional Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 200</td>
<td>Elementary Statistics in Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>or STAT 200</td>
<td>Elementary Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Select 18 credits of the following, with a minimum of 3 credits from each of the following six categories:</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and Cognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 256</td>
<td>Introduction to Cognitive Psychology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 261</td>
<td>Introduction to Psychology of Learning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 268</td>
<td>Animal Minds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 426</td>
<td>Language and Thought</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 427</td>
<td>Language Acquisition</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 452</td>
<td>Learning and Memory</td>
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<td>PSYCH 456</td>
<td>Advanced Cognitive Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 457</td>
<td>Psychology of Language</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 458</td>
<td>Visual Cognition</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 459</td>
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</table>
PSYCH 461 Advanced Conditioning and Learning

Social and Personality Psychology

PSYCH 221 Introduction to Social Psychology
PSYCH 231 Introduction to the Psychology of Gender
PSYCH 232 Cross-Cultural Psychology
PSYCH 238 Introduction to Personality Psychology
PSYCH 491 Psychology and a Sustainable World
PSYCH 420 Advanced Social Psychology
PSYCH 421 Self and Social Judgment
PSYCH 423 Social Psychology of Interpersonal/Intergroup Relationships
PSYCH 424 Applied Social Psychology
PSYCH 432 Multicultural Psychology in America
PSYCH 438 Personality Theory
PSYCH 479 The Psychology of Gender

Biological Bases of Behavior

PSYCH 253 Introduction to Psychology of Perception
PSYCH 260 Neurological Bases of Human Behavior
PSYCH 269 Evolutionary Psychology
PSYCH 441 Health Psychology
PSYCH 460 Comparative Psychology
PSYCH 462 Physiological Psychology
PSYCH 464 Behavior Genetics
PSYCH 475 Psychology of Fear and Stress
PSYCH 478 Clinical Neuropsychology

Developmental Psychology

PSYCH 212 Introduction to Developmental Psychology
PSYCH 410 Child Development
PSYCH 412 Adolescence
PSYCH 413 Cognitive Development
PSYCH 414 Social and Personality Development
PSYCH 415 Topics in Developmental Psychology
PSYCH 416/ HDFS 445 Development Throughout Adulthood

PSYCH 474 Psychological Intervention in Childhood

Applied and Clinical Psychology

PSYCH 243 Introduction to Well-being and Positive Psychology
PSYCH 244 Introduction to the Psychology of Human Factors Engineering

PSYCH 270 Introduction to Abnormal Psychology
PSYCH 281 Introduction to Industrial-Organizational Psychology
PSYCH 370 Psychology of the Differently-Abled
PSYCH 404 Principles of Measurement
PSYCH 408 Program Evaluation
PSYCH 443 Treatment and Education in Developmental Disabilities

PSYCH 444 Engineering Psychology
PSYCH 445 Forensic Psychology
PSYCH 470 Abnormal Psychology
PSYCH 471 Psychology of Adjustment and Social Relationships
PSYCH 473 Behavior Modification

PSYCH 476 Child Psychopathology
PSYCH 477 Mental Health Practicum with Children
PSYCH 481 Introduction to Clinical Psychology
PSYCH 482 Selection and Assessment in Organizations
PSYCH 484 Work Attitudes and Motivation
PSYCH 485 Leadership in Work Settings

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 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

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

- **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/)

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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 2024-25 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.

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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<th>First Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 100*</td>
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<td>3 PSYCH 200-Level Category Selection*</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGL 15 or 30H†</td>
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<td>3 CAS 100†</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSU 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 General Education Course (GQ)‡</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3 PSYCH Capstone</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 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/).

**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**

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https://berks.psu.edu/academics/babs-psychology

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

**Fayette**
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https://fayette.psu.edu/academics/baccalaureate/psychology

**Greater Allegheny**
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https://greaterallegheny.psu.edu/academics/degree-programs/psychology

**Hazleton**
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https://hazleton.psu.edu/psychology-degrees

**Lehigh Valley**
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https://lehighvalley.psu.edu/academics/degrees/psychology

**Mont Alto**
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https://montalto.psu.edu/academics/bachelors/psychology-degree

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

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

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