

PSYCHOLOGY, B.S. (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 Science degree in Psychology, a minimum of 124 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	14-18
Requirements for the Major	65

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.

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>).

Common Requirements for the Major (All Options)

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
PSYCH 100	Introductory Psychology	3
PSYCH 301W	Basic Research Methods in Psychology	4
Additional Courses ¹		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
PSYCH 200	Elementary Statistics in Psychology	4
or STAT 200	Elementary Statistics	
Select 18 credits of the following, with a minimum of 3 credits from each of the following six categories:		18
<i>Learning and Cognition</i>		
PSYCH 256	Introduction to Cognitive Psychology	
PSYCH 261	Introduction to Psychology of Learning	
PSYCH 268	Animal Minds	
PSYCH 426	Language and Thought	
PSYCH 427	Language Acquisition	
PSYCH 452	Learning and Memory	
PSYCH 456	Advanced Cognitive Psychology	
PSYCH 457	Psychology of Language	
PSYCH 458	Visual Cognition	
PSYCH 459		
PSYCH 461	Advanced Conditioning and Learning	
<i>Social and Personality Psychology</i>		
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 419	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		
<i>Biological Bases of Behavior</i>			
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		
<i>Developmental Psychology</i>			
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		
<i>Applied and Clinical Psychology</i>			
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		
<i>Capstone Experience</i>			
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		12	
Requirements for the Option			
<i>Requirements for the Option: Require a grade of C or better</i>			
Select an option		24	
¹ Must select at least 15 credits at the 400-level.			
Requirements for the Option			
Science Option (24 credits)			
<i>Available at the following campuses: Altoona, Beaver, Berks, Brandywine, Fayette, Greater Allegheny, Hazleton, Lehigh Valley, Mont Alto, New Kensington, Schuylkill, Scranton, York</i>			
Code	Title		Credits
Additional Courses			
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>			
Select 15 credits of the following:		15	
ANTH 21	Introductory Biological Anthropology		
ANTH 22	Humans as Primates		
BBH 101	Introduction to Biobehavioral Health		
Any BIOL course			
Any CHEM course			
Any MICRB course			
Any PHYS course			
Supporting Courses			
<i>Supporting Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>			
Select 6 credits in natural sciences/quantification from department list		6	
Select 3 credits in social and behavioral sciences from department list		3	
Business Option (24 credits)			
<i>Available at the following campuses: Altoona, Beaver, Berks, Brandywine, Fayette, Greater Allegheny, Hazleton, Lehigh Valley, Mont Alto, New Kensington, Schuylkill, Scranton, York</i>			
Code	Title		Credits
Additional Courses			
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>			
Select 15 credits of the following:		15	
Any ACCTG course			
BA 100	Introduction to Business		
BA 241	Legal Environment of Business		
& BA 242	and Social and Ethical Environment of Business		
or BA 243	Social, Legal, and Ethical Environment of Business		
Any ECON course			

Any FIN course	
Any HPA course	
Any IB course	
Any MGMT course	
Any MKTG course	
Any SCM course except SCM 200	
Supporting Courses	
<i>Supporting Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>	
Select 6 credits in natural sciences/quantification from department list ¹	6
Select 3 credits in social and behavioral sciences from department list	3

¹ MATH 22 or MATH 110 recommended.

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.

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.

Science Option: Psychology, B.S. 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.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 100 ^{†*}	3 PSYCH 200-Level- Category Selection ^{*2}	3
ENGL 15 or 30H [†]	3 CAS 100 [†]	3
PSU 3	1 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 Science Option Selection Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course (GQ) [†]	3
Elective	3	
	16	15

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 200-Level- Category Selection ^{*2}	3 PSYCH 200-level Course	3
STAT 200 (GQ) [†]	4 PSYCH 301W	4
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Science Option Selection ^{*1}	3 General Education Course	3
B.S. Option Course (Social Science)	3 B.S. Option Course (Natural Sciences; Quantification)	3
	16	16

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 200-level Course	3 PSYCH 200-level Course	3
PSYCH 400-level Course	3 PSYCH 400-level Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 Science Option Course	3
ENGL 202A [†]	3 General Education Course	3
	Elective	3
	15	18

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 400-level Course ^{*2}	3 PSYCH Capstone	3
Science Option Course [*]	3 PSYCH 400-Level Course ^{*2}	3

B.S. Option Course (Natural Sciences; Quantification)	3 Science Option Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	15	15

Total Credits 126

- * 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.

¹ BS Science Option students must take 24 credits in science option courses. **Consult Psychology Program Coordinator for a list of course selections.**

² Students must take 30 credits in PSYCH. Among these, students must take at least 15 credits at the 400-level and at least 3 credits in each of six categories: Learning and Cognition; Social and Personality Psychology; Biological Bases of Behavior; Developmental Psychology; Applied and Clinical Psychology; Capstone Experience. **Consult the Psychology Program Coordinator for specific course options.**

Business Option: Psychology, B.S. 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.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 100 (GS) ^{†*}	3 PSYCH 200-level Course	3
ENGL 15, 30H, or ESL 15 [‡]	3 CAS 100 [‡]	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course (GQ) [‡]	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Elective	3 General Education Course	3
	15	15

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 200-level Course	3 PSYCH 200-level Course	3
STAT 200 (GQ) [‡]	4 PSYCH 301W [*]	4
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Business Option Selection Course	3 General Education Course	3
B.S. Option Course (Social Science)	3 B.S. Option Course (Natural Sciences; Quantification)	3
	16	16

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 200-level Course ^{*2}	3 PSYCH 200-level Course	3
PSYCH 400-level Course ^{*2}	3 PSYCH 400-level Course ^{*2}	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 Business Option Selection Course	3
ENGL 202A [‡]	3 General Education Course	3
	15	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PSYCH 400-level Course	3 PSYCH Capstone	3
Business Option Selection Course	3 PSYCH 400-level Course	3
B.S. Option Course (Natural Sciences; Quantification)	3 Business Option Selection Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	15	15

Total Credits 122

* 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.

¹ BS Science Option students must take 24 credits in science option courses. **Consult Psychology Program Coordinator for a list of course selections.**

² Students must take 30 credits in PSYCH. Among these, students must take at least 15 credits at the 400-level and at least 3 credits in each of six categories: Learning and Cognition; Social and Personality Psychology; Biological Bases of Behavior; Developmental Psychology; Applied and Clinical Psychology; Capstone Experience. **Consult the Psychology Program Coordinator for specific course options.**

Career Paths

Graduates of our program enter the workforce or pursue additional education in a variety of programs, including both Master's and PhD 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

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<https://altoona.psu.edu/academics/bachelors-degrees/psychology>
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<https://newkensington.psu.edu/academics/4-year-psychology/4-year-psychologygree-information> (<https://newkensington.psu.edu/academics/4-year-psychology/4-year-psychologygree-information/>)

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

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

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