Psychology (BS)

William James characterized psychology as "the study of mental life." Psychology is both a domain of scientific inquiry and a field of applied practice. The science of psychology is concerned with the study of how people perceive, learn, feel, think, develop, and interact with others. The practice of psychology helps people improve mental health, learning, and performance.

Undergraduate degrees in psychology provide students a number of career options. Further study in graduate school leads to professional careers as clinical, counseling, industrial, academic, and other kinds of psychologists. Psychology is also a useful major for students planning careers in law, management, medicine, or social work. A psychology major provides students with the knowledge about human behavior and methods of research and data analysis that is valuable in business, helping fields, and many other occupations.

The Psychology program at UT Dallas approaches the field from a scientific perspective, applying behavioral science research methods to the study of the human mind and behavior. Thus, students will have laboratory experiences in addition to lectures, reading, and demonstrations. Psychology students learn to evaluate evidence relating to theories of social behavior, personality development, perception, memory, brain processes, and other facets of human experience. Students also gain hands-on experience through internship placements, directed research experiences in professors' labs, and individualized study with faculty in specialized topics.

The undergraduate degree awarded through the Psychology program is a bachelor of science. Students may choose electives to obtain a broader grounding in psychology or a general education in the liberal arts. Students should note that it is possible to select clusters of electives that lead to particular concentrations in careers and graduate study. Students can complete Core Curriculum and Psychology major requirements in a minimum of 78 semester credit hours, leaving 42 elective semester credit hours.

Bachelor of Science in Psychology

Degree Requirements (120 semester credit hours)¹

View an Example of Degree Requirements by Semester

Faculty


Professor and Dean Emeritus: J. Michael Coleman
Professor Emerita: Susan W. Jerger
Clinical Professor: John Stilwell
Associate Professors: Robert Ackerman, Francesca Filbey, Shayla C. Holub, Daniel Krawczyk, Mandy J. Maguire, Candice M. Mills, Jackie Nelson, Amy Pinkham, Pamela R. Rollins, Bart Rypma, Noah J. Sasson
Assistant Professors: Chandramallika Basak, Heidi Kane, Kristen Kennedy, Karen Rodrigue, Andrea Warner-Czyz, Gagan Wig
Senior Lecturers: Dawn Brinkley, Meridith Grant, Karen Huxtable-Jester, Nancy Juhn

I. Core Curriculum Requirements: 42 semester credit hours

Communication: 6 semester credit hours
- **COMM 1311** Survey of Oral and Technology-based Communication
- **RHET 1302** Rhetoric

Mathematics: 3 semester credit hours
Choose one course from the following:
- **MATH 1306** College Algebra for the Non-Scientist
- **MATH 1314** College Algebra
- **MATH 2417** Calculus I

Life and Physical Sciences: 6 semester credit hours
Select 6 semester credit hours from Life and Physical Sciences core courses (see PSY Advisor for options)

Language, Philosophy and Culture: 3 semester credit hours
Choose one course from the following:
- **HUMA 1301** Exploration of the Humanities
- **LIT 2331** Masterpieces of World Literature
- **PHIL 1301** Introduction to Philosophy
- **PHIL 2316** History of Philosophy I
- **PHIL 2317** History of Philosophy II

Creative Arts: 3 semester credit hours
Choose one course from the following:
AHST 1303 Survey of Western Art History: Ancient to Medieval
AHST 1304 Survey of Western Art History: Renaissance to Modern
AHST 2331 Understanding Art
ARTS 1301 Exploration of the Arts
DANC 1310 Understanding Dance
THEA 1310 Understanding Theater
FILM 2332 Understanding Film
MUSI 1306 Understanding Music

American History: 6 semester credit hours
Choose two courses from the following:
   HIST 1301 U.S. History Survey to Civil War
   HIST 1302 U.S. History Survey from Civil War
   HIST 2301 History of Texas
   HIST 2330 Themes and Ideas in American History
   HIST 2332 Civil War and Reconstruction

Government / Political Science: 6 semester credit hours
   GOVT 2305 American National Government
   GOVT 2306 State and Local Government

Social and Behavioral Sciences: 3 semester credit hours
   PSY 2301 Introduction to Psychology

Component Area Option: 6 semester credit hours
   PSY 2317 Statistics for Psychology
   or STAT 1342 Statistical Decision Making
   or STAT 2332 Introductory Statistics for Life Sciences

AND one of the following:
   PSY 2314 Lifespan Development
   PSY 2364 Animal Communication
   CGS 2301 Cognitive Science
II. Major Requirements: 36 upper-division semester credit hours

Major Preparatory Courses: 6 semester credit hours (0 semester credit hours beyond Core Curriculum)

- **PSY 2301** Introduction to Psychology
- **PSY 2317** Statistics for Psychology
  
  or **STAT 1342** Statistical Decision Making

  or **STAT 2332** Introductory Statistics for Life Sciences

Major Core Courses: 24 upper-division semester credit hours

- **NSC 3361** Introduction to Neuroscience
- **PSY 3360** Historical Perspectives on Psychology: Mind and Machines since 1600
- **PSY 3361** Cognitive Psychology
  
  or **PSY 4359** Cognitive Neuroscience
- **PSY 3392** Research Design and Analysis
- **PSY 3393** Experimental Projects in Psychology
- **PSY 3331** Social Psychology
- **PSY 3310** Child Development
- **PSY 4343** Abnormal Psychology

Major Related Courses: 12 upper-division semester credit hours

Guided Electives; 3 semester credit hours of one of the following:

- **BBSU 3310** Community-Based Service Learning
- **PSY 4394** Internship in Psychology
- **PSY 4395** Co-op Fieldwork
- **PSY 4V96** Teaching Internship
- **PSY 4397** Thesis Research
- **PSY 4V98** Directed Research
- **PSY 4V99** Independent Study

Plus any 9 semester credit hours of courses with PSY or CGS or CLDP or NSC prefixes or the following courses: **SPAU 3301, SPAU 3303, SPAU 3304, SPAU 3340, SPAU 3343, SPAU 3344, SPAU 3345** or **SPAU 4308**.

III. Elective Requirements: 42 semester credit hours
Free Electives: 42 semester credit hours

Electives are selected by students to explore areas of concentration in Psychology as well as explore interests outside the field. Both lower- and upper-division courses may count as electives but students must be sure to complete at least 51 semester credit hours of upper-division courses to qualify for graduation.

Incoming freshmen must enroll and complete requirements of BBSU 1100.

Fast Track Baccalaureate/Master’s Degrees

UT Dallas undergraduate students with strong academic records who intend to pursue a master’s degree in Human Development and Early Childhood Disorders or in Applied Cognition and Neuroscience at UT Dallas may consider an accelerated undergraduate-graduate plan of study. If accepted into the program, students may take up to 15 semester credit hours of graduate courses that may be used to complete the baccalaureate degree and also to satisfy requirements for the master’s degree. Students must maintain a 3.000 grade point average and earn grades of B or better in graduate courses taken.

Students should apply for Fast Track admission in the semester they reach 90 semester credit hours. To qualify for application, undergraduate students must have completed at least 18 semester credit hours in major core courses at UT Dallas. To be eligible for Fast Track admission, students must have completed at least 90 semester credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree and meet program admission requirements, including submission of GRE scores. Apply to the Fast Track program through the Program Office of the master’s program. Students should consult with a graduate advisor regarding admissions criteria and plans of study.

Minor in Psychology: 18 semester credit hours

Students who are not majoring in Psychology may minor in Psychology by taking 18 semester credit hours of Psychology courses (i.e., those with a PSY prefix, excluding those listed under Independent Study in the Catalog). Students who take a minor will be expected to meet the normal prerequisites in courses making up the minor, and should maintain a minimum GPA of 2.000 on a 4.00 scale (C average). At least 12 semester credit hours must be upper-division courses, of which at least 9 semester credit hours must be Psychology major core courses taken at UT Dallas (see list below). No semester credit hours may be used to satisfy both major and minor requirements; however, free elective semester credit hours or major preparatory classes may be used to satisfy the minor.

Psychology Major Core courses: 9 semester credit hours:

Choose three courses from the following:

- PSY 3310 Child Development
- PSY 3331 Social Psychology
- PSY 3360 Historical Perspectives on Psychology: Mind and Machines since 1600
Because Psychology is concerned with a wide range of social behaviors, it provides a strong foundation for all careers that deal with people. Students considering careers in business, education, law, medicine, clinical psychology, and counseling or social work can benefit from minoring (or majoring) in psychology.

**Upper-Division Courses: 9 semester credit hours from one of the career tracks**

**Business Careers**

Graduate schools of business look for students with a strong liberal arts background that focuses on both writing and quantitative skills. Suggested courses are the following:

- **PSY 3361** Cognitive Psychology
- **PSY 4331** Personality
- **PSY 3331** Social Psychology
- **PSY 4332** Psychology in the Workplace
- **PSY 4370** Industrial and Organizational Psychology
- **PSY 4333** Human Relations
- **PSY 3392** Research Design and Analysis

**Education Careers**

Psychology courses are especially relevant for students pursuing careers in child development, educational psychology, education counseling, and school psychology. Suggested courses are the following:

- **PSY 2314** Lifespan Development
- **PSY 3310** Child Development
- **PSY 3361** Cognitive Psychology
- **PSY 3339** Educational Psychology
- **PSY 3362** Cognitive Development
- **PSY 3342** Exceptional Children
Law and Crime and Justice Careers

A background in psychology can be enormously useful for the study and practice of law and law enforcement. Suggested courses are the following:

- **PSY 4372** Forensic Psychology
- **PSY 2314** Lifespan Development
- **PSY 3361** Cognitive Psychology
- **PSY 4374** Judgment and Decision-Making
- **PSY 4331** Personality
- **PSY 3331** Social Psychology
- **PSY 4343** Abnormal Psychology
- **PSY 4373** Psychological Assessment
- **PSY 2317** Statistics for Psychology
- **PSY 3392** Research Design and Analysis

Medical Careers

Psychology is highly recommended as a major or minor for pre-medical students interested in psychiatry or neurology, or any student who wishes to practice medicine. The intended area of medical specialization should influence choice of courses; for example, a future pediatrician would benefit from courses in developmental psychology. In general, suggested courses are the following:

- **PSY 2314** Lifespan Development
- **NSC 3361** Introduction to Neuroscience
- **PSY 4328** Health Psychology
- **PSY 4343** Abnormal Psychology
- **PSY 3361** Cognitive Psychology
- **PSY 3338** Adolescence
- **PSY 3333** Approaches to Clinical Psychology
- **PSY 2317** Statistics for Psychology
Careers in Clinical Psychology, Counseling, or Social Work

All courses in psychology are good preparation for these careers. It is especially important that students take the following courses:

- **PSY 2314** Lifespan Development
- **NSC 3361** Introduction to Neuroscience
- **PSY 3361** Cognitive Psychology
- **PSY 4331** Personality
- **PSY 4343** Abnormal Psychology
- **PSY 2317** Statistics for Psychology
- **PSY 3392** Research Design and Analysis

Other courses of interest include:

- **PSY 3333** Approaches to Clinical Psychology
- **PSY 3350** Psychology of Communication
- **PSY 4333** Human Relations
- **PSY 4328** Health Psychology
- **PSY 4373** Psychological Assessment
- **PSY 4344** Child Psychopathology
- **PSY 4345** Violence in the Family

1. Incoming freshmen must enroll and complete requirements of UNIV 1010 and the corresponding school-related freshman seminar course. Students, including transfer students, who complete their core curriculum at UT Dallas must take UNIV 2020.

2. Curriculum Requirements can be fulfilled by other approved courses from accredited institutions of higher education. The courses listed are recommended as the most efficient way to satisfy both Core Curriculum and Major Requirements at UT Dallas.

3. A required Preparatory course that also fulfills a Core Curriculum requirement. Semester credit hours are counted in Core Curriculum.