School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences

Psychology (BS)

Psychology is the study of thinking and behavior. It is both an area of scientific inquiry and a field of applied practice. The science of psychology is concerned with understanding how people perceive, learn, feel, think, develop, and interact with others. The practice of psychology applies this knowledge to help people improve their mental health, learning, relationships, and more.

An undergraduate degree in psychology can support many career options. Because a psychology major provides students with knowledge about human behavior and trains them in research methods and data analysis, it is useful for students planning careers in social work, law, management, business, or medicine. Some students may choose to continue their study of psychology in graduate school, a path that can enable professional careers as a clinical, counseling, industrial, or academic (e.g., professors) psychologists.

The Psychology program at UT Dallas approaches psychology from a scientific perspective, training students to apply empirical methods to study the human mind and behavior. Psychology students learn to evaluate and generate evidence relating to theories of social behavior, personality development, perception, memory, brain processes, and other facets of the human experience. Students also gain hands-on experience through laboratory participation, 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 can choose electives to obtain a broader grounding in psychology or a general education in the liberal arts. It is also possible to select clusters of electives to support concentrations tailored for specific career paths and graduate study (see below). Students can complete the 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)

View an Example of Degree Requirements by Semester

Faculty

Professors: Hervé Abdi, Peter F. Assmann, W. Jay Dowling, Francesca Filbey, Richard M. Golden, Daniel Krawczyk, Alice J. O'Toole, Margaret Tresch Owen, Amy Pinkham, Pamela R. Rollins, Michael D. Rugg, Bart Rypma, Noah J. Sasson, Melanie J. Spence

Associate Professors: Robert Ackerman, Chandramallika Basak, Shayla C. Holub, Kristen Kennedy, Mandy J. Maguire, Candice M. Mills, Jackie Nelson, Karen Rodrigue, Andrea Warner-Czyz, Gagan Wig
Assistant Professors: Heidi Kane, Bo Kyung Park, Jiyoung Park, Kendra Seaman, Meghan Swanson

Professor and Dean Emeritus: J. Michael Coleman

Professor Emerita: Susan W. Jerger

Clinical Professor: John Stilwell

Professors of Instruction: Salena Brody, Karen Huxtable-Jester, Nancy Juhn

Associate Professors of Instruction: Meridith Grant, Regina Ybarra

UT Dallas Affiliated Faculty: Karen J. Prager

I. Core Curriculum Requirements: 42 semester credit hours

Communication: 6 semester credit hours

- COMM 1311 Survey of Oral and Technology-based Communication
- COMM 1315 Public Speaking
- RHET 1302 Rhetoric

Or select any 6 semester credit hours from Communication Core courses (see advisor)

Mathematics: 3 semester credit hours

Choose one course from the following:

- MATH 1306 College Algebra for the Non-Scientist
- MATH 1314 College Algebra
  or MATH 2417 Calculus I

Or select any 3 semester credit hours from Mathematics Core courses (see advisor)

Life and Physical Sciences: 6 semester credit hours

Select 6 semester credit hours from Life and Physical Sciences Core courses

Language, Philosophy and Culture: 3 semester credit hours

Select 3 semester credit hours from Language, Philosophy and Culture Core courses

Creative Arts: 3 semester credit hours

Select 3 semester credit hours from Creative Arts Core courses

American History: 6 semester credit hours

Select 6 semester credit hours from American History Core courses
Government/Political Science: 6 semester credit hours

Select 6 semester credit hours from Government/Political Science Core courses

Social and Behavioral Sciences: 3 semester credit hours

PSY 2301 Introduction to Psychology\(^3\)

Or select any 3 semester credit hours from Social and Behavioral Sciences Core courses (see advisor)

Component Area Option: 6 semester credit hours

PSY 2317 Statistics for Psychology\(^2\)

or STAT 1342 Statistical Decision Making\(^3\)

or STAT 2332 Introductory Statistics for Life Sciences\(^3\)

AND one of the following:

PSY 2314 Lifespan Development

PSY 2364 Animal Communication

CGS 2301 Cognitive Science

Or select any 6 semester credit hours from Component Area Option Core courses (see advisor)

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\(^3\)

PSY 2317 Statistics for Psychology\(^3\)

or STAT 1342 Statistical Decision Making\(^3\)

or STAT 2332 Introductory Statistics for Life Sciences\(^3\)

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 4390  Directed Research and Writing
- PSY 4391  Individual Study and Writing
- PSY 4394  Internship in Psychology
- PSY 4395  Co-op Fieldwork
- PSY 4V96  Teaching Internship
- PSY 4397  Thesis Research
- PSY 4V98  Directed Research
- PSY 4V99  Individual Study
- UNIV 3310  Community-Engaged Service Learning

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 3.00 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, have completed a minimum of 36 hours of general education core curriculum, 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
- **PSY 3361** Cognitive Psychology
- **PSY 3392** Research Design and Analysis
- **PSY 3393** Experimental Projects in Psychology
- **PSY 4343** Abnormal Psychology
- **PSY 4359** Cognitive Neuroscience
- **NSC 3361** Introduction to Neuroscience

Because Psychology is concerned with a wide range of social behaviors, it provides a strong foundation for all careers involving 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 programs for business often look for students who have writing and quantitative skills and a strong background in liberal arts. Suggested courses are the following:
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
- **PSY 3332** Social and Personality Development
- **PSY 3338** Adolescence
- **PSY 4373** Psychological Assessment
- **PSY 2317** Statistics for Psychology
- **PSY 3392** Research Design and Analysis

Law and Crime and Justice Careers

A background in psychology can be quite 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 4331** Personality
- **PSY 3331** Social Psychology
- **PSY 4343** Abnormal Psychology
Medical Careers

Psychology is highly recommended as a major or minor for pre-medical students interested in psychiatry or for neurology, or any student wishing to practice medicine. The intended area of medical specialization should influence the 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
- **PSY 3392** Research Design and Analysis

Careers in Clinical Psychology, Counseling, or Social Work

Although all courses in psychology are good preparation for careers in these areas, 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.

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