

PSYCHOLOGY (PSY)

Psychology is the scientific study of individual human and animal behavior. A student of psychology can expect to investigate the following topics: psychopathology, social influences, perception, cognition, neuroscience, human development, personality, and health. The study of psychology also involves learning how psychologists work, including the areas of experimental methods, statistical analysis, and clinical psychology. From the basic courses to the more advanced, students achieve a greater understanding of themselves and others that will serve them well in their relationships and in any careers they may pursue.

In addition to the basic skills in writing, critical thinking, and use of technology expected of all Western students, Psychology majors have the opportunity to be involved in laboratory work. As students advance in their experience and knowledge, they can become involved in individual projects under faculty supervision. There are also internship opportunities available outside the classroom with programs for at-risk children, in domestic victim advocacy, in substance abuse prevention, and in other social service agencies statewide and nationally.

As many careers in psychology require a graduate degree, the Psychology Major at Western not only contributes to a solid liberal education, but also provides excellent preparation for graduate study. Students interested in careers in applied psychology are encouraged to pursue the Clinical, Counseling and School Psychology Emphasis. The Experimental Psychology Emphasis provides students with a broad background in the biological bases of behavior and offers preparation for graduate studies in experimental psychology or the neurosciences. The General Psychology Emphasis allows Psychology majors the freedom to choose courses that meet individual needs and interests.

- Environmental Emphasis (with a 3+2 Master in Environmental Management) (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/psychology/psychology-environmental-3-2-mem/>)
- Psychology Comprehensive Major - Bachelor of Science (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/psychology/psychology-comprehensive/>)
- Psychology Minor (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/psychology/psychology-minor/>)
- Psychology Standard Major (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/psychology/psychology-standard/>)

Capstone Course Requirement

The following courses in the Psychology Major fulfill the capstone course requirement: PSY 498 Capstone Seminar in Psychology, or PSY 499 Capstone Internship in Psych (with a minimum grade of "C").

Psychology Courses

PSY 100. General Psychology (GT-SS3). (3 Credits)

An introduction to psychology including research methodology, biological bases of behavior, human development, sensation, perception, intelligence, cognition, language, states of consciousness, learning, memory, motivation, emotion, personality, abnormal behavior and stress and health. GT-SS3

PSY 150. Writing in Psychology. (1 Credit)

The purpose of this course is to improve students' academic writing skills with emphasis on development of scientific writing, and to introduce students to the process of reading and synthesizing peer reviewed psychological research. To that end, students will work on an empirical literature review throughout the semester, following the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA). Prerequisite - Psychology Major or Minor; or instructor permission.

PSY 192. Independent Study. (1-6 Credits)

PSY 197. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)

PSY 200. Statistics and Data Analysis. (3 Credits)

An introduction to statistical procedures often encountered in the analysis of data from behavioral science research. Statistical methods covered include measures of central tendency and variability, correlation, regression, t-tests and analysis of variance. Prerequisites: PSY 100; MATH 113 or MATH 140 with a minimum grade of C-, or instructor permission.

PSY 210. History of Psychology. (3 Credits)

Introduces psychology majors to the philosophical underpinnings and historical context underlying the development of the discipline. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or instructor permission.

PSY 215. Psychology Seminar. (2 Credits)

This Psychology Seminar course is designed to give Psychology majors the knowledge and tools they need to get the most out of the major and assist them in making informed decisions about career choices in Psychology. It is also designed to assist potential Psychology majors in determining whether the Psychology major is the most viable option to assist them in achieving their career goals. Prerequisite – Psychology Major or Minor; or instructor permission.

PSY 258. Introduction to Personality. (3 Credits)

An examination of the fundamental theories of personality including the psychoanalytic, trait, behavioral, social-learning, humanist and existential perspectives.

PSY 269. Human Sexuality. (3 Credits)

This human sexuality course surveys the physiological, psychological and psychosocial aspects of human sexuality. Physiological bases of sexuality, research methods, historical and cross-cultural comparisons, and the development of our sexual identity will be included in the topics covered in the course. Many aspects of human sexual relationships, including communication, sexual expression, power and coercion, sexual preference, sexual expectations and difficulties, as well as sexually transmitted infections and diseases, will also be discussed.

PSY 270. Development Psychology. (3 Credits)

A critical look at the change and continuity that occurs throughout the life span, emphasizing the interrelationships among physical, cognitive and psychosocial realms of human development. Current research findings are emphasized.

PSY 290. Death and Dying. (3 Credits)

This course explores the experience of death, including the dying process, funeral rites and rituals, grief, and bereavement in Western and other cultures, through a psychological lens. Topics include loss experiences, fear of death, reactions to death, euthanasia, suicide, and the care and treatment of the terminally ill. Prerequisite: PSY 100; or instructor permission.

PSY 292. Independent Study. (1-4 Credits)

PSY 297. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)

PSY 301. Research Methods. (3 Credits)

An examination of experimental and non-experimental research methods, the design of research studies, measurement issues, research ethics, research reporting and advanced topics in data analysis using computer statistical software. Students design and conduct their own study and present the results following APA approved format. Prerequisite: PSY 200 or instructor permission.

PSY 308. Environmental Psychology. (3 Credits)

Research in the field of environmental psychology is intended to answer questions about the influence of environment on the human experience, what personal factors affect an individual's unique experience of a certain setting, how human behaviors affect the environment, and how to increase pro-environmental behaviors. Students read current scientific literature in the field and engage in problem solving for current issues that can be informed by the study of the human-environment psychological interaction. Prerequisites: PSY 100 or ENVS 100 or instructor permission.

PSY 310. Educational Psychology. (3 Credits)

Educational Psychology is an intensive introduction to the field of Educational Psychology, which, at its core, focuses on understanding how individuals learn. This course is designed to familiarize participants with the fundamental psychological theories of learning and development. Emphasis is placed on classical perspectives of learning, views of intelligence, motivation in education, social learning theories, and current trends in the field. Prerequisite: PSY 100; or instructor permission.

PSY 324. Forensic Psychology. (3 Credits)

An overview of the different tasks performed by forensic psychologists, including assessment, civil commitment, jury selection, eyewitness testimony, behavioral profiling, provision of clinical services to incarcerated individuals, and custody evaluations. Prerequisites: PSY 100 or instructor permission.

PSY 338. Cognitive Psychology. (3 Credits)

A theoretical and empirical investigation into the processes and outcomes of thinking. Topics such as memory and forgetting, problem solving and creativity, cognitive dissonance and consistency, defensive repression, language, optimism, and attribution are studied in relation to current scientific research findings. Prerequisites: PSY 100 and minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission.

PSY 345. Biological Psychology (with laboratory). (4 Credits)

An investigation of the physiological basis of human behavior. Topics include functional neuroanatomy, neurophysiology and the activity of the nervous system in relation to behaviors such as sexual behavior, drug effects, emotion, and memory. Additional course fee applies. Prerequisite: PSY 200 or instructor permission.

PSY 361. Industrial and Applied Psychology. (3 Credits)

A course designed to show how psychology is directly related to the student's career and the student's life as a job applicant, employee, manager, and consumer. Topics covered include worker morale, leadership, work climate, communication networks, and productivity.

PSY 368. Psychopathology. (3 Credits)

A systematic study of the etiology, symptoms, assessment, and treatment of major forms of psychopathology. An interdisciplinary approach is employed as a basis for understanding mental disorders and mental illness. Prerequisites: PSY 100, PSY 258, or PSY 270; or instructor permission.

PSY 369. Health Psychology. (3 Credits)

An overview of the emerging, multidisciplinary field of health psychology, which synthesizes research from clinical psychology, behavioral medicine and alternative therapies. Psychological aspects of prevention, health promotion and wellness are addressed. Content is both theory and application-based.

PSY 380. Evolutionary Psychology. (3 Credits)

Evolutionary psychology examines mental and psychological traits such as memory, perception, attraction, or aggression, as adaptations or functions of the natural selection process. Topics addressed include the nature and nurture conflict, relationships between the two sexes, group cooperation, crime, and racism. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or instructor permission.

PSY 392. Independent Study. (1-6 Credits)**PSY 397. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)****PSY 399. Internship in Psychology. (1-9 Credits)**

An opportunity for psychology majors to obtain field experience through direct, supervised contact with professionals in psychology and related areas. Graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory only. Prerequisite: completion of a minimum of 18 credits in psychology, including six credits at Western; or instructor permission.

PSY 410. Multicultural Psychology. (3 Credits)

An exploration of current issues in diversity and cultural psychology including the translation of psychological science across different cultures, and how people with identities along many dimensions of human diversity experience the world uniquely. Intersectionality is a major theme. The content of the course will focus on current events and scientific literature. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or instructor permission.

PSY 437. Behavioral Pharmacology. (3 Credits)

Considers the relationship between our sensation of the physical world and our internal perceptions through the lens of behavioral pharmacology. Attention is given to the exploration of altered perceptions produced by drugs. Prerequisites: PSY 100 and PSY 200; or instructor permission.

PSY 457. Social Psychology. (3 Credits)

A discussion of theories and research findings concerning the individual in social situations with an emphasis on their applications to current social issues. Included are such topics as interpersonal attraction, persuasion, altruism, morality, aggression, and intra-group relations.

PSY 460. Psychological Tests and Measurements. (3 Credits)

An introduction to the theory, methods, and content of designing and evaluating psychological measurement, including concepts of the purpose of testing, standardization, reliability and validity, and test administration and scoring. This course also offers a survey of the major tests used in educational and psychological testing. Prerequisite: PSY 200; or instructor permission.

PSY 475. Clinical Psychology. (3 Credits)

An introduction to the profession of clinical/counseling psychology through the presentation and analysis of different theoretical orientations and their respective techniques. Students have in-class opportunities to practice basic skills. Professional ethics in the delivery of mental health services are addressed. Prerequisites: PSY 100, PSY 258, or PSY 270; or instructor permission.

PSY 491. Topical Seminar in Psychology. (1-3 Credits)

A seminar involving advanced reading, discussion, and research. Different areas of study are selected as student and faculty interests dictate. A goal of this course is to stimulate critical thinking and analysis.

PSY 492. Independent Study. (1-4 Credits)

An opportunity for detailed study and research for advanced students. Topics and course requirements are determined in consultation with the sponsoring faculty member.

PSY 497. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)**PSY 498. Capstone Seminar in Psychology. (3 Credits)**

This capstone course is required for all psychology majors, except those who opt to complete the capstone internship. It is intended to provide the opportunity for the synthesis of the ideas and concepts acquired during undergraduate education in psychology. The seminar includes a discussion of controversial issues and ethical considerations in both experimental and applied areas, the completion of a comprehensive literature review and a consideration of the future of the field.

Prerequisites: completion of a minimum of 18 credits in psychology including PSY 210. Or instructor permission.

PSY 499. Capstone Internship in Psych. (3 Credits)

An opportunity for psychology majors to gain field experience through direct, supervised contact with professionals in psychology and related fields. In addition to on-site responsibilities, students write a comprehensive paper integrating the field experience and psychological theory and later formally present the paper in an open forum.

Prerequisites: completion of a minimum of 18 credits in psychology, including six credits at Western. Or instructor permission.