

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BRAIN SCIENCES

Programs

- Behavioral Neuroscience Major
- Behavioral Neuroscience Minor
- Psychology Major
 - Concentration in Behavioral Neuroscience
- Psychology Minor
- Accelerated Master of Arts in Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Note: Students majoring in Psychology may not declare a simultaneous major or minor in Behavioral Neuroscience, but psychology majors can do the concentration in Behavioral Neuroscience.

Student Learning Goals and Outcomes

The following Student Learning Goals and Outcomes for our undergraduate majors are drawn from the American Psychological Association's (APA) Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major and are placed in the context of our strong science-based program and embody the Jesuit principle of *Cura Personalis* (care of the whole person). Our goals for students fulfilling our undergraduate major encompass five main areas: a strong foundational knowledge in psychological science; in-depth training in scientific reasoning and quantitative analysis; effective communication skills; ethical & social responsibility in a diverse world; and professional development. These goals are detailed below, mapped onto APA Guidelines for a quality undergraduate program.

Strong Foundational Knowledge (APA Goal 1: Knowledge Base).

Students are required to take a general psychology course, followed by at least one course in each key content area, including biological, cognitive, developmental, social, and clinical psychology. Through these foundational and survey-level courses, students will:

- develop a working knowledge of concepts in key content areas
- recognize overarching themes in the field of psychology as a whole
- understand applications of psychology beyond the classroom

In-Depth Training in Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Analysis

(APA Goal 2: Scientific Inquiry & Critical Thinking). Students are required to take two intensive 4-credit courses, *Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences* and *Research Methods*. During senior year, students will also deeply engage with a specific area of psychological research through a specialized seminar course. Additionally, students have the opportunity to develop their scientific reasoning skills through our experiential learning courses in supervised and independent research. Through this coursework and research experiences, students will:

- critically read, summarize and evaluate psychological theories and empirical research
- conduct a literature review
- distinguish among different types of sources and appropriately cite them using APA-style
- design experimental studies using appropriate controls
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of different research designs

- determine which descriptive and inferential statistics should be used to analyze a data set, and conduct and interpret the appropriate analyses

Effective Communication Skills (APA Goal 4: Communication). Across multiple courses, students have the opportunity to develop and refine scientific writing and communication skills. These skills are intensively practiced in our required 4-credit *Research Methods* course as well as in our required senior seminar courses. Students additionally have rich opportunities to develop written and oral communication skills through our experiential and community-based learning courses in *Developmental Psychology with Lab*, *Supervised Research*, *Independent Research*, *Internship in the Teaching of Psychology*, and *Applied Internship in Psychology*. Through these experiences, students will:

- verbally communicate psychological ideas and research through clear and coherent presentations, including to peers, at research conferences, to members of the community
- use APA-style to clearly and coherently describe psychological ideas and research through literature reviews, research proposals, and/or research reports
- communicate and collaborate effectively with others, including field experts, students of the field, and/or members of the community

Ethical & Social Responsibility in a Diverse World (APA Goal 3). These themes are covered across the majority of our courses. Ethical standards in psychological research are explicitly covered in our required *Research Methods* course. Students who take advanced research courses complete training that helps them further understand and appreciate the ethical and social responsibilities of psychological science. Our majors also gain an appreciation and understanding of our diverse world through a variety of courses, including *Psychopathology and Clinical Science*; *Personality Psychology*; *Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination*; *Gender and Mental Health*; *Community Mental Health*; and *Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Lifespan Development*. Other opportunities beyond the classroom, including experiences gained through our *Supervised Research*, *Independent Research* and our *Applied Internship in Psychology*, similarly foster development of ethical and social responsibility in psychological practice and/or research. Through these courses and experiences, students will:

- identify and practice ethical behavior as a scientist
- conduct psychological research with integrity
- respect and appreciate the scientific method and the research subjects
- appreciate and demonstrate community responsibility and respect for human diversity

Professional Development (APA Goal 5). Professional development skills are infused across our curriculum. In particular, students gain intensive professional development opportunities through our experiential learning courses in *Supervised Research*, *Independent Research*, *Internship in the Teaching of Psychology*, and *Applied Internship in Psychology*. Beyond the classroom, our majors have the opportunity to participate in a variety of events hosted by the Psychology Club, as well as through Fairfield University's chapters of Psi Chi and Sigma Xi. Through these courses and experiences, students will:

- implement their psychological knowledge, skills, and values in occupational pursuits in a variety of settings

2 Psychological and Brain Sciences

- develop insight into their own and others' behavior and mental processes
- apply effective strategies for self-management and self-improvement