Nebraska Wesleyan University

Psychology

Catalog

2025-2026

About the Program

A major in Psychology prepares a student for a career in a number of diverse fields and occupations including business, management, human resources, law enforcement, health and medical services, social services, and non-profit organizations. The major also prepares the student for studies in graduate or professional schools, leading to careers in law, clinical and counseling psychology, and academic positions in psychology.

The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and Bachelor of Science (B.S.) for the psychology major do not differ in terms of the required classes. Students considering a career in a field that involves the natural sciences (e.g. psychiatry, neurobiology, etc.) often select the B.S., while students interested in other areas (e.g. clinical, counseling, social, developmental, etc) often select the B.A. degree. The student's psychology advisor will be able to help answer questions.

A minimum of 20 credit hours in the major must be taken within the Nebraska Wesleyan Psychology Department. At least 12 credit hours of the major must be in upper level courses (3000-4990).

Department Learning Outcomes
Majors will be able to:

1. Demonstrate fundamental knowledge and comprehension of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives.
2. Learn basic skills and concepts in interpreting behavior, focusing on theory use, as well as designing and executing research plans.
3. Develop ethically and socially responsible behaviors for professional and personal settings.
4. Produce a research study or other psychological project, explain scientific results, and present information to a professional audience.
5. Apply psychology-specific content and skills, effective self-reflection, teamwork skills, and career preparation.

Majors, Minors & Degrees

Majors

1. Psychology (B.A., B.S.)

Minors

1. Psychology

Courses

PSYCH 1010 Introduction to Psychological Science

4 hours

The Introduction to Psychological Science course will engage students in a learner-centered approach to the science of behavior and mental processes by synthesizing these areas of psychology: Scientific Inquiry, Biopsychology, Development, and Learning, Sociocultural Context, Individual Variations, and Applications of Psychological Science.
This is not a First Year Writing Course.

PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science

4 hours

The Introduction to Psychological Science course will engage students in a learner-centered approach to the science of behavior and mental processes by synthesizing these areas of psychology: Scientific Inquiry, Biopsychology, Development, and Learning, Sociocultural Context, Individual Variations, and Applications of Psychological Science.
(Normally offered every fall and spring semester.)

PSYCH 2010 Professional Seminar

4 hours

This course, intended for the newly declared psychology major, is a reflection upon the historical development, the current state, and the future of psychology. The practicalities of being an undergraduate psychology major will be presented. Discussion of the student's future in psychology will emphasize professional issues related to graduate/professional school admission and employment opportunities after graduation.
Prerequisite(s): A major in psychology and PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
(Normally offered each spring semester.)

PSYCH 2100 Psychological Statistics

4 hours

An introduction to descriptive and inferential statistics as decision-making guides in psychology and related fields. Topics include organization, analysis, presentation, and interpretation of data with emphasis on the hypothesis testing model of inference. Specific procedures include z-tests, t-tests, analysis of variance, and correlation. A laboratory section is required for computational experience.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science and sophomore standing.
Recommended: College level mathematics course.
(Normally offered each semester.)

PSYCH 2110 Research Methods in Psychology

4 hours

A course designed to introduce, apply, and evaluate the basic research methods of psychology. Emphasis is placed upon problems of research design and analysis in the laboratory and in natural settings. Students conduct investigations applying various designs and methods building skills in interpreting findings and in written communications.
Three lectures and one lab per week.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science and PSYCH 2100 Psychological Statistics.
(Normally offered each semester.)

PSYCH 2210 Basic Helping Skills

2 hours

A practical introduction to helping skills in the field of psychology that are applicable to a variety of professions (e.g., management, human resources, therapy, healthcare, coaching, etc.). Emphasis on skills (e.g., empathy, reflective listening, and effective use of questions) that are developed through hands-on practice and real-life application. Prerequisite: PSYCH-1010FYW/1010

PSYCH 2350 Lifespan Development

4 hours

This class will provide a perspective on the changes that take place during an individual's life from infancy to old age/death. Participants will study and describe the developing person at different periods in the lifespan. The processes of growth and

change taking place in early, middle, and late adulthood will be considered as well as the more traditional concern with development in childhood.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
(Normally offered each semester.)

PSYCH 2400 Theories of Personality

4 hours

A survey of leading theories of personality and supporting research. Includes consideration of psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive, trait, humanistic, and interactionist approaches. Important historical figures in personality theory, current day applications, personality testing, and basic methods of personality research will be explored.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
(Normally offered each spring semester.)

PSYCH 2450 Health Psychology

4 hours

An introduction to the field of health psychology, which is devoted to understanding how people stay healthy, why they become ill, and how they respond to illness and disease. Topics will be discussed from local, national, and global perspectives, and will include the behavioral aspects of the health care system, exercise and nutrition, health-compromising behaviors, stress, AIDS, and the etiology and correlates of health, disease, and dysfunction.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
(Normally offered each spring semester.)

PSYCH 2500 Industrial/Organizational Psychology

4 hours

The application of scientific methods and psychological principles to industrial and organizational behavior. Topics include job analysis, personnel selection, performance appraisal, assessment validity, the legal context for personnel decisions, work motivation, work attitudes, leadership, and occupational health. The ultimate objective of this discipline is to maximize both employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.

PSYCH 2600 Basic Learning Principles

4 hours

The behaviorist viewpoint and the methodology of behavioral analysis is introduced in this course. The emphasis is on theories derived largely from non-human research and applied to everyday human behavior. Topics include an analysis of the basic operations of classical and operant conditioning and the biological constraints on learning. A practical animal lab is used to demonstrate the methods of behavior analysis and modification.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
(Normally offered each fall semester.)

PSYCH 2650 Psychology of Gender

4 hours

Theories and research exploring how gender is constructed in United States culture are introduced in this course. Topics include the construction and propagation of gender roles, differences between men and women in various domains, gender identity, sexuality, romantic relationships, and roles within work and family.
Cross listed with GEND-2650.
Prerequisite(s): Sophomore standing.
(Normally offered each spring semester.)

PSYCH 2700 Psychological Disorders

4 hours

An investigation of the symptoms, etiology, and treatment of psychological disorders including those associated with anxiety, mood, psychosis, dissociation, somatoform reactions, personality, substance use, sexual dysfunctional/deviance, eating disorders, neurodevelopmental, and neurocognitive disorders.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science or permission of the instructor.
(Normally offered each semester.)

PSYCH 2900 Selected Topics

1-4 hours

An intermediate-level course designed to treat subject matter not covered in other departmental courses. The title, content, and credit hours will be determined by current mutual interests of faculty and students.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science plus additional requirements as may be determined or permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 2950 Independent Study

1-4 hours

This is a research course. The student initially meets with the department chair to select a study topic and review research methods. At this time the student will be assigned a faculty resource person to guide his or her work and assist in an advisory capacity. A copy of the student's work is filed in the archives for the department. Independent study may not duplicate courses described in the catalog. P/F Oriented.
Prerequisite(s): Permission of the department chair.

PSYCH 2960 Special Projects

1-4 hours

An intermediate-level course for a student to engage in an individually arranged project supervised by a psychology faculty member. Special Projects may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.
P/F Oriented.
Prerequisite(s): Major or minor in psychology and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 2970 Psychology Practicum

1-8 hours

Supervised field experience in settings providing psychological services with opportunities for observation and participation. Reading assignments, written reports, and class meetings typically are included, although the exact nature of a student's responsibilities are individually arranged. Students spend 45 hours per semester in the assigned setting for each hour of the academic credit. Enrollment generally is limited to 1-4 hours of academic credit in any given semester with the possibility of enrollment for a second semester. Approval from the cooperating agency also is required. Enrollment reflects a volunteer experience.
P/F Only.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 3050 Art Therapy

2 hours

A survey of the field of art therapy in its various applications and theoretical orientations.
Cross listed with ART 3050.
Prerequisite(s): 8 hours of psychology, including PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science, and 9 hours of art, or permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 3150 Behavioral Neuroscience

4 hours

An introduction to neurophysiological bases of general behavior, sleep, perception, emotion, learning, cognition, and mental disorders. The relevance of these topics to applied problems in psychology will also be considered, as will the methods for investigating the relationship between brain and behavior.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science and BIO 1400FYW Introduction to Biological Inquiry or permission of the instructor.
(Normally offered each spring semester.)

PSYCH 3210 Introduction To Counseling

2 hours

An introduction to the fields of counseling and Counseling Psychology. Includes an overview of established theories of counseling as well as issues of professional practice (e.g., self-awareness, competence, and ethics). Prerequisite: PSYCH-1010FYW/1010

PSYCH 3360 Child and Adolescent Development

4 hours

Students will have the opportunity to broaden their perspective of and appreciation for the developmental processes that occur in the early developmental periods of childhood and adolescence. The course will follow bioecological and other systems perspectives with a strong focus on diversity in childhood experiences. Topics will include socialization of children and attitudes about childhood and child-rearing; self and identity processes; family interactions; peer interactions; and educational experiences, all from multiple cultural contexts. Additional attention will be spent on less common childhood circumstances such as living on the street, exposure to war or heavy conflict, and experiences of trauma and violence.

Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science; PSYCH 2350 Lifespan Development or by permission of instructor.

PSYCH 3370 Adult Development and Aging

4 hours

This course will examine theories, research, and applications of development in the adult years, gaining perspective and appreciation for the developmental and aging processes that occur in this time period. In particular, the course will follow biopsychosocial perspectives with a strong focus on diversity in adult development, examining how factors might affect development differently for different people. These factors will include, but are not limited to, mental health status, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, cultural influences, sexual identity, gender identity, ability, and developmental history.

Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010 Introduction to Psychological Science/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science; PSYCH 2350 Lifespan Development; or instructor permission.

PSYCH 3400 Social Psychology

4 hours

A scientific study of the way in which thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by other people and situational factors. Topics include research methodology, conformity, social cognition, attitudes, persuasion, aggression, prejudice, and interpersonal attraction.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
Recommended: PSYCH 2100 Psychological Statistics and PSYCH 2110 Research Methods in Psychology
(Normally offered each fall semester.)

PSYCH 3450 Introduction to Clinical Psychology

4 hours

A survey of the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment procedures utilized in clinical psychology, along with a discussion of professional issues in the field, including training, ethical practice, and understanding of and appreciation for diversity.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 2700 Psychological Disorders.
(Normally offered each fall semester.)

PSYCH 3650 Perception

4 hours

An overview of the physical and cognitive mechanisms of the different perceptual modalities is presented in this course. The past and current methods of studying the relationship between physical stimuli and the perceptual experience are investigated. The emphasis is on the visual system and the role of the individual in depth perception, perceptual constancies and illusions.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
Recommended: BIO 1400FYW Introduction to Biological Inquiry.
(Normally offered each spring semester of odd numbered years.)

PSYCH 3700 Cognitive Psychology

4 hours

This course will explore the history of cognitive psychology, current research, how the field changes over time, and what current cognitive psychologists define as the important issues in the study of attention, perception, memory, language, problem solving, reasoning, and decision making.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
(Normally offered each spring semester.)

PSYCH 3750 Cultural Psychology

4 hours

Explore the complexities of creating a comprehensive psychology for a global context. Study cultural concepts and controversies, integrate cultural issues into mainstream psychological science, and develop culturally responsive practices. Elaborate a broad definition of culture (that includes ability status, age, ethnicity/race, gender, geographic location, language, migration, national origin, politics, religion, sexual orientation and social class) to examine the intersectionality of diversity through a sociocultural lens. Cultivate a worldview of psychology outside the dominant perspectives of the Global North and promote human dignity and justice.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.

PSYCH 3800 Psychology of Sleep and Dreaming

4 hours

Emphasis is on the psychological and physiological aspects of sleep and dreaming in humans. Topics include comparative studies, developmental changes, physiological and biochemical mechanisms of REM and NREM sleep and arousal, sleep disorders, dream content and dream recall, and functional theories of sleep and dreaming.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science.
Recommended: BIO 1400FYW Introduction to Biological Inquiry.
(Normally offered each spring of even-numbered years.)

PSYCH 3900 Selected Topics

1-4 hours

A topical course designed to investigate relevant subject matter not included in any standard courses. The title and the content will be determined by current mutual interests of students and faculty. This course may be offered to meet a requirement for a major only by approval of the department chair.

PSYCH 3950 Independent Study

1-4 hours

An opportunity for a student to engage in an individually arranged research project supervised by a member of the psychology faculty. Independent Study may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.
P/F Oriented.
Prerequisite(s): Major or minor in psychology and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 3960 Special Projects

1-15 hours

Supervised individual projects for students on topics selected by the student in consultation with the instructor. Special Projects may not duplicate courses described in the catalog. P/F Oriented.
Prerequisite(s): Permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 4900 Selected Topics

1-4 hours

A course designed to treat subject matter not covered in other department courses or to provide advanced study of subject matter introduced in other courses. The title, content, and credit hours will be determined by current mutual interests of faculty and students.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 1010/PSYCH 1010FYW Introduction to Psychological Science, plus additional requirements as may be determined.

PSYCH 4910 Directed Readings

1-4 hours

An opportunity for a student to engage in supervised reading of specialized literature not covered in other courses.
P/F Oriented.
Prerequisite(s): Major or minor in psychology and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 4930 Student Instructor Experience

1-8 hours

In this course students will gain first-hand teaching experience by assisting a professor with teaching a course. The professor and the student will formulate a learning contract at the beginning of the term, which will outline the expectations of the students' involvement in the course and the criteria for rating the students' performance. Responsibilities may include grading, taking attendance, tutoring students, and facilitating class activities. For each hour of academic credit, students will spend 3-4 hours a week assisting with teaching. Enrollment generally is limited to 1-3 credit hours in a given semester with the possibility of enrollment in future semester. P/F Oriented.
Prerequisite(s): 12 credits of psychology courses and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 4940 Research Experience

1-8 hours

In this course students will gain first-hand research experience by assisting a professor with conducting a psychological research project. Running participants, analyzing and managing data, and doing literature searches typically are included, although the exact nature of the student's responsibilities will depend on the research project and will be agreed upon at the beginning of the semester. For each hour of academic credit, students will spend 3-4 hours a week assisting with the research. Enrollment generally is limited to 1-4 credit hours in a given semester with the possibility of enrollment in future semesters.
P/F Only.
Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 2100 Psychological Statistics, PSYCH 2110 Research Methods in Psychology, and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 4950 Independent Study

1-4 hours

An opportunity for a student to engage in an individually arranged research project supervised by a member of the faculty. Independent Study may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.
Pass/Fail oriented.
Prerequisite(s): Major or minor program in psychology and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 4960 Special Projects

1-4 hours

An opportunity for a student to engage in an individually arranged project supervised by a member of the faculty. Special Projects may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.
P/F Oriented.
Prerequisite(s): Major or minor in psychology and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 4970 Psychology Practicum

1-8 hours

Supervised field experience in settings providing psychological services with opportunities for observation and participation. Reading assignments, written reports, and class meetings typically are included, although the exact nature of a student's responsibilities are individually arranged. Students spend 45 hours per semester in the assigned setting for each hour of the academic credit. Enrollment generally is limited to 1-4 hours of academic credit in any given semester. The course may be repeated for a maximum of 8 credit hours. Openings are limited to advanced psychology majors who meet the prerequisites set by the department and by the cooperating clinical or research agency. Approval from the cooperating agency also is required. Enrollment reflects a volunteer experience.
P/F Only.
Prerequisite(s): Junior or senior standing and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 4980 Introduction to Senior Research

4 hours

This capstone course for the psychology major requires the student to explore potential topics, to evaluate the literature within the student's topic of choice, to identify appropriate measurement instruments for the senior research project, to write a research proposal using APA style, and to complete a professional oral presentation of the research proposal. Small group collaboration and peer review will be encouraged. The proposed research may be conducted during PSYCH 4990 Senior Research. Normally taken during the senior year.

Prerequisite(s): Major in psychology, PSYCH 2110 Research Methods in Psychology, and permission of the instructor.

PSYCH 4990 Senior Research

4 hours

This is an empirical research investigation in which each student majoring in psychology conducts the research project proposed during PSYCH-4980: Introduction to Senior Research. After obtaining Institutional Review or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee approval, the student will collect and analyze the data, and prepare a formal report of the investigation consistent with the publication style of the American Psychological Association and give a conference-style presentation. Either laboratory or field research is acceptable. Normally taken during the fall semester following PSYCH 4980 Introduction to Senior Research.

Prerequisite(s): PSYCH 2100 Psychological Statistics, PSYCH 2110 Research Methods in Psychology, PSYCH 4980 Introduction to Senior Research, and permission of the instructor.