

PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

A degree in psychology provides students with a scientific framework for understanding human behavior. The department offers foundational coursework in general and lifespan development psychology, and core content in personality, cognitive psychology, statistics, social psychology, research methods, and biological psychology. A number of electives are open to students including those with a focus on abnormal psychology, the psychology of gender, health psychology, the psychology of sexuality, introduction to counseling, the science of happiness (study abroad), and psychosocial aspects of aging. Students then choose a capstone course with an emphasis on their own primary research, an internship/fieldwork experience, or a deeper dive into the history and systems of psychology. The department uses an empirical approach to the study of psychology and emphasizes using the scientific method in the quest to understand human behavior.

Programs

The Psychology and Sociology Department offers these programs and courses:

- Psychology, B.A. (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/sciences/psychology/psychology-ba/>)
- Gerontology Minor (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/sciences/psychology/gerontology-minor/>)
- Psychology Minor (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/sciences/psychology/psychology-minor/>)
- Gerontology Certificate (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/sciences/psychology/gerontology-certificate/>)
- Sociology (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/sciences/sociology/>)

Contact Information

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Psychology Courses

PSY 1105 - General Psychology (Conceptions : VCSS - Social Science) - 4 cr.

Designed to provide an overview of concepts, methods, and applications of psychology. Topics include psychology as a science, research methods, perspectives of psychology, sub disciplines of psychology, biological foundations of behavior, developmental psychology, sensation and perception, learning, memory, thinking, language development, intelligence testing, personality, psychological disorders, psychological and biomedical therapies for psychological disorders and social psychology.

PSY 2208 - Lifespan Developmental Psychology (Conceptions : VCSS - Social Science) - 4 cr.

Cognitive, personality/social, and physical development from conception to death. Within a life span developmental perspective, the course examines research methods, developmental theories, and application of research findings to selected problems in the major periods of the life span: the prenatal period, infancy, early/middle/late childhood, adolescence, and young/middle/late adulthood. The developmental perspective provides an important foundation for understanding normal children and adults, while also providing the essential knowledge base for the modern view of psychological disturbances as "normal development gone awry." This approach has practical implications for individuals with interests in parenting, caregiving, education, social services, and health sciences with both normal and exceptional populations.

Prerequisite Courses: none, but sophomore standing recommended.

PSY 2555 - Project in Psychology - 1-2 cr.

Applications of psychology through supervised practical experience in College or community activities. Some volunteer activities are appropriate. Each student will initiate a project in the form of a written proposal and complete it under faculty supervision. Written report is required.

Prerequisite Courses: consent of supervising faculty member and department chair.

PSY 2777 - Topics in Psychology - 1-4 cr.

Courses not a part of the regular Psychology curriculum but taught because of a special need, interest or opportunity.

PSY 3216 - Personality - 2 cr.

Origins, explanations, assessment and modification of personality as described by major theories of personality, with attention to ethical practices. This course includes a focus on applications to coping and adjustment of the healthy personality, as well as applications for helping individuals recover normal functioning. Emphasis is on the interaction of the individual's personality traits with specific situations as the individual attempts to adapt to the environment. Active learning components include theory-based problem-solving and responding to a variety of personality instruments.

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 1105 or PSY 2208, one course in general or developmental psychology.

PSY 3222 - Cognitive Psychology - 4 cr.

Examines principles of human cognition and practical applications of these principles. Topics include perception, memory, mental imagery, general knowledge, language, problem-solving, creativity, deductive reasoning, decision-making, and individual/gender/cultural differences.

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 1105 or PSY 2208, one course in general or developmental psychology.

PSY 3315 - Psychosocial Aspects of Aging - 4 cr.

Overview of the aging individual within a social context. Focus is on characteristics of today's older adult cohort, psychological processes in late life, the social context in which older adults live and society's response to older adults. Topics include demographics, stereotypes and attitudes, research methods, theories of development, sense of and response to the environment, cognitive processes, mental disorders and treatment, death and dying, sexuality, intimate relationships, family relationships, caregiving, employment and retirement, finances, Social Security, Medicare, living environments, ethnicity, gender, crimes against and by older adults, social programs and political power of the older cohort.

PSY 3320 - Biological Psychology - 4 cr.

Provides an overview of the biological bases of behavior. Topics include basic structure and processes of the nervous system, methods and ethics in psychobiological research, sensation and perception, thirst and hunger, sexual behavior, sleep and dreaming, memory, recovery from brain damage, psychopathology and genetics.

Prerequisite Courses: BIO 1102 and (PSY 2208 or PSY 1105)

PSY 3327 - Social Psychology - 4 cr.

Explores the history, content, methods, and applications of social psychology as a scientific discipline. Topics include social psychological research methods, the importance of the person and the environment in predicting social behavior, errors in social judgments and decision making, attribution theories, obedience to authority, conformity, group processes, prejudice and discrimination, aggression, altruism, interpersonal attraction and sexuality, and conflict and peacemaking. The most current applications of social psychology to law, the health professions, the clinic, business, and politics are discussed, with special emphasis on connections to students' own lives.

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 1105 or PSY 2208, one course in general or developmental psychology.

PSY 3328 - Behavior Management - 2 cr.

Examines the use of scientifically established principles of learning to promote behavior change. The use of operant and classical conditioning methods and their applications for a variety of human conditions are covered. Special emphasis is on the application of behavioral methods for health improvement and for stress management. Topics include positive and negative reinforcement, punishment, escape and avoidance, reinforcement schedules, modeling, desensitization, progressive relaxation.

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 1105 or PSY 2208, one course in general or developmental psychology.

PSY 3330 - Research Methods - 4 cr.

Overview of research process designed for upper-division students interested in reading and/or conducting research. Topics include logic of scientific research, types of research, phases of a research study, designing experimental and correlational studies, sampling, quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting data, evaluation and writing of research reports, and ethical issues.

PSY 3331 - Statistics (Foundations : VFMA - Mathematics) - 4 cr.

Covers basic statistical concepts and methods useful in conducting research and evaluating results of studies done by others. Topics include frequency distributions and graphs, measures of central tendency and variability, transformed scores, correlations, multiple regression, hypothesis testing (t test, analysis of variance, and chi square), selection of appropriate statistics, calculation with MS Excel spreadsheets and SPSS, interpretation of the "results" sections of journal articles, and numeracy (understanding and using numbers in decision-making).

Prerequisite Courses: competence in arithmetic.

PSY 3340 - Psychology of Gender - 2 cr.

Introduces students to the research methods, findings, and theories of psychology of gender. Students examine evidence for gender differences and similarities in cognitive abilities, personality, social behavior and mental health, and explore nature and nurture explanations. Gender stereotypes and their impact are discussed. Women's and men's experiences in the workplace, in relationships, and in parenting are major focuses.

Prerequisite Courses: one psychology course or consent of instructor.

PSY 3341 - Introduction to Counseling - 2 cr.

Identification of communication and counseling skills for working with all age groups. Topics include active listening skills, counseling process, empathic responding, overcoming barriers to communication, assets and limitations of paraprofessional helpers and counseling ethics.

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 1105 or PSY 2208, one course in general or developmental psychology or equivalent, or consent of instructor.

PSY 3363 - Health Psychology - 2 cr.

Aimed toward understanding psychological influence on variables that explain how people stay healthy, why illness occurs, and how individuals react when they become ill. Course serves as a review of determinants of health behavior through models of behavior which can be used (a) for assessment of barriers to positive health behaviors, (b) to develop prevention strategies for intervention purposes and (c) to understand prediction issues in regard to health-risk behaviors. Topics include biopsychosocial model vs. biomedical model, mind-body relationships, behavioral methods in health care, pain, acute and chronic illness and treatment follow-through/compliance issues.

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 1105 or PSY 2208, one course in general or developmental psychology.

PSY 3423 - Abnormal Psychology - 4 cr.

Provides an overview of what is considered to be abnormal behavior in American society. The main focus of the course is on describing various mental disorders and discussing how these disorders are explained and treated according to the major theoretical perspectives. Important issues related to diagnosing, researching and treating mental disorders are also addressed.

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 1105 or PSY 2208, one course in general or developmental psychology and junior status recommended.

PSY 3424 - Mental Health and Aging - 2 cr.

Addresses the mental and emotional health of adults over 65 years of age. Factors that contribute to good mental health are discussed; however, a major emphasis is on the manifestation and treatment of mental disorders in late life. Topics include: diagnosing and treating mental disorders, psychosocial factors that affect mental health, stress, grief, depression, suicide, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, delirium, dementia, Alzheimer's disease and alcoholism.

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 3315 or PSY 2208

PSY 3555 - Advanced Project in Psychology - 1-4 cr.

Applications of psychology through supervised, advanced practical experience in college or community activities. Some volunteer activities are appropriate, including non-paid teaching assistantships. Students initiate project in the form of a written proposal and complete it under faculty supervision. Written report in APA style is required.

Prerequisite Courses: junior status, acceptance into the psychology major, and consent of supervising faculty member and department chair.

PSY 3777 - Topics in Psychology - 1-4 cr.

Courses not a part of regular Psychology curriculum but taught because of special need, interest or opportunity at upper-division level.

PSY 4000 - Learning Outcomes Assessment - 0 cr.

For purposes of program assessment, Psychology majors take a non-credit, non-graded comprehensive examination in psychology and a scientific-thinking examination near the end of their last semester preceding graduation.

Prerequisite Courses: Completion or current semester completion of all requirements for the Psychology major.

PSY 4334 - Empirical Research Proposal - 2 cr.

The PSY 4334/4335 course sequence constitutes one of three capstone experiences for the major in psychology (see also PSY 4435 and PSY 4555). Each student conducts an independent research study requiring in-depth synthesis of prior learning of research methods, statistics and report writing. In PSY 4334, students (a) conceptualize their research questions and design and (b) plan and organize the study. In PSY 4335, students (a) collect and analyze data, (b) write a research report and present the results in two department colloquia (one oral, one poster). Must complete with a grade of C or better.

Prerequisite Courses: Junior standing; a general psychology course and PSY 3330 (Research Methods) and PSY 3331 (Statistics); and two other 300-level PSY courses.

PSY 4335 - Empirical Research Report - 4 cr.

The PSY 4334/4335 course sequence constitutes one of three capstone experiences for the major in psychology (see also PSY 4435 and PSY 4555). Each student conducts an independent research study requiring in-depth synthesis of prior learning of research methods, statistics and report writing. In PSY 4334, students (a) conceptualize their research questions and design and (b) plan and organize the study. In PSY 4335, students (a) collect and analyze data, (b) write a research report and present the results in two department colloquia (one oral, one poster).

Prerequisite Courses: PSY 4334 with a grade of C or higher; Junior standing; a general psychology course and PSY 3330 (Research Methods) and PSY 3331 (Statistics); and two other 300-level PSY courses.

PSY 4435 - History and Systems of Psychology - 2-4 cr.

Traces development of early and modern psychology and integrates diverse materials and approaches to which upper-division students have been exposed in psychology courses. Topics include philosophical foundations of psychology, early scientific psychology, structuralism, functionalism, psychoanalytic theory, behaviorism, Gestalt psychology, and recent developments in psychology. Race and gender issues are incorporated throughout the course. prerequisites - PSY 3216, PSY 3327, PSY 3328, PSY 3423; junior status minimum, senior status preferable.

Prerequisite Courses: two of the following courses (or equivalents), including their general or developmental psychology - PSY 3216, PSY 3327, PSY 3328, PSY 3423; junior status minimum, senior status preferable.

PSY 4444 - Research in Psychology - 1-4 cr.

Students either (a) initiate and implement empirical research in an area of special interest or (b) participate in an ongoing empirical research project developed by a faculty member. For student-initiated projects, the student develops the research proposal, conducts the research and reports the research in standard APA format. For faculty-initiated research, students work one on- one with the faculty member or as part of his/her research team of students. Activities may include doing library research, developing measures, collecting data, analyzing data and writing portions of research reports using APA style.

Prerequisite Courses: consent of supervising faculty member and department chair.

PSY 4555 - Psychology Fieldwork - 0-12 cr.

Off-campus practicum to provide valuable experience for psychology majors. No later than the middle of the semester before the DAPP placement is to begin, students must complete three tasks: (a) choose a DAPP advisor (must be Psychology faculty, usually the academic advisor), (b) submit a written proposal to the DAPP advisor indicating their objectives and how they plan to achieve them, and (c) submit an interagency agreement form. The DAPP site is selected by the student in consultation with the DAPP advisor. (Some restrictions on counseling placements apply.) Upon completion of the DAPP, the student submits a written report (DAPP thesis), then schedules a DAPP review meeting with the DAPP advisor, at least one other faculty member and, when possible, the supervisor from host agency. Six credits of PSY 4555 are required. Students may choose to do all six in one semester or distributed over two semesters. PSY 4555 may be coordinated with GER 4555 for psychology majors working toward a gerontology minor. See the Gerontology Program coordinator. Psychology majors who have a double major that requires a field internship in which they have experiences appropriate for a DAPP thesis, may petition the department chair for waiver of the PSY 4555 credits and sign up for PSY 4556 instead.

Prerequisite Courses: seven psychology courses and consent of academic advisor and DAPP advisor.

PSY 4556 - Fieldwork Capstone for Double Majors - 0 cr.

This course is a capstone option for psychology majors who have PSY 4555 waived because they have a double major that requires a clinical or field internship. In addition to time spent at the site, requirements are to write a brief proposal, keep a log/journal, write a paper in which psychological and ethical concepts are applied to fieldwork experience, and participate in an oral exam. An additional four credits of PSY courses to make up for the four credits of fieldwork are not required.

Prerequisite Courses: seven psychology courses and consent of academic advisor and course instructor.

PSY 4777 - Topics in Psychology - 1-4 cr.

In-depth study of a topic of current interest in small group setting. Topic to be covered depends on the joint interest of faculty and students.

Prerequisite Courses: consent of instructor.

PSY 4999 - Independent Study - 1-4 cr.

Scholarly library research and reading in area of special interest. Students initiate study in form of written proposal and complete it under faculty supervision. Students prepare and defend reports or take examinations.

Prerequisite Courses: consent of supervising faculty member and department chair.

PSY 5470 - Program Evaluation - 2 cr.

Examination of strategies used in assessing the need for, implementation of and effectiveness of interventions. Topics include: purposes of evaluation, understanding the program, planning the evaluations, roles for the evaluator, selection of criteria and standards, development of measures, implementation evaluation, outcome assessment, qualitative methods, reports of results, utilization of results and ethical issues in program evaluation. Students read reports and prepare proposals.

PSY 5999 - Psychology - 0-4 cr.

Independent Study in Psychology.

PSY 6444 - Projects in Psychology - 1-4 cr.

Applications of psychology through supervised practical experiences or research. The student initiates the project in a written proposal, completes it under faculty supervision and writes a formal report.

Prerequisite Courses: consent of supervising faculty member and department chair.

PSY 6777 - Selected Topics in Psychology - 1-4 cr.

In-depth study of a topic of current interest in psychology.

Prerequisite Courses: consent of instructor.

PSY 6999 - Independent Study Psychology - 1-4 cr.

Scholarly library research and reading in one's area of special interest. Under faculty supervision, the student initiates study in the form of a written proposal and then prepares and orally defends his/her written report or takes an examination.

Prerequisite Courses: consent of supervising faculty member and department chair.

Sociology Courses

SOC 1125 - General Sociology (Conceptions : VCSS - Social Science) - 4 cr.

Designed to provide an overview of the concepts, methods, and applications of sociology, and the development of the sociological imagination. Topics include development of the social self, status and role, race and ethnicity, gender, social class, deviance, political and economic institutions, population dynamics, the family, and other dimensions of society. This introductory course emphasizes the development of the sociological imagination.

SOC 2125 - Sociology of Health (Conceptions : VCSS - Social Science) - 4 cr.

Provides an overview of the concepts, methods, and applications of sociology, and the development of the sociological imagination, through the sociology of health. It explores health, illness, healthcare, and medicine in the United States. Classic and contemporary theories are combined with recent research findings. Emphasis is placed on the study of health in a broader social context, including the social construction of health and illness, with special attention to inequalities and differences among people by socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, gender, and age.

SOC 2777 - Topics in Sociology - 1-4 cr.

Courses not a regular part of Sociology curriculum but taught because of a special need, interest or opportunity. Topics vary.

SOC 2999 - Topics in Sociology - 1-4 cr.

Independent Study in Sociology.

SOC 3777 - Special Topics - 1-8 cr.

Courses not a regular part of Sociology curriculum but taught because of a special need, interest or opportunity. Topics vary.

SOC 3999 - SOC Independent Study - 1-8 cr.

Independent study in Sociology.

SOC 4777 - Topics in Sociology - 1-4 cr.

Courses not a regular part of Sociology curriculum but taught because of a special need, interest or opportunity. Topics vary.

SOC 4999 - Independent Project or Study - 1-6 cr.

Students select a particular topic of study with instructor. Individual student learning goals and method of evaluation is designed.

Prerequisite Courses: permission of instructor.