PSYCHOLOGY (PSY)

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Psychology students at Guilford are challenged to recognize the role of multiple causation in the determination of human behavior. Why do people do what they do? How do personality, culture, biology, gender, and ethnicity affect perceptions and behavior?

The psychology curriculum provides opportunities for students to investigate current methods and theories in personality, social interaction, learning, motivation, perception, and human development. Students are encouraged to appreciate different approaches and points of view and to understand how clinical and laboratory methods supplement each other.

A student majoring in psychology can expect to develop rigorous habits of observation with reference to psychological phenomena; to develop statistical knowledge; and to grasp the often complex interplay of theory, observation, research and analysis.

Our recent graduates have obtained positions in mental health, education, research, and administration. Some attend graduate school in psychology or social work, and others have taken a completely different route such as environmental studies, writing, or politics. The program fosters critical thinking and writing skills that are valuable to a wide variety of graduate programs and careers. Our students gain insight into how people think and behave as well as an appreciation for individual and cultural differences. The knowledge and skills they acquire will serve them well both personally and professionally.

Degree Offered
The Bachelor of Science degree is offered in psychology

- Psychology Major (https://catalog.guilford.edu/catalog/academic-departments-majors/psychology/psychology/)
- Communications Minor (https://catalog.guilford.edu/catalog/academic-departments-majors/psychology/communications-minor/)
- Psychology Minor (https://catalog.guilford.edu/catalog/academic-departments-majors/psychology/psychology-minor/)

PSY 100. General Psychology. 4.
Introduction to the science of behavior including study of motivation, learning and remembering, the brain, perception and thinking, social processes, and developmental behavior disorders. Includes instruction on basic research methods in psychology, and requires students to find, read, and analyze primary research articles. Fulfills social science requirement (1998). Social/behavioral science requirement (2019).

PSY 150. Special Topics. 1-8.
May also be offered at 250, 350 and 450 levels. Prerequisites vary.

PSY 213. Class, Race and Gender. 4.

PSY 224. Developmental Psychology. 4.
Psychological aspects of human growth and development across the lifespan, with emphasis on emerging capacities, expanding behavior, and increasingly complex social interactions. Includes instruction on basic research methods in psychology, and requires students to find, read, and analyze primary research articles. Includes community engagement. Fulfills social science requirement (1998). Social/behavioral science requirement (2019).

The study of mass media, including the impact of mass media on the ways people conceptualize the world, and the impact of mass media on human behavior. The course will look at a variety of media, including books and magazines, television, radio, film and the internet.

The study of African Americans from a psychological point of view, with emphasis on theories, research and models as they pertain to African Americans. The course examines a variety of issues, such as: ethnic identity, personality traits, nonverbal communication, racism, mental health and the legal system. Fulfills diversity in the U.S.

PSY 243. Environmental Psychology. 4.
Study of the impact of human knowledge, attitudes and behavior on environmental problems and their solution.
Prerequisite: PSY 100 or ENVS 100. Alternate years. Fulfills social justice/ environmental responsibility requirements (1998). Evaluating systems and environments requirement (2019).

PSY 250. Special Topics. 1-8.

May also be offered at 360 and 460 levels. Intensive reading and/or independent research on a topic of interest to the student. By departmental approval.

A comparison of prison systems in the U.S. and Norway from the perspectives of restorative justice, criminal justice, and psychology. Students will compare the goals, structures, and policies of the two systems, and consider the differential impact on violence, mental health, rehabilitation, and recidivism. Includes visits to prisons in the U.S. and Norway.

Using an experiential learning laboratory approach, this course provides students with a solid theoretical foundation for understanding interpersonal communication, the internal dynamics that lead individuals to construct meaning and the skills needed to maintain effective relationships of all kinds.

PSY 290. Internship. 1-8.
Community engagement, individually arranged so that students can become directly involved in work within the community. Highly recommended for all majors. May also be offered at the 390 level.

PSY 301. Research Methods and Analysis. 4.
Application of methods for collecting and analyzing behavioral science data and for drawing inferences from such data.
Prerequisite: PSY 100 and Historical Perspectives.

PSY 330. Personality. 4.
The study of personality from a variety of perspectives; Emphasis on different personality theories and techniques of assessment and research.
Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224.
PSY 332. Industrial and Organizational Psychology. 4.
Application of psychology to problems of employee selection, motivation, training, work environment and human relations in business, industry and other organizations. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224.

PSY 337. Child and Adolescent Psychopathology. 4.
Childhood and adolescent problems encountered by clinical psychologists, special education teachers, social workers, counselors and school psychologists examined in the context of normal child development. Emphasis is on psychological factors in deviant and disturbed behavior and treatment procedures. Includes community engagement. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224.

PSY 338. Theoretical Perspectives. 4.
The course will focus on a major theoretical perspective in psychology, including behaviorism, cognitive psychology, humanistic psychology, or psychoanalytic psychology, one or more theorists within a perspective, or a comparison of theories or theorists. Rotating titles. Repeatable. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224.

Study of behavior from a biological point of view. Focus on the structure and function of the nervous system and on the relationships between behavior and the nervous system. Co-requisite: laboratory work. Prerequisite: either two courses in biology or one course in biology and one course in psychology.

PSY 341. Psychotherapy. 4.
Studies psychotherapy's theoretical foundations and the therapist's practical skills. The course will explore four to six therapeutic approaches in depth. The therapies chosen will vary each semester, as will the focus on individual, group, family or child modalities. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or PSY 224.

PSY 342. Adult Psychopathology. 4.
This course examines psychological disturbances that may be diagnosed in adulthood, studied in the context of modern life, genetics, and the socio-cultural milieu. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224.

Detailed study of each of the major sensory systems, including the anatomy and physiology of each system, an analysis of the stimulus and measurements of sensory abilities. Laboratory work. Prerequisite: either two courses in biology or one course in biology and one course in psychology.

PSY 347. Social Psychology. 4.
Factors affecting the behavior of the individual in the social setting; laboratory and field research in social interaction. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224.

PSY 349. Multiculturalism and Psychology. 4.
Examines various areas in which multiculturalism has been applied, such as education, mental health and counseling, and inter-group relations. Students investigate cultural differences in development, examine cultural and personal identity and explore ways of improving relations among cultures. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224. Fulfills diversity in the U.S. requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).


PSY 351. Psychology and Gender. 4.
Variable title. Repeatable. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224.

PSY 352. Psychology of Language. 4.
Study of the psychological aspects of language use, including language acquisition, language production and comprehension, the dynamics of interpersonal communication, and the relationship between language and thought. Also explores issues of memory, mental representation, and neuroscience as they relate to the study of language. Prerequisite: PSY 100 or 224.

PSY 354. Social Psychology and Film. 4.
Film can be both a reflection of society and an agent for change. In this course, we will consider how social psychological principles are illustrated in film and how their depictions can be used to bring about social change, sometimes, but not always, for the better. Prerequisite: PSY100 or PSY224.


A comparison of prison systems in the U.S. and Norway from the perspectives of restorative justice, criminal justice, and psychology. Students will compare the goals, structures, and policies of the two systems, and consider the differential impact on violence, mental health, rehabilitation, and recidivism. Includes visits to prisons in the U.S. and Norway.


Selected theoretical and methodological issues of contemporary psychology. Prerequisite: PSY 301 and second-semester junior or senior standing.

PSY 450. Special Topics. 1-8.


Major research project designed and conducted under the supervision of a faculty member. Prerequisite: PSY 301 and senior standing.

Thesis designed and conducted under the supervision of a committee, including one Chair who is in the psychology department and two other committee members (one inside and one outside the department). Requires a thesis defense to the committee and entire department. Departmental honors are awarded only after approval of the committee and department. Prerequisite: PSY 301, senior standing, 3.5 cumulative G.P.A.