



PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR

Professor: A. Coats (Chair), D. Jones
Associate Professors: R. Brunner
Assistant Professor: K. Lacey, L. Scott

Contact: Dr. Abby Coats
Email: abby.coats@westminster-mo.edu

Psychology is defined as the science of mental processes and behavior. The Department of Psychology offers both a major and a minor in psychology. The courses that comprise the psychology major are designed to acquaint the student with the systematic and quantitative demands of scientific thought, as well as to ensure that students will be able to comprehend human behavior from cognitive, environmental, and biological perspectives.

The Psychology Department's learning goals are for students to:

1. Develop a conceptual framework that includes important psychological facts, principles, and theories.
2. Use critical thinking to analyze human behavior recognizing behavior as the product of antecedents and consequents.
3. Develop quantitative reasoning skills to a level enabling organization and analysis of data from survey, field, or laboratory research.
4. Master use of computer technology in the execution and/or presentation of research findings.
5. Demonstrate writing skills incorporating APA style elements for the presentation of psychological findings.
6. Develop cooperative learning skills by working productively in groups providing leadership for task completion.
7. Demonstrate oral presentation skills incorporating APA style elements for the presentation of psychological findings
8. Master information gathering and integration, in which knowledge from several subfields in psychology is synthesized to address a major question.
9. Develop meaningful professional direction for life after graduation.

Beyond the pedagogical goals cited above, the curriculum is designed to provide introductory courses for the College's general education requirements, and a few collateral courses supplementing other major programs.

In order to graduate with Honors in Psychology, the student must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Graduate with minimum 3.50 GPA in psychology courses
2. Be a member of Psi Chi, the national honor society in psychology
3. Complete satisfactorily a senior thesis
4. Present at least one paper at an off-campus regional or national conference or have a publication in a refereed journal.

Majors are strongly urged to take a biology course, such as BIO 107 or NSC 108. MAT 114 Elementary Statistics is a required pre-requisite for the required PSY 270 course. No more than six credit hours of PSY 398 Independent Study may be counted towards meeting major requirements and only three credit hours from 200 level electives may be counted toward the major. Majors must earn a grade of C- or better in all psychology needed to satisfy major requirements. PSY 422 or PSY 431 must be taken while enrolled at Westminster. Graduation with a psychology major at Westminster will require that a student complete at least 20 hrs. of Westminster psychology courses with grades of C- or higher.

You can find the course descriptions for all courses required for this major by clicking on the following links:

- [Psychology Course Descriptions](#)

Major: **PSYCHOLOGY**

Student's Last Name

First Name

Middle Initial

Advisor

Date Major Declared

Course #	Title of Course	Hours Completed	Semester Completed	Grade
Required Courses (12 hrs):				
PSY 112	Psychology as a Natural Science	3		
PSY 113	Psychology as a Social Science	3		
PSY 270	Research Tools	3		
PSY 274	Methods in Experimental Psychology	3		
Four of the Following, with AT LEAST ONE from each list (12 hrs):				
List One:				
PSY 310	Social Psychology	3		
PSY 312	Developmental Psychology	3		
PSY 315	Psychology of Personality	3		
PSY 390	Abnormal Psychology	3		
List Two:				
PSY 290	Biological Psychology	3		
PSY 320	Memory and Cognition	3		
Two of the following Laboratories (2 hrs):				
PSY 311	Social Psychology Laboratory	1		
PSY 313	Developmental Laboratory	1		
PSY 316	Personality Laboratory	1		
PSY 321	Memory and Cognition Laboratory	1		
PSY 391	Abnormal Psychology Laboratory	1		
A Senior Capstone Course or Courses (3-6 hrs):				
PSY 422	Senior Seminar	3		
	or both			
PSY 430	Pre-Thesis <u>and</u>	3		
PSY 431	Senior Thesis	3		
Three Psychology electives- 9 hrs (6 hrs must be upper level)				

PSY 1xx/2xx				
PSY 3xx/4xx				
PSY 3xx/4xx				
	TOTAL HOURS FOR MAJOR	38-41 hrs		

If any substitutions or waivers of requirements are allowed, please list below and initial.

PSY – Psychology

PSY 112 Psychology as a Natural Science (3 hrs.) An introductory analysis of mental processes and behavior from the perspective of natural science. Includes such topics as the nervous system, sensation and perception, animal and human learning, cognition, memory, and intelligence. Includes a computer-based laboratory designed to explore methodology and key concepts. Offered every semester.

PSY 113 Psychology as a Social Science (3 hrs.) An introduction to human behavior and mental processes from the social science perspective. Includes such topics as social inference, interpersonal relations, cognitive and social development, personality structure and function, motivation and emotion, stress and adjustment, abnormal behavior, and psychotherapy. Includes a computer-based laboratory designed to explore further course topics. Offered every semester.

PSY/EDU 221 Educational Psychology (3 hrs.) The application of psychological principles of learning, cognition, and child and adolescent development to the educational process in elementary and secondary schools. Topics include the impact of psychological knowledge on student learning, teaching, motivation, management of the classroom, and assessment of student learning. Offered every spring.

PSY 231 Sports Psychology (3 hrs.) An examination of the psychological factors influencing participants and, to a lesser extent, spectators in sport. Topics include the use of behavioristic principles to develop skills, and the effects of causal attribution, attention, anxiety, coaching strategy, and imagery on athletic performance. Additional special topics include audience effects, children in sports, and the psychological benefits of exercise. Offered every fall.

PSY 270 Research Tools (3 hrs.) A hands-on exploration of how the psychologist uses the computer to search for literature, analyze data, and report results. Through a series of exercises using primarily PC computers in the psychology laboratory, students learn how to use the Internet to search for previously published research, how to locate and use electronic literature, how to use statistical packages such as Jamovi, and how to generate graphs and other APA style documents. Prerequisites: PSY 112, PSY 113, and MAT 114. Offered every fall.

PSY 274 Methods in Experimental Psychology (3 hrs.) An examination of experimental methods and designs utilized in laboratory research. Topics include the assumptions of science, hypothesis formation, statistical analysis of data, and assessment of theory. Also technical skills associated with reading literature and presenting findings using APA-style elements are emphasized. MAT 114 Elementary Statistics is recommended but not required. Offered one semester a year. Prerequisites: PSY 112 and 113. Offered every spring.

PSY 290 Biological Psychology (3 hrs.) An exploration of the relationship between human behavior and biology. Basic material on genetics, neuroanatomy and neurophysiology is included, although the focus of the course is behavioral and mental phenomena that can be understood better via an analysis of brain function. Topics covered are: vision, learning, memory, motivation, emotion and abnormal behavior. Offered once every two years. Prerequisites: PSY 112 or BIO 114. Offered every odd spring.

PSY 301 Human Sexual Behavior (3 hrs.) The focus of this course is on the scientific study of human sexual behavior. Current research findings are presented and discussed in class. Topics include: Human anatomy and sexual functioning, pregnancy/childbirth, sex education, sexual and gender expressions, intimate relationships, as well as sexual problems, infections, and sex therapy. Students will discuss and process their own beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions about sexuality through in-class discussion and assignments. Offered occasionally. Prerequisites: PSY 112 or 113.

PSY 305 Industrial-Organizational Psychology (3 hrs.) This course applies the principles of psychology to work and other organizational settings. It presents both traditional industrial applications (personnel selection, job design, training, and performance evaluation), more recent perspectives on organizational performance (group dynamics, romance in the workplace, leadership, problem solving, organizational design, organizational development, and organizational culture and socialization), and recent work in ergonomics and engineering psychology. Offered occasionally. Prerequisites: PSY 112 or 113.

PSY 310 Social Psychology (3 hrs.) A survey of the field of social psychology emphasizing social cognition and inference, patterns of interpersonal relationship, the development and change of attitudes, and group structure and function. Offered every fall. Prerequisites: PSY 113.

PSY 311 Social Psychology Laboratory (1 hr.) Optional laboratory to accompany PSY 310. Offered every fall. Prerequisites: PSY 113 and either PSY 270 or PSY 274.

PSY 312 Developmental Psychology (3 hrs.) A survey of cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development across the lifespan, including the identification of general trends and individual differences in developmental patterns. Offered every fall. Prerequisites: PSY 112 or 113.

PSY 313 Developmental Psychology Laboratory (1 hr.) Optional laboratory to accompany PSY 312. Offered every fall. Prerequisites: PSY 113 and either PSY 270 or PSY 274.

PSY 315 Psychology of Personality (3 hrs.) A survey of the field of personality, emphasizing historical theories of personality, including those of Freud, Jung, Adler, Rogers, Maslow, and others, modern theoretical approaches including trait theory, the self, person-situation interactions, emotion and motivation, and basic methods of investigation. Offered every odd spring. Prerequisites: PSY 113.

PSY 316 Personality Laboratory (1 hr.) Optional laboratory to accompany PSY 315. Offered every odd spring. Prerequisites: PSY 113 and either PSY 270 or PSY 274.

PSY 320 Memory and Cognition (3 hrs.) An investigation of theories and research dealing with cognitive structure and processes. Such topics as long- and short-term memory, forgetting, iconic and echoic storage, concepts, heuristics, and problem solving are included. Offered every even spring. Prerequisites: PSY 112 or 113.

PSY 321 Memory and Cognition Laboratory (1 hr.) Optional laboratory to accompany PSY 320. Offered every even spring. Prerequisites: PSY 112 and either PSY 270 or PSY 274.

PSY 330 Addictive Disorders (3 hrs.) This course will integrate biological, psychological, social and cultural aspects of the use and abuse of a wide variety of psychoactive substances ranging from caffeine to alcohol to heroin. The course will focus on the nature of and criteria for diagnosing substance use disorders (SUDs), and predictors of SUDs. Existing and new/emerging approaches to treatment (medications, counseling, support groups) will also be discussed and explored in class, with a strong focus on reading, understanding, and critiquing original peer-reviewed research on SUDs and their treatment. Offered occasionally. Prerequisites: PSY 274 or PSY 290 or BIO 107 or BIO 114.

PSY 340 Forensic Psychology (3 hrs.) This course will explore the basic principles surrounding the interaction of psychology and the legal system. Forensic Psychology's foundation is within the rubrics of psychological, political science and sociological principles. It is inherently an interdisciplinary course due to its interaction between several fields of learning. Students will learn about several areas within forensic psychology including, but not limited to, what forensic psychology entails, the roles of forensic psychologists, use of psychology in the selection of law enforcement, techniques in criminal investigation, risk assessment, child custody cases, interrogation and confessions, insanity and competency to stand trial, and death penalty trials and appeals. Discussions regarding the cooperative and conflicting nature of the relationship between the legal system and psychology will be prevalent. Offered occasionally. Prerequisites: POL 112, POL 211, PSY 113, or SOC 111.

PSY 374 Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Group Conflict (3 hrs.) This course uses experimental social psychology as the foundation to explore the affective, behavioral, and cognitive processes associated with group interaction and conflict. Utilizing an interdisciplinary perspective, it will integrate psychological, sociological, political, historical, and security-related approaches to understanding stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination on a local and global scale. Offered occasionally. Prerequisite: PSY 113.

PSY 390 Abnormal Psychology (3 hrs.) This course explores the psychological, cultural, and social factors involved in defining patterns of thought and behavior as abnormal with a focus on mental/psychiatric disorders as defined by the Diagnostic and statistical manual. A strong emphasis is placed on understanding scientific research on predictors of and biological psychological treatments for a wide range of mental disorders (mood, anxiety, personality, substance use, eating/body image, dissociative, psychotic and sexual disorders). Offered every spring. Prerequisite: PSY 113.

PSY 391 Abnormal Psychology Lab (1 hr.) Optional laboratory to accompany PSY 390. Offered every spring. Prerequisites: PSY 113 and either PSY 270 or PSY 274.

PSY 398 Independent Study (1-4 hrs.) This course gives the psychology major an opportunity to increase his/her/their understanding of psychology as a discipline through a program of individual research supervised by a faculty member. The course may be repeated with change of topic. Enrollment by permission of the instructor. Offered occasionally.

PSY 405 International and Cross-Cultural Psychology (3 hrs.) Utilizes an interdisciplinary perspective to focus on a contemporary challenge facing our world: the need to understand persons from different cultures as the globalization of our communications and commerce forces close contact with persons who have a different cultural background from our own. The course includes a cross-cultural examination of many of the basic topics in the field of psychology such as sensation-perception, gender, personality and abnormal. Also focuses on cross-cultural behavioral expectations and fosters development of the skills needed to evaluate a situation and determine the behavioral rules existing in that situation. Offered occasionally. Prerequisites: PSY 113 and one of the following: HIS 334, 356, HUM 277, 278, 294, GTS 201, PHL 102, POL 212, REL 102, SOC 111, WGS 210.

PSY 412 Counseling Theories and Methods (3 hrs.) An introduction to the major theories of counseling and psychotherapy, current issues in the field, and applications for specific groups and settings. The course includes both theoretical and experiential components. Offered occasionally. Prerequisites: PSY 113.

PSY 418/SOC 318 Adult Develop & Aging (3 hrs.) An investigation of theories and research in adult development, from young adulthood to old age. Emphasizes gains and losses in cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development as well as death and grieving. Offered occasionally. Prerequisites: PSY 112, 113, or SOC 111.

PSY 422 Psychology Seminar (3 hrs.) Discussions, readings, and individual papers based on special problems in psychology. Offered every spring. Prerequisites: PSY 112, PSY 113, and either PSY 270 or 274.

PSY 430 Pre-Thesis (3 hrs.) The first course in a two-semester sequence for students wishing to complete a senior thesis. Students will be asked to complete an extensive literature review of a topic approved by their thesis advisor. Offered every spring. Prerequisites: PSY 112, PSY 113, and either PSY 270 or PSY 274.

PSY 431 Senior Thesis (3 hrs.) The senior thesis is a report of extended library research and an experimental study focusing on a topic chosen by the student and approved by a sponsoring member of the department. Library research is performed during enrollment in pre-thesis and the experimental project is executed while taking this course. Offered every fall. Prerequisites: PSY 112, PSY 113, PSY 270 and 274, completion of PSY 430 with a C or higher, and senior standing.