

Psychology

Department Information

- **Department Web Site:**
www.ndsu.edu/psychology/ (<http://www.ndsu.edu/psychology/>)
- **Credential Offered:**
B.S.; B.A.; Minor
- **Official Program Curriculum:**
catalog.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/psychology/ (<http://catalog.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/psychology/>)

Whether you're interested in psychology as a helping profession or as the science of mind and behavior, the Department of Psychology at North Dakota State University is an exciting place to be. For the last several years, our programs have grown to build on our strengths in health psychology and cognitive neuroscience. Our expanded faculty and graduate programs mean that our undergraduate majors have ample opportunities for participating in cutting-edge research and course work.

Background Information

Psychologists study a broad range of thought and behavior, from normal to abnormal, in both individuals and social groups. What distinguishes psychology from other fields is its strong research orientation. Because psychology is relevant to virtually all professions, students who plan to enter professions such as medicine, law, business management, social work, education or counseling often elect to major or minor in psychology.

Career Opportunities

Most professional positions for psychologists require a master's or doctoral degree. In addition to pursuing graduate work in psychology, recent graduates have entered professional programs in medicine, counseling and guidance, business, special education, social work, law, dentistry, ministry and optometry.

Many of our students seek employment immediately after completing their bachelor's degree. Employers seek out psychology majors for their combination of people and research skills. Some of our graduates have entered positions directly related to psychological services (e.g., mental health aide, psychological testing technician, behavior analyst, or medical research assistant). Others have taken positions not directly concerned with psychological services but related to psychology (e.g., sales, management, law enforcement, corrections, advertising, market research and statistical consulting).

Alumni surveys by the NDSU Career Center have consistently shown that our graduates are very successful in obtaining good jobs or going on to graduate or professional school.

The Program

Undergraduate students can either major or minor in psychology at NDSU. Students majoring in psychology may pursue either a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or a Bachelor of Science (B.S.). The primary difference between the two degree programs is that the B.A. degree requires competency at the second-year level of a foreign language while the B.S. requires an approved minor or additional course work in either the natural sciences or the social sciences instead of a language. Both the major and minor requirements within psychology allow each student to select the courses most relevant to his or her own interests.

Advising

Freshman and transfer students receive introductory academic advising from the department's professional advisor in conjunction with NDSU's Career and Advising Center. This preparatory advising continues until students are assigned to a faculty advisor to start their junior year. In addition to these professional and faculty advisors, students can use our web-based advising center to obtain information about the psychology curriculum and career planning. Printed handouts with this information are also available from the department.

One helpful feature is the Career Orientation OverLay (COOL), which has been developed to aid students in selecting courses relevant to their career goals. COOLs are available for behavioral neuroscience (e.g., medicine, medical research), industrial psychology (e.g., business, industry), human services (e.g., clinical psychology, social work), and experimental psychology (e.g., academic and research careers).

Research and Computing Facilities

Students and faculty at NDSU are engaged in research on a wide variety of topics in psychology. Research laboratories include experimental rooms for human research, sound-attenuated chambers, a group lab suite, a virtual reality display system and a driving simulator. Laboratory facilities include advanced equipment for studying human perception, brain function, information processing and social interaction.

Because the program at NDSU emphasizes the scientific approach to the study of behavior, student research is strongly encouraged. Undergraduate students often serve as research assistants working closely with faculty and graduate students. Current research includes projects on health,

vision, virtual reality/multi-sensory integration, information processing, behavior modification, emotion, depression, history of psychology, and group processes.

Field Experience

The department maintains excellent relations with a number of service agencies in the Fargo-Moorhead community. Through these contacts, psychology majors can gain field experience in human service settings. At the same time, they earn college credit and gain an understanding of the applications of psychological principles in community service agencies.

Financial Aid

Research and teaching assistantships are sometimes available to advanced undergraduate students. Students can also receive support for work in the department through the NDSU work-study program. In addition, the Psychology Research Award Fund provides money to undergraduates for research projects and travel to professional conferences.

Some scholarships are available for undergraduates. For example, the Patricia Beatty Scholarships provide funding for one to two junior and senior psychology students each year. Students are invited to apply for these scholarships, which are awarded based on grade point average and involvement in department research and activities. Many of our students also have participated in campus-wide programs that sponsor students to do research with faculty mentors (for example, the McNair Scholars program).

High School Preparation

Basic college preparatory courses in high school are sufficient for NDSU psychology majors. Since research and writing skills are particularly important, students should be well-grounded in English, science, social science, and mathematics. Do not be concerned if you have not had psychology in high school—you will get plenty of courses here. In fact, we generally prefer that students take their introductory psychology course at NDSU rather than Advanced Placement Psychology in high school.

Requirements for Majors

A total of 51 semester credits are required in psychology and must include PSYC 111 (Introduction to Psychology), PSYC 350 and 351 (Research Methods I and II) and 15 credits at the 400-level from a selection of courses. Students also are required to complete general education requirements, which include our required courses of MATH 103 (College Algebra) or higher and ENGL 324, 325, or 459 for Upper Division Writing, and a capstone experience course.

Psychology Minors

A total of 18 credits are required in psychology and must include PSYC 111 (Introduction to Psychology) and one 300 or 400-level course. In addition to general psychology minors, more specialized minors are available in neuroscience and managerial psychology.

B.S. in Behavioral Statistics

This interdisciplinary major is the result of a joint effort between the Departments of Psychology and Statistics. (Note: students in this major also complete the requirements for a degree in psychology.) Graduates of this program will have skills in collecting and analyzing data on human behavior, and would be employable in firms that deal with medical or Medicare data, consumer activity, market research, etc. See the psychology web site, your advisor or the *NDSU Bulletin* for detailed information.