

Psychology

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The Bachelor of Arts in psychology program focuses on the scientific study of behavior, cognition, and emotion. Through in-depth exploration of psychological theory and research—including hands-on learning in research laboratories, internships, and community-based projects—students gain understanding of the complexities of psychological phenomena. The psychology department helps students develop and appreciate the importance of critical thinking combined with empirical evidence in understanding human and animal nature. The department offers learning experiences that enrich students' understanding of functioning from behavioral, biological, cognitive, developmental, humanistic, organizational, psychodynamic, social, and sociocultural perspectives.

Requirements for the Major

Requirements for the major: 12 course units

All students must take four Core courses in sequence, three Foundation courses, three Specialized courses, one Psychology Option, and one Senior Experience course. It is permissible to take more than this minimum. Psychology majors may choose a specialization; each specialization requires one or two Foundation courses in addition to other course requirements. For students who select a specialization within the major, specialized courses and a Senior Experience course are chosen from options relevant to the area of interest or specialization. A student may opt not to have a specialization. Please see the [Psychology Department web page](#) for more detail, including specialization-specific requirements.

Specialization	Required Foundation Course(s)
<i>Biopsychology</i>	PSY 212/Biopsychology PSY 214/Cognitive Psychology <i>or</i> PSY 213/Learning and Memory
<i>Cognitive Psychology</i>	PSY 214/Cognitive Psychology PSY 213/Learning and Memory
<i>Counseling and Clinical Psychology</i>	PSY 216/Personality Theory and Research PSY 217/Abnormal Psychology
<i>Developmental Psychology</i>	PSY 220/Development across the Lifespan
<i>Industrial/Organizational Psychology</i>	PSY 267/Organizational Psychology
<i>Social Psychology</i>	PSY 215/Social Psychology

A. Core Courses: (Four required courses taken in sequence.)

PSY 101/General Psychology

PSY 121/Methods and Tools of Psychology

PSY 203/Design and Statistical Analysis

PSY 299/Research Seminar (recommended to be taken in specialization, if applicable.)

B. Foundation Courses: (Choose at least three)

- PSY 212/Biopsychology
PSY 213/Learning and Memory
PSY 214/Cognitive Psychology
PSY 215/Social Psychology
PSY 216/Personality Theory and Research
PSY 217/Abnormal Psychology
PSY 220/Development across the Lifespan
PSY 267/Organizational Psychology

C. Specialized Courses: (Select at least three 300-level courses from options relevant to one's area of specialization, if applicable.)**D. Psychology Option:** (Select one additional course at the 200-level or above; 300-level or above is encouraged.)**E. Senior Experience:** (Select at least one 400-level course.)**Regulations and Other Requirements****Experiential Learning Opportunities in Psychology (ELOPsy)**

Experiential learning is a cornerstone of the undergraduate psychology program at TCNJ. We assert that learning through direct experience is one of the most powerful and transformative learning strategies. The Experiential Learning Opportunities in Psychology (ELOPsy) at TCNJ encourage direct student involvement in and exploration of psychological theory, research, and application. Such experiences are designed to target integrative learning objectives. Experiential Learning Opportunities in Psychology include:

- PSY 390, 492/Collaborative Research Course and Senior Collaborative Research Course
- PSY 391/Independent Study in Psychology
- PSY 393, 493/Independent Research in Psychology and Senior Independent Research in Psychology
- PSY 396, 496/Senior Honors Thesis in Psychology I and II
- PSY 397/Instructional Internship in Psychology
- PSY 399, 499/Internship in Psychology

Students may take ELOPsy courses multiple times (with the exception of PSY 396, 496, which may be taken once only, and 397, which may be taken twice only). A maximum of one 300-level ELOPsy course may be counted as a Specialized course in the psychology major and minor; one 300- or 400-level ELOPsy course may be counted as the Psychology Option in the psychology major; one 400-level ELOPsy course may be counted as the Senior Experience course in the psychology major (see specific psychology specialization requirements). Some ELOPsy courses may be taken for variable credit (PSY 397, 399/499, and 391/393). All other ELOPsy courses are one unit courses. Prerequisites and requirements for the ELOPsy courses vary. See the [Psychology Department website](http://psychology.pages.tcnj.edu) (psychology.pages.tcnj.edu) for further information about these special opportunities.

Psychology Major with Education as Dual Major

See advisors in Education and Psychology Departments. All psychology major requirements and regulations apply.

ECE 201/Infant through Adolescent Development for Early Childhood, ELE 201/Child and Adolescent Development, SPE 203/The Psychological Development of Children and Adolescents, or NUR 110/Development of Unitary Man and Environment Across the Life Span may count as PSY 220, a Foundation course. However, a student cannot count BOTH PSY 220 and the equivalent (ECE 201, ELE 201, SPE 203 or NUR 110) in the psychology major.

Departmental Honors in Psychology

Departmental Honors in Psychology requires a minimum GPA in psychology of 3.3, a minimum grade of B in PSY 299, and completion of a year-long Honors Thesis (PSY 396, 496). Further information is available on the [Psychology Department website](#).

Program Entrance, Retention, and Exit Standards

Every major program at the College has set standards for allowing students to remain in that program, to transfer within the College from one program to another, and to graduate from a program. The following are the standards for psychology programs with minimum grades noted in parentheses:

- Retention in the program is based on standards including performance in these “critical content courses”: PSY 101/General Psychology and PSY 121/Methods and Tools of Psychology (C+ in both); PSY 203/Design and Statistical Analysis and PSY 299/Research Seminar (C- in both). Please see the Psychology Department website for additional information about retention requirements.
- Transfer into the program from another program within the College requires completion of an application process that occurs once each semester. To apply, students must have earned a grade of C+ or higher in PSY 101 and must submit an essay: Please complete a 400-800 word essay describing your past preparation and future plan for success in Psychology. In your description, please make sure to include all of following elements:
 - Describe any past coursework in social sciences, physical sciences, or math/statistics and how these courses have helped you prepare to succeed in psychology.
 - Describe any past non-classroom experiences in any of the sciences (e.g., volunteer work, internship, research experience) and how these experiences have helped you prepare to succeed in psychology.
 - Describe your plan for successfully completing the psychology major, with attention to how you expect to complete all necessary coursework given your current class rank. For example, if you are currently a second-semester junior, you might include plans for taking courses over the summer or taking a fifth year in order to complete the necessary coursework.

- Discuss why, given your interests and plans, Psychology would be a good major for you.

Please refer to our website for additional details.

- Transfer students who wish to enter The College of New Jersey with a psychology major or double major must meet college transfer admission standards.
- All students (including transfer students) must take at least seven psychology course units at The College of New Jersey.
- Students must earn a C- or better in each course applied to the psychology major (with the exception of PSY 101 and PSY 121 as stipulated above). However, a psychology course for which the grade is D+ or D may be applied toward graduation as a free elective.
- In accordance with College policy, courses may only be repeated **once**.

Requirements for the Minor

A five-course minor in psychology is available. Requirements for the minor include:

1. Completion of PSY 101 and 121 (grade of C+ or higher in both courses).
2. Completion of three additional courses: one Foundation course and two Specialized courses. Psychology minors should consider taking PSY 121 before taking upper-level psychology courses.
3. All grades C- or better (with the exception of PSY 101 and PSY 121 as stipulated above).

At least one-half of the courses required for the minor must be completed at The College of New Jersey or through previously approved study abroad. One Experiential Learning Opportunity in Psychology (ELOPsy) course may count toward the Psychology minor.

Recommended course sequence

First Year

FSP	First Seminar	1 course unit
PSY	96/Orientation to Psychology	0 course units
PSY	101/General Psychology	1 course unit
PSY	121/Methods and Tools of Psychology (<i>Prerequisite: PSY 101</i>)	1 course unit
PSY	1-2 Foundation courses	1-2 course unit
WRI	102/Academic Writing (if not exempted)*	1 course unit
Foreign Language (if not exempted)**		2 course units
Liberal Learning		1-3 course units

*It is recommended that students exempted from these courses take other liberal learning courses.

** It is recommended that students exempted from these courses take other liberal learning courses. Note: Arabic 151 and 152, Chinese 151 and 152, Japanese 151 and 152, and Russian 151 and 152 are intensive courses and carry two course units of credit each. Students should take this into account when planning a normal four-course semester.

Total for year

8 course units

If a student has earned transfer credit for PSY 101 (or its equivalent) or has earned a score of four or higher on the AP Psychology test, PSY 121 should be selected and an additional foundation course should be taken in the first year.

Sophomore Year

PSY 97/Exploring the Psychology Major	0 course units
PSY 203/Design and Statistical Analysis (<i>Prerequisite:</i> PSY 121)	1 course unit
PSY 299/Research Seminar (<i>Prerequisite:</i> PSY 203)	1 course unit
PSY Foundation courses	1-2 course units
PSY Specialized course	1 course unit
Foreign Language (as needed)	1 course unit
Liberal Learning courses	2-4 course units

Total for year**8 course units**

Psychology majors may choose an optional primary specialization in sophomore year by completing a Specialization Choice Sheet (available on the psychology department website) in consultation with their psychology advisors and submitting it to the psychology department main office. PSY 299 (Research Seminar) is recommended to be taken in the chosen specialization.

Junior Year

PSY 98/Exploring the Psychology Profession	0 course units
PSY Specialized courses	1-2 course units
PSY Psychology Option (any 200- or 300-level psychology course)	1 course unit
Liberal Learning courses	1-2 course units
Electives (may include additional PSY courses)	3-4 course units

Total for year**8 course units****Senior Year**

PSY 99/Psychology Professional Seminar	0 course units
PSY Choose one Specialized course	1 course unit
PSY Senior Experience course	1 course unit
Liberal Learning courses	1-2 course units
Electives	4-5 course units

Total for year**8 course units**