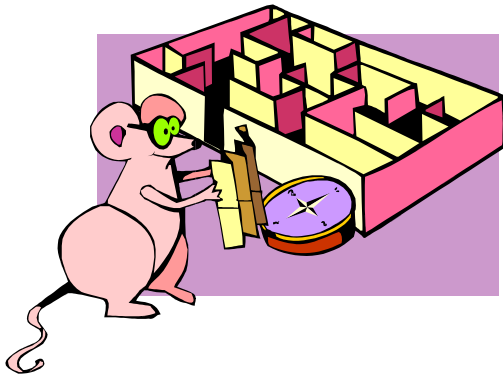


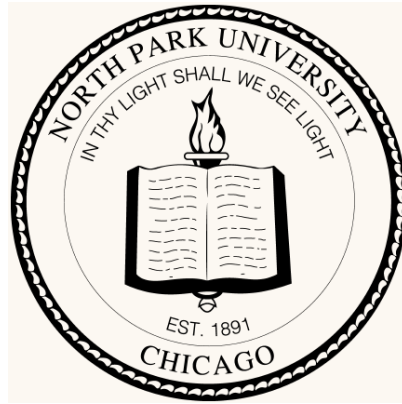
PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Student Major Reference Book



Focus on the important
NORTH PARK
UNIVERSITY
CHICAGO





Congratulations on choosing to do your major in the Psychology Department at North Park University! We, the faculty, wish you the best of luck in pursuing your degree in Psychology. Please take some time to review the content of this book. It was constructed to give you basic information on who we are, what will be expected from you during your studies, what you'll need to do to graduate, and your options after you graduate. This book is not intended to be an exhaustive source of information about the Psychology major, so we strongly encourage you to see one of us shortly after you declare your major.

Welcome!

David Bennett, PhD
Elizabeth Gray, PhD (Department Chair)
Hywel Morgan, PhD
Rachel Schmale, PhD

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SECTION 1: North Park University Psychology Department Mission Statement

The mission of the psychology major is to prepare its students for lives of significance, intellectual growth, and service through the science and profession of psychology—lives marked by an understanding of the complexity of behavior, informed about its biological, cognitive, developmental, social, and cultural dimensions; and by the use of empirical methods, interpretive skills, and faith, in the application of knowledge for human well-being.

SECTION 2: Psychology Major Expected Outcomes

Upon completion of a psychology major, the graduate will be able...

1. to describe one's own conceptualization and experience of contemporary psychology as both science and profession.
2. to apply the scientific method in theoretical reasoning, critical thinking, inquiry, and problem-solving.
3. to demonstrate knowledge of psychological theory, methods, concepts, application and ethics.
4. to articulate a self-understanding that demonstrates an application of learned psychological principles.
5. to articulate an understanding of others and interrelationships that demonstrates an application of learned psychological principles.
6. to communicate effectively using methodologies consistent with the expectations of the discipline of psychology.

A dark blue rectangular box containing the text "Department of Psychology" in a white, serif font. The text is centered within the box.

Department of
Psychology

Section 3: North Park University Psychology Major (BA & BS) Requirements

PSYCHOLOGY, BACHELOR OF ARTS

NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY ● CHICAGO ● ILLINOIS

Effective in catalog AY 10-11

Graduation Requirement:

120 semester hours, minimum

General Education Requirements: 44 semester hours

- The North Park Dialogue (12)
 - Dialogue I (4)
 - Dialogue II (4)
 - Dialogue III (4)
- Culture and Society (4)
- Personal Development (2) *May be met by PSYC 1200*
- Biblical Studies (8)
 - BTS 1850 (4)
 - BTS option (4)
- Foreign Language (8)
 - 1010 Level (4)
 - 1020 Level (4)
- Mathematics (4) *Met by prerequisite course STAT 1490*
- Fine Arts (2)
- Natural Science (4)
 - Biology (2)
 - Chemistry/Physics (2)

See General Education checklist for specific courses that will fulfill each requirement.
<http://www.northpark.edu/advising/ge/>

Psychology majors are advised to meet with their advisor as soon as they declare a psychology major to discuss major requirements and electives. Students should seek regular advising regarding which courses would be most appropriate for their specific career goals. Departmental policy requires a meeting with your psychology advisor every semester.

**** A 2.0 minimum Psychology GPA is required for graduation. Thus, a minimum C average is necessary in all PSYC courses ****

Additional Graduation Requirements

** Total of 120 semester hours, minimum. Additional courses may need to be taken to meet this requirement.

** Grade Point Average

- Overall cumulative grade point average of 2.00
- Cumulative grade point average in major of 2.00

** Last 30 semester hours must be taken at North Park

** Acceptance into the major (Declaration of major form)

Major Requirements:

Required Semester Hours: 40 semester hours

Prerequisites and Supporting Courses:

- STAT 1490: Introductory Statistics (4)

Required Core Courses:

- PSYC 1000: Introduction to Psychology (4)
- PSYC 2100: Research Methods in Psychology (4)
- PSYC 2700: Human Lifespan Development (4)
- PSYC 3010: Behavioral Neuroscience (4)
- PSYC 3100: Learning & Cognition (4)
- PSYC 3500: Social Psychology (4)

Choose ONE course from Cluster A:

- PSYC 3200: Personality (4)
- PSYC 3600: Abnormal Psychology (4)
- PSYC 3700: Counseling Psychology (4)

Choose TWO courses from Cluster B:

- PSYC 3020: Neuropsychology (4)
- PSYC 3400: Psychological Testing (4)
- PSYC 3800: Perception (4)
- PSYC 3900: The Psychology of Language (4)

Psychology Electives:

- Complete additional Cluster options
- PSYC 1200: Stress & Health (2)
- PSYC 3910: Topics (2-4)
- PSYC 3910: Independent Study/Directed Research (1-4)
- PSYC 4970: Internship in Psychology (4)
- PSYC 4000: Departmental Honors (2-4)

Students preparing for particular graduate programs should meet with their advisor to select appropriate cluster courses and electives, and plan enriching experiences such as internships or directed research.

Psychology majors are required to take and pass an objective departmental comprehensive exam in their final semester; or, anyone failing that exam will be required to take and pass a departmental comprehensive essay exam. Students must enroll in PSYC 4901: **Psychology Comprehensive Exam (0sh)** to complete this requirement.

Graduation Requirement:

120 semester hours, minimum

General Education Requirements: 44 semester hours

- The North Park Dialogue (12)
 - Dialogue I (4)
 - Dialogue II (4)
 - Dialogue III (4)
- Culture and Society (4)
- Personal Development (2) *May be met by PSYC 1200*
- Biblical Studies (8)
 - BTS 1850 (4)
 - BTS option (4)
- Foreign Language (8)
 - 1010 Level (4)
 - 1020 Level (4)
- Mathematics (4) *Met by prerequisite course STAT 1490*
- Fine Arts (2)
- Natural Science (4)
 - Biology (2)
 - Chemistry/Physics (2)

See General Education checklist for specific courses that will fulfill each requirement.
<http://www.northpark.edu/advising/ge/>

Psychology majors are advised to meet with their advisor as soon as they declare a psychology major to discuss major requirements and electives. Students should seek regular advising regarding which courses would be most appropriate for their specific career goals. Departmental policy requires a meeting with your psychology advisor every semester.

Notes to BS students:

- BS degree students MUST meet with their advisor to verify eligibility for required course (science elective, topics, internship) *
- Students who wish to pursue doctoral studies in Psychology should choose the BS option. Graduate psychology programs are extremely competitive and this curriculum offers the most thorough preparation
- If student meets the criteria for Honors and has a faculty sponsor, s/he may complete a senior honors project (PSYC 4000) as an alternative to an internship. Students particularly interested in an experimental PhD program should pursue this option

Major Requirements:

Required Semester Hours: 60 semester hours

Complete Prerequisite/Supporting Courses:

- STAT 1490: Introductory Statistics (4)
- Additional 4sh of science* outside of the Psychology department in Life, Physical or Mathematical Sciences (4sh) *Course(s) must be approved by advisor

Complete ALL Required Core Courses:

- PSYC 1000: Introduction to Psychology (4)
- PSYC 2100: Research Methods in Psychology (4)
- PSYC 2700: Human Lifespan Development (4)
- PSYC 3010: Behavioral Neuroscience (4)
- PSYC 3100: Learning & Cognition (4)
- PSYC 3500: Social Psychology (4)

Complete FIVE course from Cluster A or B:

Cluster A

- PSYC 3200: Personality (4)
- PSYC 3600: Abnormal Psychology (4)
- PSYC 3700: Counseling Psychology (4)

Cluster B

- PSYC 3020: Neuropsychology (4)
- PSYC 3400: Psychological Testing (4)
- PSYC 3800: Perception (4)
- PSYC 3900: The Psychology of Language (4)

Complete ONE Topics seminar course (PSYC 3910) (4sh)

Complete PSYC 4970, Psychology Internship (4sh) or PSYC 4000, Departmental Honors (4sh)

Pass PSYC 4901, Psychology Comprehensive Exam (0sh)

- Psychology majors are required to take and pass an objective departmental comprehensive exam in their final semester; or, anyone failing that exam will be required to take and pass a departmental comprehensive essay exam.

Pass PSYC 4902, Psychology Portfolio (0sh)

- Students must enroll in and pass PSYC 4902, Psychology Portfolio in their final semester

Section 4: Requirements for a Minor in Psychology

Required semester hours: 20 semester hours in psychology

Prerequisites and Supporting Courses: STAT 1490 Statistics (4 sh)

Required Core Courses: PSYC 1000 Introductory Psychology,
PSYC 2100 Research Methods

Electives: 12 additional hours in psychology

Section 5: Course Descriptions

Introductory Level courses (open to all students; no pre-requisites)

PSYC 1000 Introduction to Psychology (4 sh) Introduces the methodologies and major content areas of psychology. *No pre-requisites.*

Second-Year Courses (foundational courses; service to psychology majors, minors and nursing)

PSYC 2100 Research Methods in Psychology (4 sh) Introduces the methods and statistics used in the study of psychology, including case study, survey, observation, and experimentation. Special attention to the unique requirements of human subjects. Lecture plus lab experience. *Prerequisites: PSYC 1000, STAT 1490.*

PSYC 2700 Human Lifespan Development (4 sh) Studies physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and faith development across the human lifespan. The course incorporates theories, methods, and research with both children and adults. *Prerequisite: PSYC 1000.*

Upper Division Lab Courses (psychology major courses)

PSYC 3010 Behavioral Neuroscience (4sh) Explores the how biological mechanisms interact with experience to create behavior, with an emphasis on components of the nervous system, and the biological bases of the sensory systems. Labs included. *Prerequisites: PSYC 1000, 2100, STAT 1490.*

PSYC 3020 Neuropsychology (4sh) An in depth exploration of functional neuroanatomy and the psychobiology of cognition, consciousness, learning, emotion, movement, and psychopathology. Labs included. *Prerequisites: PSYC 1000, 2100, 3010, STAT 1490.*

PSYC 3100 Learning and Cognition (4 sh) Examines some of the central aspects of behavior and mental life: classical and operant conditioning, remembering, forgetting, solving problems, making decisions, and communicating. Combines experimental data, everyday experience, and psychological theory. Lecture plus lab experience. *Prerequisites: PSYC 1000, 2100, STAT 1490.*

PSYC 3200 Personality (4 sh) Focuses on the scientific investigation of individuals' characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving from a psychological perspective. Includes historical and

contemporary approaches, current research, personality assessment, and the application of personality concepts in everyday life. Lecture plus lab experience. ***Prerequisites: PSYC 1000, 2100, STAT 1490.***

PSYC 3400 Psychological Testing (4 sh) Studies the history, principles, and applications of psychological testing and assessment. Included are: the functions of psychological testing; technological and methodological components such as reliability and validity; test development and construction. Particular focus on the theories and uses of intelligence and personality tests. Lecture plus lab experience. ***Prerequisite: PSYC 1000, 2100, STAT 1490.***

PSYC 3500 Social Psychology (4 sh) Introduces the study of human behavior in groups, including social cognition, social influence, attribution, social comparison, attraction and friendship, stereotypes, and the self. The course incorporates theory, research, and application. ***Prerequisite: PSYC 1000, PSYC 2100, STAT 1490.***

PSYC 3600 Abnormal Psychology (4 sh) Studies psychological disorders, etiologies, assessment, and interventions. This includes the history of abnormal psychology; theory and research; and biological, psychological, and social approaches to treatment. Extensive use of video recordings are included. ***Prerequisites: PSYC 1000, 2100, STAT 1490.***

PSYC 3700 Counseling Psychology (4 sh) Introduces research and principles, theories, and techniques of counseling. Emphasizes the practice and mastery of basic listening and responding skills; sound judgment and the limits of practice; and professional ethics. Lab experience using video recordings of skills practiced by the students. ***Prerequisites: PSYC 1000, 2100, STAT 1490.***

PSYC 3800 Perception (4 sh) Studies the relationship between the external world and our internal representation of it—the world as we perceive it. Considers the bases of accurate perception, factors contributing to perceptual distortion and disability, the dimensions and processes of consciousness, and the nature of reality. Lecture plus lab experience. ***Prerequisites: PSYC 1000, 2100, STAT 1490.***

PSYC 3910 Topics in Psychology (2 or 4 sh) Studies in depth and detail selected topics in psychology. Repeatable. ***Prerequisites as announced.***

Senior Level Courses (summative experiences)

PSYC 4000 Departmental Honors in Psychology (4 sh) Studies an approved research topic in depth and detail under the supervision of department faculty. Involves a literature review, design of a study, analysis, and write-up. The final paper is presented to the larger university and/or psychological community. ***The prerequisite is approval of the project proposal by the department faculty and assignment of the supervisor, additionally student must meet the University criteria for honors.***

PSYC 4901 Comprehensive Examination (0sh) All majors are required to complete and pass the psychology comprehensive exam prior to graduation. Students should enroll in PSYC 4901 in their final fall or spring semester at North Park University (PSYC 4901 is not offered in the summer). The psychology comprehensive exam is a cumulative exam covering all content in major PSYC courses offered at North Park University. Pass/Fail.

PSYC 4902 Psychology Portfolio (osh) Reviews academic progress, career planning and exploration, and evidence of major outcomes in psychology through personal reflection. Student will submit an organized sample of education, work samples and skills for review. Independent study.

PSYC 4910 Independent Study in Psychology (1-4 sh) Studies in detail a topic chosen by the student in consultation with a department faculty member whose approval is prerequisite for the course. Repeatable.

PSYC 4970 Internship in Psychology (1-4 sh) See internship information through Career Services. NOTE: To qualify for internship placement, you must have a minimum 2.75 psychology GPA.

Section 6: Departmental Policies

Comprehensive exam

All students are required to take and pass the comprehensive exam to be awarded a degree in Psychology. The comprehensive exam is given to students in the spring semester. Students must take the exam in their final year of study in the fall or spring term. Students are notified via email to register to complete the exam on the day announced (typically a Saturday morning in November/April). Registration for the exam is by enrolling in PSYC 4901 "Psychology Comprehensive Examination". The exam will show on your transcript as a pass or fail for a zero credit course.

The comprehensive exam is an objective exam (multiple choice questions) which covers content from all of the regular courses offered in the psychology department. Students pass this exam by meeting the minimum criteria established for the department for that year.

If a student fails the objective exam, a back-up essay exam is available. The student will be notified of the failure on the objective exam and will be given essay questions which cover the major to prepare. The essay exam will be scheduled with the student(s) before graduation. On the day of the exam the student will be given three essay questions chosen by the department and will write for three hours without notes.

Students who fail both the objective and essay exam may be provided with the option to submit a paper, in APA style, which addresses all of the essay questions that they were provided to prepare. A specific deadline will be assigned.

In the event that a student does not pass the comprehensive exam or complete the written assignment by the assigned deadline, the student will be invited to begin the comprehensive exam process again from the beginning in the following spring.

Students who do not pass the comprehensive exam will not meet the requirements for graduation.

Full courses

The Psychology Department policy on full courses is to have students interested in adding the course come to class on the first day. On that day the instructor will assess need and space and

determine if it is possible to add students to the course. Students who do not attend the first day of class, except for unusual circumstances, will not be added to the course.

Pre-requisites

Students must meet all pre-requisites to enroll in psychology courses. Instructors may check for pre-requisites on the first day and will administratively drop students who do not meet the requirements. In special circumstances the instructor may allow a student without pre-requisites to enroll in a course. Pre-requisites are in place to ensure that students have the foundational skills to succeed in a course. It would be unethical for a professor to allow you to enroll in a course that you were not prepared for as it may be knowingly setting you up for an experience of failure.

Psychology GPA

Students must achieve a 2.0 cumulative psychology GPA to be eligible for graduation. A 2.0 average is a C average. Thus, while a D- or higher is a “passing grade” for any psychology course, a student must earn average grades of C across courses. For example, if a student earns a D in a particular course they must also earn a B in another course to achieve an overall psychology GPA of 2.0.

Grade GPA Equivalent	
A	4
A-	3.67
B+	3.34
B	3
B-	2.67
C+	2.34
C	2
C-	1.67
D+	1.34
D	1
D-	0.67
F	0

Section 7: Psychology Opportunities

Workshop Series on Professional Development

Each year the department will offer a series of informational workshops designed to help students understand the major and its opportunities, and prepare for their future in psychology. Typical workshops have included 1) An Introduction to the Major, 2) Applying to Graduate Schools, 3) Career Opportunities with a Psychology degree, and 4) Types of Graduate Schools/Degrees.

The department highly recommends attendance and participation in these workshops throughout your academic career at North Park. For more information please contact a faculty member.

Departmental Honors, PSYC 4000

Departmental honors may be achieved by completing a senior research project with one of the psychology professors. To be eligible for this program you must be a senior psychology major, have a 3.5 overall GPA and a 3.7 GPA in the major, and have departmental approval. Students should apply for approval in the spring of their junior year. To obtain approval the student should meet with a professor who is working in the area of psychology that they are interested in to discuss the possibility of working with them on a PSYC 4000 project. Once the student has a mentor for their project they will work with that professor to obtain approval from the department as a whole. While enrolled in PSYC 4000 the student will complete a paper or a project and must publicly present their work. This presentation may be at the Psychology Honors Ceremony on campus or at a student research convention (e.g., the Psi Chi poster session at the Midwestern Psychological Association annual conference). PSYC 4000 is 4 semester hours. Students may enroll in 4sh in their final semester or 2sh across their final year depending on the nature of their project.

Senior Research

Students who wish to work on a research project with a professor who do not meet the departmental honors criteria for GPA may complete a project under PSYC 4930. All other guidelines and restrictions apply, see above.

Internships

Students may enroll in a psychology internship to gain experience in the work world. Internship guidelines are posted on the NPU website under Career Planning Services. The student must apply for an internship through that office and obtain a psychology faculty sponsor. www.northpark.edu/home/index.cfm?northpark=Res_Career.Rcar_Internship

Psi Chi

Psychology students may be eligible to join Psi Chi, the Psychology National Honors Society. Psi Chi is the national honors society in psychology founded in 1929 for the purpose of promoting excellence in scholarship and advancing the science of psychology. Membership in Psi Chi is an honor as well as a recognition of academic excellence that is recognized by graduate schools and employers.

When inducted into Psi Chi you will be eligible to wear honors regalia at graduation, will receive Eye on Psi Chi magazines, are eligible for Psi Chi awards and grants, may present research at Psi Chi programs at national and regional conferences, and may submit your research to the Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research. www.psichi.org

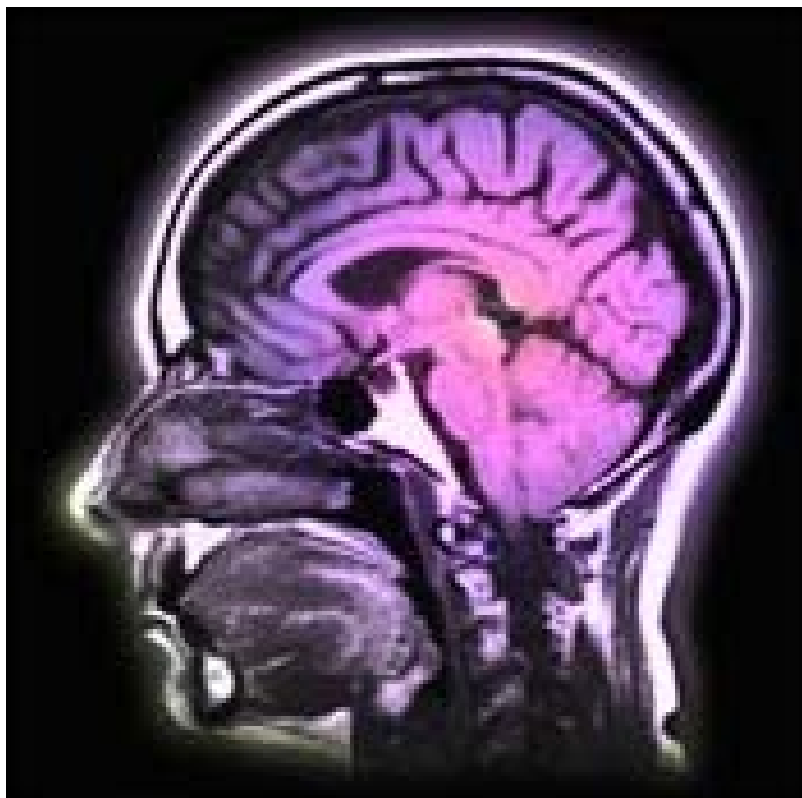
Psi Chi has the following requirements:

- Completion of at least 3 semesters of college
- Completion of at least 9 semester hours in psychology
- Declaration of a major in psychology
- A minimum psychology GPA of 3.00
- A minimum overall GPA of 3.00
- Rank in the top 35% of your class (sophomores, juniors, seniors)

Psychology Club

The Psychology Club was established in 2004 to promote knowledge and awareness of psychology as well as offer psychology-related events for North Park University students. All students are welcome to participate in the Psychology Club.

NOTE: Communication from the psychology department to majors will be via email. Please check your email account regularly



Section 8: Psychology Department Faculty

David Bennett, Ph.D.

B.S., Psychology
M.A., Experimental/Cognitive-Neural Psychology
Ph.D., Experimental/Cognitive-Neural Psychology

Loyola University of Chicago
University of South Florida
University of South Florida

At North Park University since 2002

Research Interests: pedagogy (teaching), memory, humor (and the relationship between combinations of these)

Teaching emphasis: Learning & Cognition, Research Methods, Perception, Psychology of Humor & Laughter, Introduction to Psychology

Office Phone: 773-244-5724

Email: dbennett@northpark.edu

Elizabeth Gray, Ph.D.

B.A., Psychology
M.A., Psychology
Ph.D., Personality and Social Psychology

University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Iowa
University of Iowa

At North Park University since 2002.

Research Interests: the stability of personality, the associations between personality and everyday behaviors, the effects of personality in intimate relationships, the pedagogy of teaching psychology, and undergraduate research.

Teaching emphasis: Personality, Social, Psychological Testing, Intimate Relationships, Development

Office Phone: 773-244-4844

Email: egray@northpark.edu

Hywel Morgan, Ph.D.

B.S. Psychology
M.S. Behavioral Neuroscience
Ph.D. Behavioral Neuroscience and
Clinical Neuropsychology

University of Toronto
Memorial University of Newfoundland
University of Toronto

At North Park University since 2006

Research Interests: cognition and physiological measures of arousal, specifically, how arousal affects the way we process information.

Office Phone: 773-244-5249

Email: hmorgan@northpark.edu

Rachel Schmale, Ph.D.

B.A. Psychology
M.S. Developmental Psychology
Ph.D. Developmental Psychology

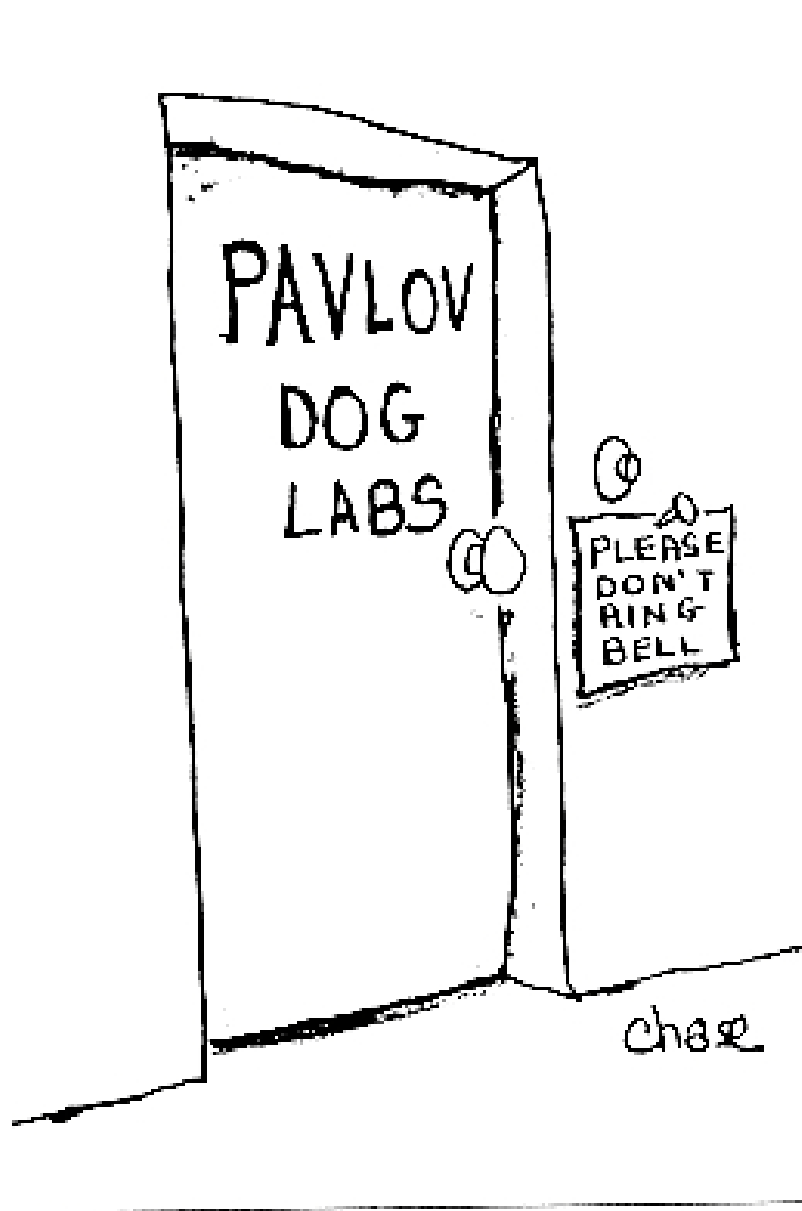
University of California, Berkeley
Purdue University
Purdue University

At North Park University since 2008

Research Interests: the examination of language acquisition in infants and toddlers, particularly, the impact of variability on processes such as word recognition and word learning.

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Section 9: What to do with Your Psychology Degree

It's never too early to consider what you might do with your psychology degree!

The beginning of the second year is not too soon to start thinking of the sort of career you might wish to enter after completing your degree in Psychology.

Many graduates fail to do justice to themselves on application forms and in interviews because they freeze up when they come to the dreaded question: "And what do you have to offer us?" They tend to have great difficulty verbalizing the skills that they have acquired, and also fail to recognize that other graduates may not have them. Psychology does not just equip students for the psychological professions: it is a good background for any number of "general-subject graduate" careers.

Listed below are some of the skills which a typical psychology graduate will have acquired during his/her degree course. None of them is unique to psychology, of course, but not many disciplines can offer so comprehensive a list. How often, for instance, do you find graduates who are simultaneously literate, numerate, computer-literate and good at problem-solving?

Literacy:

The ability to write both succinct reports and more lengthy analyses. Psychology graduates are accustomed to writing essays, which allows them to explore issues in detail, but they also become familiar with the techniques of concise writing within a pre-set format, as they write up their practical reports. The ability to produce a concise report is often cited by managers as a skill they would like their management trainees to have.

Numeracy:

The ability to handle and interpret statistical information. Not many jobs require mathematical whiz-kids, but psychology graduates are good at drawing the implications out of data summaries and probability statements.

Computer literacy:

The ability to use a computer package, whether word processing or statistics, and the ability to learn to use new ones. The ability to program is rarely required and most organizations accept that their own systems are likely to be new. But most psychology graduates are familiar with the basic use of computer packages by the time they graduate.

Interpersonal awareness:

Knowledge of the mechanisms of social communication and the potential sources of interpersonal conflict. This is not the same as being socially skilled oneself (although it contributes), but does make a difference in understanding and dealing with interpersonal problems when they arise in the workplace. And most psychology graduates are familiar with this type of knowledge.

Environmental awareness:

Knowing how environments, organizations, etc., can directly influence people's understanding and behavior. Very few psychology graduates are unaware of the importance of environment, and yet many non-psychologists do not notice environmental factors.

Problem-solving skills:

The ability to identify different strategies and approaches to solving problems. This may be on a macro-level, in applying totally different perspectives or levels of analysis to the problem, or at a more basic level in terms of choosing appropriate methods to deal with it. It is a valuable skill in the organizational world, and one which psychology graduates are strikingly good at. They are trained from the very first lab class.

Information-finding skills:

Knowing how to go about looking for information on a particular topic or general area. Not a skill needed for every job, but useful in many of them nonetheless.

Critical evaluation:

The ability to appraise information and situations realistically, and to anticipate problems or difficulties. An essential skill for a manager or management trainee, and useful in many others. And again, it is one in which psychology graduates are directly trained.

Research skills:

Knowing how to go about gathering systematic information about human experience or behavior. We train students in a number of different methods - at the least, observational, experimental and case study techniques. Such awareness of methodology is useful to any number of different professions, some obvious ones being marketing and health education.

Measurement skills:

Knowing how to go about designing questionnaires and developing other measurement tools. Psychology graduates acquire these skills again normally as part of their methodology course. But they are not easy skills to acquire and not many graduates understand the underlying principles of them as thoroughly as does a typical psychology graduate.

Perspectives:

The ability to look at issues from several different points of view. Although this is a skill in which psychology graduates are directly trained, they often do not realize that they have acquired it. But it is a valuable one for an employer.

Higher-order analysis:

The ability to extract general principles from immediate or concrete situations. Psychology graduates tend to be better than most people at spotting recurrent patterns or similarities between situations, and at looking at issues in terms of their underlying principles rather than becoming bogged down with the details of the immediate situation.

Pragmatism:

The ability to make the best of a non-ideal situation, and to get on with working within pre-set constraints. It does not take much exposure to psychological methodology for psychology students to realize that the perfect experiment is going to be elusive and they will simply have to get on with doing it as well as possible anyway! As graduates, this tends to give them a strongly practical element which is valuable in many forms of work.

What are you going to do when you graduate? The time to ask yourself this question is not whilst you're recovering from a post-finals binge, but, ideally, 18 months to two years before that date. The beginning of your second year is probably the best moment. You then have a year to start exploring,

experimenting, experiencing some of the options, before putting into practice your ideas at the appropriate moment during the final year. Few job or course applications can actually be made during your second year, but many will require action from the beginning of your last term, and some, such as those for teacher training or the Civil Service, can be submitted before the final year starts.

When you apply for jobs or courses, not only are you expected to know what you'd like to do, you're also expected to make a convincing case as to why you're the best candidate for that job or course. This is not just about "selling yourself" effectively, it's also about being sure in your own mind that this is really the right option for you - after all, if you're offered the chance to do it, you want to know you'll be competent and happy at it. Nothing and no-one can tell you what to do with your life, so the onus is on you to invest some time and effort in using the facilities and people at North Park (as well as your friends, family and teachers), to discover all you can about the options open to you and how your particular set of interests, abilities and personal qualities equips you for particular jobs, training or further study.

Psychology graduates are in the fortunate position of having a very wide range of career options open to them, some very directly related to the subject, such as Clinical or Prison Psychology, others which don't use the content of the course but rely heavily on the skills acquired in studying it, such as Systems Analysis or Market Research. In addition, the jobs for generalists, such as industrial management, broadcasting or the police force, where personal qualities and interests are the most significant, are just as possible for Psychology graduates as for those in any other subject. Obvious traps which Psychology graduates can fall into are thinking too narrowly about where a degree in Psychology can lead, (for example, "what else is there apart from clinical or educational psychology?"), and failing to recognize just how skilful, ("I thought everyone would have communication/analytical/computer skills so I didn't mention them!") and experienced, ("I got a summer job because I needed the money, I didn't think it was relevant!"), you are. An open-minded examination of your discipline will help you to avoid these traps and participation in self-assessment exercises, work experience programs, vacation courses, practice interviews, etc., will give you confidence in presenting your abilities and achievements in the most positive way.

Don't put off the moment when you start thinking about what to do when you graduate. It may seem intimidating, you may be confused because you've no idea what to go for, but most graduates survive the transition and go on to have a lot of fun in their working lives. The more organized and prepared you are, the more likely it is that you will be happy and successful, however you measure that, in what you do. If time isn't on your side, or you have constraints on your choice, such as family commitments or restricted mobility then it's even more important that you start investigating the options and planning early.

If you can't find information or the answer to what seems to be a trivial or a major question, ASK - if your psychology professor or Career Services doesn't have the answer, we'll find someone who does. Above all, don't leave it too late - the props start to fall away once you've graduated and left the university, so use us now!

What Can You Do With a BA in Psychology?

by Lyn Aubrecht - Meredith College

Many, many things! Included with this article is a partial list of "General Job Areas for Graduates with a BA Degree." Under each job area one could go on to list several different jobs. For some job areas, the number of different jobs listed could run into the hundreds. Each of these general job areas are ones in which graduates with a BA in psychology find jobs.

How could a major in psychology help a person qualify for so many different jobs? How can you use *your* knowledge of the realities of job placement for psychology graduates to *your* advantage?

To answer these questions there are some important things you should know. First, the basic requirement for a wide variety of jobs in the world of business, government, and many other public and private work domains is a college degree. So, from the standpoint of the *minimum requirement* for most jobs, a BA degree with a major in psychology is as good as a BA degree with a major in almost any other area. Second, however, with regard to many jobs, a major in psychology is not just another major. *Psychology is a better major.* This is true because for these jobs psychology can provide you with better preparation for the tasks that you will be asked to do. Third, if you make the choice to take advantage of the many additional options available to you as a psychology major, you could be especially well prepared for one or more career choices when you receive your BA degree.

Finally, it should be noted that no general job area for the graduate with a BA degree includes the job title "psychologist." You can find a job in which you are called a "counselor," but you will not find a job in which you are called a psychologist. This is because psychology has decided that one minimum requirement in order to be called a psychologist is an advanced degree (usually a PhD, or a PsyD, but sometimes an MA). You can go on to become a psychologist, and getting your BA in psychology is a big step in the right direction, but you will have to continue your education in graduate school.

Let us consider some of these issues in a little more detail.

A college degree means something positive to a prospective employer. In addition to the statement that your college degree appears to make about your intellectual and learning abilities, it also suggests that you have the ability to set a goal, carry out a plan, and manage resources, and, perhaps most significant of all, it means that you did not give up or quit (Carroll, Shmidt, and Sorensen, 1992). While all college graduates, regardless of major, may have these characteristics, you, as a psychology major, can bring several other valuable characteristics to your new job.

Success in many jobs depends largely upon you, the worker, being successful in understanding, relating to, and working with, people. Psychology majors are often persons who start out with an above-average interest in people. And all psychology majors take many courses in which they are encouraged to understand and appreciate people from a wide variety of perspectives. After all, the understanding of human behavior has been one of the major goals of psychology for a long time. As a psychology major you know something about people and you know how to interact with them. These are characteristics that employers value.

But being able to understand and relate to people is not the only special strength of psychology students. The scientific study of human behavior by psychology turned out to be one of the most complex tasks in the history of science. In order to do this task well, psychology decided that all students of psychology must have solid preparation in the techniques of scientific research and statistical analysis. As a result, a typical student with a BA in psychology has had more training in doing, analyzing, and writing up scientific research than a typical BA-level student in almost any other science or discipline. As a psychology major you have important research and writing skills. You can use these important skills to benefit your employer.

In addition to these general strengths, there are other choices that you as an individual can make to help you become a better job candidate. The most obvious may be your choices regarding courses you take to complete your psychology major. If, for example, your career goal centers on "working with children in an educational setting," you will want to take courses in developmental and child psychology, and perhaps a course on the psychology of exceptional children. In addition to these courses, however, you could also choose to select courses that provide related information, insights, and skills that may prove useful to you--and to your employer. For this example, courses like behavior analysis, perception, tests and measurement, and theories of personality, among others, might be included. Get advice from someone who knows something about both your career area *and* the courses taught in psychology. From an academic standpoint, you will be even better prepared for a job in your area when the time comes.

Want to be *especially* well prepared for a particular job or a career? Here are two additional options that you can choose to do.

The first option is a variation of the "course choice" suggestion just noted. In addition to looking for courses *within* psychology that can provide you with information, insights, and skills useful in a chosen job or career field, look for courses *outside of psychology* as well. For example, if you are considering a career in a particular area of business, you might choose to take one or more courses in accounting, marketing, and/or personnel management. Don't overlook courses that can help you develop useful *general* abilities and skills as well. Examples of choices like these include courses in computer science, public speaking, and Spanish. While you are thinking about it, have you ever considered a minor in an important related area to go along with your psychology major? What about a second major? Once again, advice from someone who knows something about your chosen career field can be very important. Do you know the people in your college's career services office? You should. Someone in that office may be just the right person for you to talk with. Taking these courses will expand your knowledge and abilities beyond what you have attained in your general education courses and in your major area, psychology. You may even be a much more attractive candidate for a job as a result.

The second option is to take advantage of opportunities to develop important skills and abilities *outside of class*. Being a member of a team--working with others to accomplish a common goal, teaching a self-help skill to a frustrated child, actually doing psychological research, being a leader who defines goals and then helps people to reach them--all of these might be best learned by experience rather than "out of a book." Look for opportunities to nurture and develop these skills and abilities in yourself.

On campus for example, you can choose to belong to (or start!)--and take a leadership position in--the Psychology Club or the Psi Chi chapter at your school. You can also become involved in other worthwhile organizations on campus as well. You can find a professor to work with you on an

independent research project. Put a lot of genuine effort into each of these tasks and you will learn a great deal. Your skills and your confidence will grow too.

Off campus, for example, you can choose to be a volunteer at the suicide hotline or at a nursing home. You can arrange for an "internship" at a children's center or at the courthouse. You might even be able to get a summer job at a bank, a consumer market research firm, or a state social services facility. If you think you already know the kind of work you are interested in, try, if possible, to get positions that are close to that kind of work. With each experience you will help yourself formulate a clearer idea of what you want to do, and what you don't want to do, in your job--in your career. When a potential future employer asks you why you want the job you are applying for, you will be able to answer with greater conviction--and with an answer that is based upon personal experience. You will also have some *job experience* to report on your job applications and on your resume.

Both on campus and off campus, outside-of-class experiences often result in yet another powerful advantage, more and better personal contacts. By choosing to make this time commitment, you create opportunities that allow others to get to know you--not only what you have learned in class, but your personal qualities as well: your positive attitude, your responsibility, your willingness to work hard, etc. See the list of "Student Characteristics Valued by Professors and Employers" included with this article. And you get to know other people too, people you otherwise might not have an opportunity to know: professors, bosses, advisors, professionals, etc. This can be very important when it comes time for you to get good letters of recommendation. This can be even more important if, as a result of the working relationships you have established, you are offered a good job.

Look at the listing of "General Job Areas for Graduates with a BA Degree" again. Select three or four of the general job areas that might be of most interest to you. Consider how good your application for a job in each of those areas might be if you took just basic psychology courses and made no effort to take special courses or to get involved in outside experiences. Now consider how good your job prospects might be if--in addition to your basic psychology courses--you had chosen to take several special courses, had shown evidence of "getting involved" and "being a leader," had done independent research (maybe with a professor's help), had participated in two or three off-campus work experiences that were somewhat related to the job area, *and* you had two or three good letters of recommendation! As a student of psychology, what would your evaluation be of the advantages of choosing to take on additional opportunities?

It is important to understand that even if you have done all of these things, you will not receive full benefit from them until you can effectively communicate what you know and what you can do to your prospective employer. What if, as a psychology major, you *are* a person who is interested in people? You are good at relating to people and interacting with them. What if, as a psychology major, you have learned to do research studies? You have learned to analyze differences to see whether or not they are statistically significant. What if, as a psychology major who has chosen to be especially well prepared, you have learned more in related areas by taking special courses? You have developed interpersonal, leadership, and professional skills by actually being involved in making things happen on and off campus. Should you assume that your prospective employer will somehow know that psychology majors, that *you*, have these skills? The answer is no. To be sure of getting the benefit you deserve for the qualities and abilities you have, you must also learn to communicate effectively in your applications, on your resume, and during interviews. This, too, is an important ability.

Of course not *all* of the options to be considered when asking the question "what can you do with a BA in psychology?" are suggested by [the list](#) of "General Job Areas for Graduates with a BA Degree." An entirely new category of possibilities could be subsumed under the heading "postgraduate education." Besides going to graduate school in psychology or some other discipline and working toward a MA, PhD, or PsyD, postgraduate education also includes options such as going to medical school or law school. Have you ever considered the possibility of continuing on in school?

Are you *really* interested in some area of psychology (medicine or law, etc.)? Are you a hard worker and do you earn good grades? Do you want to *be* a "psychologist" (doctor, lawyer, or someone with a similar professional standing)? Are you willing to commit two, three, four, or more years of your life--after receiving your BA degree--to study and train in order to reach that goal?

If you have answered yes to just about all of these questions, then postgraduate study *might* be something you should consider. Postgraduate education is not for everyone, and there is certainly nothing wrong with deciding not to continue your formal education after completing your BA degree. But if you think that postgraduate education might be a possibility for you, then you need to seek out information and advice about that prospect as soon as possible. In addition to talking with someone in the psychology department and/or in your career services office, several good resources on this topic are noted within this article. Fortunately, if you have chosen to utilize several of the additional options to help you become a better candidate for a job with a BA in psychology, you have already started doing most of the things that you need to do to get accepted for postgraduate studies as well.

Of course there is more to know about actually getting a job with a BA in psychology or actually getting into a postgraduate program than can be addressed in a short article like this one. How do you choose what area to go into? What are the most effective ways to search for a job? How should you choose the right graduate programs to apply to? What are the most effective ways to convince an employer or a graduate school to select you? What can you do to be successful on the job, or in graduate school, once you get there?

Fortunately, some experienced people have taken the time to try to answer many of these questions. Their answers can be found in the resources listed in the bibliography at the end of this article. Two of the best and most complete sources of help are the short books by Appleby (1997) and by Morgan and Korschgen (1998b). If you can, get a copy of both books and read them.

Asking what you can do with your BA in psychology is a very important question. Your answer to that question--along with the actions you take to help ensure a favorable outcome--could have an important effect on your future. Hopefully, some of the concepts introduced in this article will prove helpful to you as you begin to plan what to do next. Much of what may happen in your future may well be up to you. Carpe diem!

General Job Areas for Graduates with a BA Degree

Each of these areas include several jobs that students with a BA in psychology can obtain.

Admissions/Financial Aid	News Reporting
Advertising	Personnel/Human Resources
Bank Management	Private/Nonprofit Management
Child/Youth/Elder Care	Production/Quality Control
Community Services	Property Management
Consulting Services	Public Relations/Media Services
Court/Juvenile Services	Purchasing
Customer Services	Real Estate Sales
Educational Services	Residential Services
Employee Relations	Restaurant Management
Employment Services	Retail Management
Financial Services	Retail/Wholesale Sales
Government/Legislative Services	Social Services
Hotel Management	Special Populations Services
Human Resources	Stocks/Bonds Sales
Human Services	Student/Alumni Services
Insurance Claims/Underwriter	Substance Abuse Services
Insurance Sales	Supply Management
Law Enforcement/Police	Teaching
Manufacturing/Production	Technical Writing
Market Research	Travel Services
Military Service	Volunteer Services
Museum Programs	Youth Services

Student Characteristics Valued by Professors and Employers

Here is a partial list of characteristics adapted from many sources. These characteristics, when judged to be "high" or "good," are generally considered favorable by potential employers and by professors--including those serving on graduate school admissions committees. Which characteristics would you now consider among your strengths? Which two or three characteristics would you choose that could be significantly improved over the next year--if you decided to make the effort to do so?

Intellectual Ability	Independent Work Skills
Scholastic Ability	Written Communication Skills
Motivation	Oral Communication Skills
Creativity	Foreign Language Skills
Character	Analytical Thinking Skills
Emotional Maturity	Research Skills
Positive/Optimistic Attitude	Statistical Skills
Empathetic Understanding	Computer Skills
Adaptability/Flexibility	Technology/Equipment/Material Skills
Ability to Handle Stress	Teaching Skills
Interpersonal Skills	Counseling Skills
Group Work Skills	Organization Skills
Cross-Cultural Interaction Skills	Leadership Skills

Bibliography

Appleby, D. (1997). *The handbook of psychology*. New York: Longman.

Appleby, D. (1999, Spring). Choosing a mentor. *Eye on Psi Chi*, 3, 38-39.

Appleby, D., Keenan, J., & Mauer, B. (1999, Spring). Applicant characteristics valued by graduate programs in psychology. *Eye on Psi Chi*, 3, 39.

Carroll, J. L., Shmidt, J. L., & Sorensen, R. (1992). Careers in psychology: Or what can I do with a bachelor's degree. *Psychological Reports*, 71, 1151-1154.

DeGalan, J., & Lambert, S. (1995). *Great jobs for psychology majors*. Lincolnwood, IL: VGM Career Horizons.

Morgan, B. L., & Korschgen, A. J. (1998a, Fall). How do I maximize my chances of getting a good job with an undergraduate psychology degree? *Eye on Psi Chi*, 3, 27-28.

Morgan, B. L., & Korschgen, A. J. (1998b). *Majoring in psych? Career options for psychology undergraduates*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

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Section 10: Graduate School Options

Note: If you want to help people with problems (do "counseling"), you are not limited to careers that require graduate degrees *in psychology*. Psychology-related graduate programs such as education and social work are typically happy to have students who majored in psychology as undergraduates. Too, in my experience, they often have less stringent admission standards than do psychology programs. Thus, if you're like most undergraduates who won't have the necessary GRE scores and GPAs to be admitted to master's or doctoral programs in clinical or counseling psychology, don't despair! You should *definitely* consider these alternative educational pathways to the counseling "mountaintop."

At the master's and doctoral level, education becomes increasingly specialized. Thus, to do the work you want to do, it's *essential* to obtain a degree that will prepare you to do so. To ensure that you make the correct decision in this regard, you must be very clear about your career goals at this level. In addition, you need to know *for sure* that the degree you pursue will prepare you to do what you want. (If you get in the wrong degree program, you can waste time, money, and also end up unprepared to do what you had hoped.)

There are many factors to be considered as you make decisions about your graduate school options. You will probably have to review the information in this section a number of times before it begins to make sense. Nonetheless, your future happiness and income are riding on it, so stick with it. *Choose a graduate program on the basis of considerations that are important to you, not others.* Just because your faculty mentor has a PhD doesn't mean that you need to get one to be happy or for your mentor to respect you. Get the degree that meets *your* needs. Choose a program that offers the level of education you want (master's, doctorate), that is compatible with your orientation (scientific, practical; behavioral, cognitive, etc.), and that offers the coursework and training to prepare you to do what *you* want to do (individual, family, group therapy; testing; working with adults, children, etc.).

I will provide some general guidelines to help you understand some of the major degree programs and their similarities and differences. Nonetheless, because of the detailed and technical nature of this information and because so much is riding on your making informed decisions, I strongly advise you to work with a faculty member who knows about the various degree options that are relevant to the work in which you're interested. (As you may have learned, some faculty know more than others and some are more willing than others to share what they know; it's a good idea to keep your ears open and to shop around.)

MA, MS, MEd, MSW, PhD, PsyD, EdD: What Does It All Mean?

To understand the various degree options, you need to know some important points about academic degrees. You're probably aware that degrees have different "names" (the technical name for this is degree nomenclature), but you probably don't know what these are or what they can tell you. Just as there are a number of degrees offered at the undergraduate level—e.g., bachelor of arts (BA) and bachelor of science (BS), there are a number of different types of graduate degrees;

The nomenclature for degrees contains two important pieces of information. One tells you the *educational level* of the degree: "B" for a bachelor's degree (beginning level; 4 years); "M" for a master's degree (intermediate level; 1-2 years beyond the bachelor's degree); and "D" for a doctoral degree (highest level; 3-5 years beyond the bachelor's degree). The second piece of information contained in degree nomenclature is the *discipline* in which the degree is awarded. Here things can get complicated,

so I'll try to keep to the essential points. Those academic disciplines (majors) that deal with basic principles vs. the applications of knowledge are classified as the liberal arts (and sciences). These include psychology, sociology, political science, history, biology, physics, English, etc. Disciplines (majors) such as education, nursing, and business teach the applications of the basic principles of knowledge. Because the various disciplines and their educational requirements are different, it's important to distinguish among them. Thus, all *masters* degrees in the *liberal arts and sciences* disciplines give degrees titled master of *arts* (MA) and/or master of *science* (MS). Often, an MA indicates that a thesis is required, whereas an M.S. indicates that it is not; however, this is not always so. (Note the correspondence with the bachelor of arts and the bachelor of science degrees at the undergraduate level.) All *doctoral* degrees in liberal arts disciplines (psychology, biology, etc.) give the doctor of *philosophy* degree (PhD).*

* The PsyD degree is awarded *only* in psychology and *only* in the "professional" areas of clinical and counseling psychology--not, for example, in subfields like social or developmental psychology. The major difference between the PsyD and the PhD is the emphasis on research. The PhD degree prepares clinical psychologists to be researchers (as well as practitioners); whereas, the PsyD prepares clinicians to be consumers of research (as well as practitioners). Thus, PhD programs require students to take more courses in research design and statistics and to conduct research compared to PsyD programs. In addition, PsyD programs place considerable emphasis on the provision of psychological services. If you're interested in a detailed discussion of the differences between the PsyD and PhD degrees, read the following article:

Scheirer, C.J. (1983). Professional schools: Information for students and advisors. *Teaching of Psychology*, 10, 11-15.

To further complicate matters, more distinctions are made among the degrees in the *applied* disciplines. We'll consider only those fields of greatest interest to psychology majors. In *social work*, there is a master of social work degree (MSW) and a doctor of social work degree (DSW)--and, sometimes, a PhD. In *education*, the master of education degree is either the MEd or the EdM; the doctor of education degree is the EdD. In *business*, the master's degree is the master's of business administration (MBA); the doctorate, the DBA (or, sometimes, the PhD). If you want to explore this further, you can use your college catalog to see how the degrees of your instructors match their disciplines.

A Master's Degree or a Doctoral Degree?

Are there any practical reasons for choosing a master's degree or a doctoral degree? Yes! *Doctoral* degrees will enable you to earn more money, to work in positions with more responsibility (and status), and to have more independence. Of course, doctoral programs are hard to get into, and take more time and effort to complete--typically at least 4-6 years beyond the bachelor's degree. A *master's* degree gives you more occupational advantages than a bachelor's degree, but fewer than a doctoral degree. On the other hand, master's programs are easier to get into than doctoral programs; they are also less difficult and take less time to complete (typically 1-2 years beyond the bachelor's degree).

To determine the relative difficulty of the various degree programs (and departments), you need to consider several factors. First, you need to compare *admissions standards* (how hard is it to get

in?). Second, you also need to compare the *graduation requirements* in the programs in which you're interested (how hard is it to *graduate*?). Is there a foreign language requirement? written comprehensive and/or oral exam? a thesis? a dissertation?

Some Useful Distinctions Between Degrees in Clinical Psychology, Education, and Clinical Social Work

To help you understand why you might lean toward a degree in psychology, social work, or education, I'll try to make some distinctions among the graduate programs in these fields.

Psychology. In psychology graduate programs, you will learn a lot about research methods and statistics and specialize in a subfield of psychology: developmental, social, personality, neuropsychology, clinical, health, etc. (See "[Areas of Specialization in Psychology](#)." If your sub-field is clinical or counseling psychology, you will also get a lot of practical experience in conducting psychotherapy and psychological testing.

Typically, what distinguishes psychology from education and social work is the strong research focus--remember your courses in research methods and statistics? Thus, most master's and doctoral psychology programs in clinical psychology will require coursework in research. This research emphasis serves two primary functions. First, because psychology is an empirical discipline, psychologists must understand research methodology to keep up with developments in the field (by reading professional journals). Second, psychologists and psychology students conduct research to advance knowledge in the field. Thus, doctoral programs require a dissertation (a major research project of publishable quality), and some master's programs do as well. If you select a master's program that requires a thesis, you will need these skills to conduct the research for your thesis. (A thesis is a research project that may or may not be of publishable quality and is highly desirable if you are planning to go on for a PhD) In a non-thesis program, you will need the research skills to understand the research articles you read for your classes and papers and to keep up with developments in the discipline after you graduate.

In my experience, most psychology majors have relatively little interest in research. (I don't mean this as an indictment, only a description of reality as I see it.) If you are one of these students, you should think seriously about going on in a field other than psychology (and should definitely rule out a PhD in psychology--although a PsyD may be an option--see Halgin (1986) below). If research is not your cup of tea, graduate programs in education and social work may be much more to your liking. For additional information on this idea, I would urge you to read the article listed below; it describes a number of alternative career and educational options to traditional clinical psychology, as well as strategies for increasing the the likelihood of being admitted to competitive doctoral programs in clinical psychology.

Halgin, R. P. (1986). Advising undergraduates who wish to become clinicians. *Teaching of Psychology*, 13(1), pp. 7-12.

An essential resource on graduate programs in psychology is the APA publication, *Graduate Study in Psychology*. At the back of the book, there is an alphabetical list of all of the subfields in psychology; under each heading, you will find listed almost all of the institutions that offer degrees (both master's and doctoral) in that subfield. Once you locate the schools you're interested in, you can

read the details about admission requirements, application deadlines, degree requirements, program goals, faculty/student statistics, tuition costs, and financial aid.

Some subfields in psychology also publish their own directories. These directories include the *Directory of Graduate Programs in Applied Sport Psychology*, *Graduate Training Programs in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Related Fields*, and *Neuroscience Training Programs in North America*.

Additional useful references on the topic of graduate programs and their admission criteria, etc. include the following:

Mayne, T. J., Norcross, J. C., & Sayette, M. A. (1994a). Admission requirements, acceptance rates, and financial assistance in clinical psychology programs. *American Psychologist*, 49, 605-611.

Norcross, J. C., Mayne, T. J., & Sayette, M. A. (1996). Graduate study in psychology: 1992-1993. *American Psychologist*, 51, 631-643.

Education. Graduate programs in counselor education place less emphasis on research than do psychology programs—including those in clinical and counseling psychology. At the master's level, you probably won't have to do a thesis; at the doctoral level, you may have to complete a dissertation, although some programs allow students to substitute a major theoretical review paper. (For this level of detail, you will need to review the degree requirements for individual programs.) In education programs, students also typically get less coursework and practical experience in psychological assessment than do students in psychology programs. Moreover, preparation in this area is usually limited to educational testing—e.g., occupational interest inventories. Counselor education programs will require you to take courses and have supervised experiences in the appraisal and treatment of psychological problems. Thus, if you want to do counseling, but are not interested in doing psychological testing or research, a degree in counselor education (*agency counseling* or *school counseling*) may be just what you want.

If you're interested in learning to use a battery of psycho-educational tests to determine why a child isn't performing well in school, *school psychology* may be the career for you. Because school psychologists also usually design programs to help children perform better (based on the results of testing and interviews with the child, teacher, and parents), they take courses in counseling and behavior modification as well as in educational, intellectual, and personality assessment. My understanding is that an independent research project (thesis) is not required for this degree. A minimum of a master's degree is required to become a school psychologist, but many states require school psychologists to have training beyond a master's degree (EdS or education specialist's degree); some require the doctorate (PhD).

The APA publication, *Graduate Study in Psychology* lists APA-accredited programs in school psychology, educational psychology, and counseling psychology that offer *education* degrees (as well as those offering psychology degrees).

Clinical Social Work. Unlike graduate programs in counselor education, school psychology, and clinical/counseling psychology, social work programs will *not* prepare you to conduct psychological testing. Otherwise, clinical social workers take coursework and practica in the diagnosis and treatment of psychological problems, among other topics. Thirty years ago, social work education tended to be rather Freudian, but I don't know if this is still the case. Frankly, I think there is much to

be said for a degree in social work. The training is typically good; the degree enables you to work in a variety of settings (hospitals, schools, community mental health centers, etc.); and one can obtain a *license* in clinical social work at the master's level in all states. (See next section, "What Are Licenses and Certificates?")

If you want to know what institutions offer graduate programs in social work, consult the booklet, *Summary Information on Master of Social Work Programs*, published by the National Association of Social Workers. You can order a copy by contacting the National Association of Social Workers.

What Are Licenses and Certificates?

A license is a "quality control" credential awarded by the state—not an educational institution. A license gives you legal authority to work independently—i.e., you don't need to be supervised by someone else. This means that you can have a private practice—see clients on your own, receive insurance payments, and so forth. Recall that physicians, dentists, and veterinarians are licensed. The use of the title "psychologist" is regulated by state licensing boards. That is, only individuals who have met the requirements for a psychology license may put themselves forward to the public as "psychologists." Similarly, licensed "psychologists" are prohibited by law from putting themselves forth to the public as a licensed social worker and vice versa. A major reason for these regulations about the practice of psychology, social work, etc. is to protect the public from those who are not competent to treat those in need of assistance.

Although the requirements for a *psychology* license vary from state to state, they typically involve the following: (1) a doctoral degree in a field of study that is "primarily psychological in nature," (2) one year of supervised clinical work during graduate school, (3) one year of post-doctoral supervised clinical work, and (4) a passing score on a standardized examination. Some states also require an oral examination once the written exam is passed.

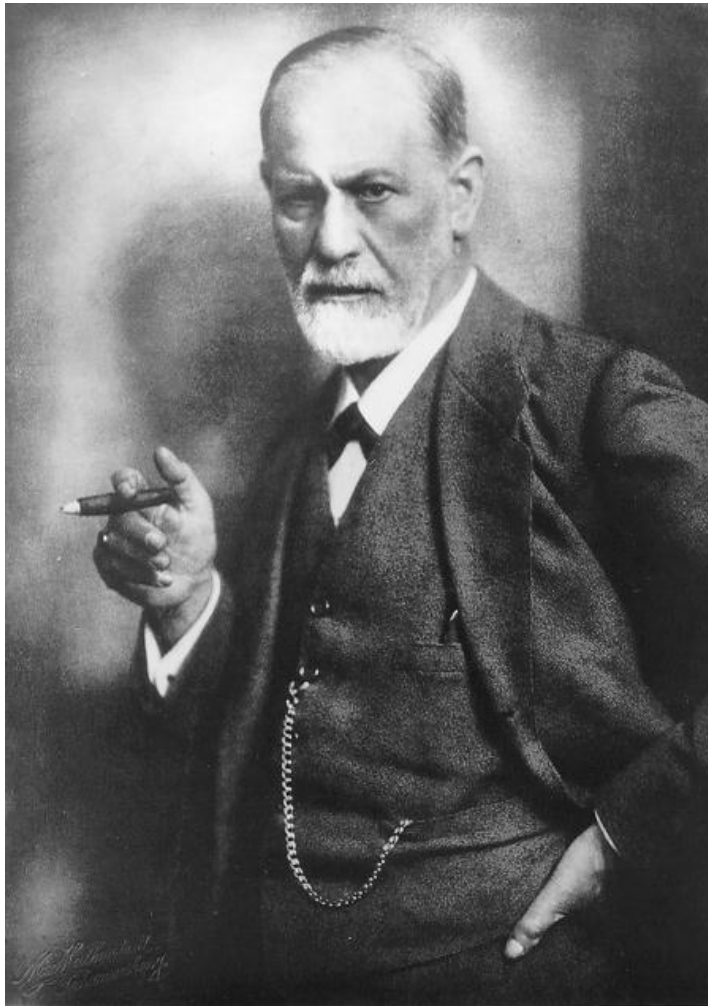
For many people, the fact that *clinical social workers* with only a master's degree can be licensed in all 50 states is a major advantage of the MSW degree. You should note, however, that managed health care is driving many licensed mental health workers out of private practice because they cannot compete with the health maintenance organizations (HMOs). To learn more about this, talk with a clinical psychologist in your department.

In many states, individuals with *master's* degrees in clinical psychology (MA/MS) and agency counseling (MEd) cannot be licensed. And even in those states where they are licensable, they are never licensed as a "psychologist" because they don't meet the minimum requirement of a doctoral degree. When individuals with master's degrees in psychology are licensed, they usually carry a title like "psychological associate" or "psychological assistant" to distinguish them from licensed "psychologists." Moreover, their work is limited to certain activities—psychological testing, for example. In Georgia, those with a master's degree in psychology (and agency counseling, I believe) are eligible for two licenses: a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). *Of course, individuals with master's degrees who aren't licensed are still able to work in a variety of mental health settings (community mental health centers, etc.) where supervision from licensed individuals is available.*

In some states, those with master's degrees in clinical psychology (and agency counseling, I believe) may be eligible for *certificates*. Certificates are quality-control credentials awarded by

professional organizations--not a state or an educational institution. They certify that a person has had courses and supervised practical experience in *particular areas* such as drug addiction or family therapy. Although they do not grant an individual the authority to work on one's own (private practice), certificates are often necessary to get jobs where specialized skills are needed. For example, in Georgia, one has a much better chance at getting a job in the addictions area if one is a Certified Addiction Counselor (CAC).

Lloyd, M. A. (1997, August 28). Graduate school options for psychology majors. [Online]. Available: <http://www.psywww.com/careers/options.htm>.



Section II: Interesting Psychology Websites

<http://psychology.about.com/> (a short description of psychology)

<http://www.apa.org> (website of the American Psychological Association)

<http://www.psychologicalscience.org> (website of the Association for Psychological Science)

<http://www.midwesternpsych.org> (website of the Midwestern Psychological Association)

<http://www.psywww.com/> (psychology web resources)

<http://www.psichi.org/> (the national honor society in psychology)

<http://www.apastyle.org/> (information on the writing style of the APA)

Section 12: Letters of Recommendation

Employers, graduate schools, summer programs, and scholarship applications often ask applicants to submit letters from former professors. As a matter of courtesy, ask a professor familiar with your work at least two weeks before the recommendation is due.

Provide:

- 1) A written and signed list of the addresses to whom the references should be sent.
- 2) Include: a) a curriculum vita, b) a transcript, and c) a few lines of biographical information about why you are applying for the particular position and the experiences in your background not covered by a) and b) that enhance your fit to the opportunity.

The recommendation is usually more effective if it can be tailored to the position and your interests.

