Psychology Major Student Handbook

Ursuline College

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Preface

Welcome to the Psychology Department!

This handbook is designed to assist you to prepare for academic advising appointments, learn about career choices with a major in psychology, and to learn about our successful graduates who have chosen to enroll in graduate school.

Please read this handbook carefully. It will answer many of your questions, and hopefully spark some additional questions specific to your life and career goals.

Your academic advisor is your partner in helping you best achieve your career goals. Work closely with your advisor. Ask questions. The more your advisor understands your career goals, the better the advisor can guide you.

This handbook is a living document. So while you are likely to receive this handbook before every academic advising session, there will be revisions to it. Please always use the most recent Psychology Major Student Handbook. The revision date will always be located on the first page.

You have chosen a wonderfully exciting and challenging major. We look forward to partnering with you in this exciting adventure!

Dr. Edmonds

Professor and Chairperson,
Psychology Department
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Academic Advising FAQ

This file is offered to students to streamline the actual advising process, not to replace it. Below are several common questions that are often asked of the faculty advisors, and may answer many of your questions. All of the questions are good ones, and the answers may help you along in your academic pursuits. As always, we encourage you to make an appointment with your academic advisor to discuss specific questions you may have that are not answered here.

Q. I'm curious about Psychology as a major. How can I learn more?

A. Browse the Psychology Department web pages, talk to students who are psychology majors, make an appointment with a member of the psychology faculty to discuss your interests. To declare Psychology as your major, visit the Office of Academic Services (MU218) and request a Change of Major form. Complete it as instructed.

Q. How should I prepare for a meeting with my advisor for registration?

A. Review your copy of your audit sheet.
   1. If you don't have one, get an Audit Sheet from our web site.

   http://www.ursuline.edu/academics/audit_sheets.html

   2. Determine the next logical sequence(s) of classes that you still need to meet (Ursuline Studies Core Curriculum, Psychology Major), and then examine the course schedule.

   3. Create a draft (or several!) of a schedule for the next term. Create a list of the department codes, course numbers, section numbers, etc. for the courses that you've selected.

   4. Bring that draft to your appointment and ask specific questions about your proposed schedule of classes. Do not come your advising appointment without a draft of your schedule.

   5. Have questions prepared about your academic progress, and/or career development.
6. Select a time slot from those listed on your advisor's office door to arrange an appointment for Registration. Write your name in the appointment slot.

7. Keep your appointment. Please telephone your advisor if you must cancel, but do reschedule. This is an important time for us to collaborate on your academic goals.

Good questions:
- "Given my career interests, which of these specific classes do you recommend?"
- "What are my career options with a [bachelors, masters, doctoral] degree?"

Not-so-good questions (because you should know these answers):
- "What should I take?" (Review your Audit Sheet)
- "Have I completed my [Stage I, Stage II, Stage III] requirements?" (Review your Audit Sheet)
- "How many hours have I completed?" (Review your Audit Sheet, check MyUrsuline)
- "What courses do I still need to take for my major?" (Review your Audit Sheet)
- "When am I going to graduate?" (Review your Audit Sheet)

Q. Why are there two program tracks in psychology?

A. The two program tracks were developed to accommodate individual student needs. Briefly, the Applied Track is for those who do not want to go to graduate school, and want to acquire the greatest number of skills for the workplace with a B.A. in psychology. The Graduate School Tracks is for those who hope to gain admission to graduate school. The curriculum is tailored with specific content to make one competitive in the graduate school application process. Visit Psychology Major/Minor and Audit Sheets for more information.

Q. What are "Ursuline Studies" courses?

A. The Ursuline Studies Program is the writing-intensive core curriculum of an Ursuline College liberal arts education. There are two types of Ursuline Studies courses: Anchor courses and Satellite courses. Anchor courses are those classes from the Ursuline Studies department. All of these classes are prefixed "US". All students complete five "US" anchor classes as part of their core curriculum (exceptions do exist for transfer students).

Stage I: Introductory Seminars / Transitions (6 hours)
US101 & 102 OR
US303 & 304 OR
US311 & 312 OR
US313 & 314
Stage II: Introduction to Culture (6 hours)
US350 & US351

Stage III: Culminating Seminar (3 hours)
US401

The Ursuline Studies Satellite courses are from a variety of departments and have been approved by the Ursuline Studies Department as complementing the Stage I, Stage II, and Stage III developmental and academic goals of our core curriculum. The Ursuline Studies Stage I, Stage II, or Stage III Satellite courses can be identified in the schedule under their respective headings. In the process of preparing a schedule of classes, consult your audit sheet to determine which areas of your Stage I, Stage II, or Stage III curriculum still need to be completed. Schedule classes accordingly. Stage I courses (anchor and satellite) should be completed before Stage II courses, which should be completed before Stage III courses. See the Ursuline Studies Audit Sheet for specific Satellite course requirements.

Q. Which courses are approved as Ursuline Studies satellite courses?

A. The semester schedule designates Ursuline Studies satellite courses as either fulfilling Stage I, II, or III requirements. The Stage II courses are specifically identified by their content area: WO (World Culture), WE (Western Culture), AM (American Culture), or AE (Aesthetic Response). Use your audit sheet to plan your schedule to complete all of your Stage I, II, and III anchor and satellite requirements. If you have not been keeping your audit sheet up to date, request a copy of your transcript from the registrar. A complete list of ALL approved Ursuline Studies satellite courses can be found on the Ursuline College website. Cross check your transcript against this approved list to update your records.

http://www.ursuline.edu/Documents/Academics/satellite.pdf

Q. I’m a psychology major. Why do I take liberal arts courses?

A. The essence of a liberal arts education is to provide a broad-based curriculum to prepare the person to think critically, to express oneself clearly, to make sound judgements and choices in life, and to foster an intellectual curiosity that thrives throughout one’s lifetime. Most four year colleges are liberal arts institutions. Ursuline College is no exception. The selection of a particular major curriculum provides the person with a concentrated area of expertise. The liberal arts curriculum provides the person with a breadth of experiences to assist her throughout her lifetime. In contrast to a liberal arts education, technical education trains the person for a specific career without the breadth of educational experiences available at a four year college. Examples of technical training include the building trades (carpentry, plumbing, masonry, electrical), personal services (manicurist, beautician), and health services
(respiratory therapist, phlebotomist, LPN). The world does need people who are excellent in their respective trades. Realize however, that you have selected a liberal arts education that includes exposure to literature, the arts, the sciences and mathematics, history, social sciences, philosophy, and religion.

**Q. Should I take certain psychology classes in a certain order?**

**A.** Yes, definitely. The psychology curriculum is structured with course prerequisites for many classes. In general, your strategy should be to complete MAT212 Introduction to Statistics as soon as possible because that class is a prerequisite for PS322 Research Methods I. Research Methods I is a prerequisite for several other upper division classes (PS324 Research Methods II, PS335 Psychological Testing, PS350 Theories of Personality, PS355 Sensation & Perception, PS380/L Human Memory & Cognition/Lab, PS480 Fundamentals of Human Neuropsychology). Delaying the successful completion of MAT212 Introduction to Statistics will inhibit your ability to complete the major in a timely fashion. We recommend that you complete MAT212 Introduction to Statistics by the end of your sophomore year.

If you are in the Graduate School Track, see also, Essential Course Sequencing

So, these courses:
PS101 General Psychology
MAT212 Introduction to Statistics

are prerequisites for
PS322 Research Methods I

which is a prerequisite for these courses
PS324 Research Methods II
PS335 Psychological Testing
PS350 Theories of Personality
PS355 Sensation & Perception
PS380/L Human Memory & Cognition/Lab
PS424 Research Methods III
PS480 Fundamentals of Human Neuropsychology

In summary, MAT212 Introduction to Statistics (by end of sophomore year), then PS322 Research Methods I (fall of junior year)

**Q. What is Psi Chi?**

**A.** Psi Chi is the National Honor Society in Psychology. Admission is based upon academic accomplishments (credit hours, GPA, etc.) Visit the Psi Chi web page to learn more.

**Q. I'm nearing graduation. What happens now in terms of academic advising?**
A. In November of your senior year, you will see signs posted on campus for you to schedule a graduation audit with your academic advisor. At this time, you will schedule your classes for spring term, and your advisor will review your academic file. Remember, you are ultimately responsible for making certain that you have completed all requirements for graduation (keep your Audit Sheet up to date). Your advisor is just that, an advisor in this process. Paperwork will be filed with appropriate offices to reflect the formal graduation audit, and an application for graduation will be completed.
Career Advising—What can I do with a B.A. in Psychology?

A bachelor’s degree in psychology is very much a pre-professional degree. That is, just like anyone who is “pre-med” or “pre-law” as an undergraduate, we always know that she needs to go to medical school or law school in order to be able to practice her craft. Psychology is the same way. If one wants to work in the psychology field, then going to graduate school in psychology is necessary.

However, there are plenty of jobs available with a B.A. in psychology. Rather than only consider psychology specific careers (which require advanced training and degrees), consider what skills and knowledge a B.A. psychology major brings to the workforce. Suddenly many employment opportunities become evident.

These are some of the talents an Ursuline College psychology major brings to the workforce:

Technical writing skills
Insight into human behavior
Critical thinking skills
Research methods skills
Interpersonal skills
Oral presentation skills
Computer skills
Statistical skills
Leadership skills
Values

These are some of the possible job titles that might be appropriate for someone who has earned a B.A. in Psychology: (abridged from Landrum, R. E. & Davis, S. F. (2003). The Psychology Major. (2nd Ed.) Prentice-Hall.)

[also use your favorite search engine and search for "BA psychology jobs careers"]

Affirmative action representative
Alcohol/drug abuse counselor
Bank management
Behavior analyst
Camp director
Career counselor
Case manager
Childcare worker
Child protection worker
Claims specialist
College admissions officer
Community organizer
Community outreach worker
Congressional Aid
Corrections officer
Customer relations
Day Care Center supervisor
Director of Alumni Relations
Eligibility worker
Employee relations
Employment counselor
Family services worker
Group home coordinator
Hospital patient liaison
Hotel management
Human Relations recruiter
Job analyst
Law enforcement officer
Life Skill counselor
Loan Officer
Management trainee
Mental health technician
Occupational analyst
Office manager
Parole Officer
Probation officer
Program manager
Property management
Public information officer
Rehabilitation counselor
Residential youth counselor
Restaurant manager
Sales Representative
Social services director
Social work assistant
Statistician
Store manager
Technical writer
Trainer
Urban planning research assistant
Vocational rehabilitation counselor
Career Advising-Thinking About Graduate School?

Why should I consider graduate school?

Psychology continues to be profession where the careers with the highest earning potential and responsibility are landed by those with graduate degrees.

What can I do now to prepare myself for graduate school (a four year plan)?

Freshman & Sophomore Years:

Take your Psychology prerequisite courses early in your undergraduate career

Freshman: PS101 Introduction to Psychology & any MAT212 Introduction to Statistics prerequisite

* Sophomore: MAT212 Introduction to Statistics (NOTE: If you are eligible to enroll in MAT212 Introduction to Statistics as a freshman, do it, and accelerate the rest of this timetable.

Junior Year:

* Fall: PS322 Research Methods I
* Spring: PS324 Research Methods II
  - Submit your research paper from PS324 to The Ohio Undergraduate Psychology Conference (early April deadline).
  - Explore your career interests by volunteering at sites that are similar to your career goals: hospitals, clinics, rest homes, research labs, industry, etc.
  - Visit graduate programs via cyberspace.
  - Write to graduate programs to inquire about their admission policies, programs, etc.
  - Summer between Junior and Senior years:
    - Prepare to take the GRE (study, study, study). Get books and software (e.g., ETS, Kaplan), and get going. Have a 10 - 15 week study schedule leading to the GRE test date.
    - Use GRE preparation software
    - Prepare a draft of your personal statement.
    - Request literature/applications from graduate programs of interest to you.
    - Personally visit graduate programs to talk to potential mentors among the graduate faculty.
    - Take the GRE in August before you start fall classes. www.ets.org
Senior Year:

- Fall: PS380 & PS380L Human Memory & Cognition / Laboratory, PS490 Capstone in Psychology
- Take the Psychology Subject GRE, usually in December.
- Conduct independent research under the supervision of a faculty member in the department
- Submit your completed research project to the Midwestern Psychological Association Conference (November 1 deadline)
- Submit your applications for graduate school (Apply to as many programs as you can afford, and to a variety of programs, from your first choice to others you would be happy to attend.)
- Spring: PS424 Research Methods III
- Submit a Spring research project to The Ohio Undergraduate Psychology Conference (mid-April)
- Present your Fall research project at the Midwestern Psychological Association Conference (late April/early May)
- Have peak experiences: Continue volunteering at relevant sites for "career" experience and exposure.

What is Essential Course Sequencing in the Graduate School Track?

Freshman
PS101 Introduction to Psychology and Complete MAT212 Prerequisite

Sophomore
MAT212 Introduction to Statistics and PS Core/Elective Classes

Junior
Fall Semester: PS322 Research I and PS Core/Elective Classes
Spring Semester: PS324 Research II and PS Core/Elective Classes

Senior
Fall Semester: PS380/L Human Memory & Cognition/Lab, PS490 Capstone, and PS Core/Electives
Spring Semester: PS424 Research III and PS Elective Classes

What is involved in the application process for graduate school?

Be Responsible
Be proactive in your quest for a career in Psychology. Know your graduation requirements. Understand how the curriculum benefits you, and what you need to do to take full advantage of the opportunities made available to you in the department. Be responsible. Investigate careers in Psychology. Learn of the requirements to earn admission to the graduate program of your choice.
Be Realistic.
Doctoral programs in psychology are very competitive. Masters programs in psychology are less competitive than doctoral programs, but still have rigorous admission requirements. Know your abilities and talents, and match those with the appropriate graduate program. Many very qualified candidates do not get into the graduate programs of choice because there are so many very qualified applicants for very limited seats in each class.

Transcripts
Graduate programs typically want a complete transcript of all of your undergraduate course work, including credits that you transferred to Ursuline College from other institutions. Assemble the necessary addresses to request transcripts of all of your undergraduate course work.

Preparing for the Graduate Record Examinations (GREs)
The GRE is similar to the SAT or ACT you took for entry into your undergraduate program, but geared for graduate school applicants. Your GRE scores can select you in or out of a program, so they are very important in the application process. We recommend that you spend the summer before your senior year studying for the GRE and taking practice tests to familiarize yourself with the test material and environment.

There are usually two scores of interest on the GRE General: Quantitative and Verbal. Computer based and paper administrations of the GRE can be arranged. There seems to be a tremendous lean towards computer based testing. Check the Educational Testing Service (ETS) (www.ets.org) for more information.

There is also a separate GRE Subject Test for Psychology that many programs want you to take. The Psychology GRE is currently only offered in November, December, and April with registration for the test due about two months before the actual test administration. It is currently only administered as a paper test.

You have a real interest in preparing for the GREs, and taking them as early as reasonably possible. The November test date is the last scheduled administration date for you to have your scores for your application. If you take the GREs early, you have the time and opportunity to take them again if you feel that your scores are not representative of your abilities. There are dozens of GRE test preparation books, and several formal test preparation services available.

Miller's Analogies Test (MAT)
The MAT is a test of verbal abilities and reasoning.

The format is FOOT: SHOE :: HAND : ___________
The analogy reads: "FOOT is to SHOE as HAND is to ________"

Applicants select their answer from choices provided:
FINGER - GLOVE - RING - ARM

The answer in this case is GLOVE.

Some programs require the MAT, but most require the GRE. Check with each program.

Letters of Recommendation
All graduate programs require letters of recommendation from individuals who are able to evaluate your interests and abilities to complete a graduate program. The number of letters varies, but is usually between three to five per program application.

When you consider which people to ask to write letters on your behalf, consider the following:

- Will this person write a favorable letter of recommendation? (By definition, a letter of recommendation does not necessarily mean a good letter of recommendation.)
- What does this letter writer know about me as a graduate school applicant?
- Did you complete the Graduate School Track?

To make the letter of recommendation process easier for everyone, consider the following strategies:

- Ask your letter writers early about their ability and interest in helping you. A lead time of several months is reasonable. This lead time will enable your letter writer to think about the letter he or she will write, and also write the letter in the best possible frame of mind. By asking early, you are being responsible, and being sensitive to the many obligations the letter writer has as a faculty member, employer, supervisor, etc. With so many people applying for graduate admission with due dates of January and February, I highly recommend that you make requests for letters of recommendation by November 1. For other admission deadlines, a lead time of three months is appropriate. Do not approach your letter writer at the last minute/during finals week hoping for a strong letter of recommendation. This is a serious career move, and last minute/short lead time requests are not perceived as coming from a serious candidate for admission. Your letter reflects that perception.

Provide your letter writers with:

- A brief resume of relevant information that can be used in the letter. Include courses taken in your major and the corresponding grades earned. Include your major GPA and overall GPA, GRE scores, and whatever other scores are needed by your university. If you have had any special experiences (work,
volunteerism, research, honors), include that as well. Don’t assume that the letter writer will remember all of the reasons why you are an excellent applicant for graduate school. Remind the writer.

- A list of ALL of the universities you are applying to, as well as the program names for each university (e.g., Clinical), degree sought (e.g., MA, PhD, PsyD), due dates for letters, and any specific forms that need to be completed.

- Addressed, stamped envelopes for every letter that is to go out directly from the letter writer. For letters that need to be returned to you, to later send along, still provide an envelope with the university/program name on it.

- Signed forms that waive your right to review the letters once submitted. If you don’t trust the letter writer to write you a favorable letter, then don’t ask.

Give all of the materials to your writers once. Prepare a packet of stamped, addressed envelopes, program names, and all of the corresponding materials each writer needs to assist you in your application.

The Personal Statement
The personal statement is a very important part of your application to graduate school. In it, you should explain your career goals, why their program is an excellent choice to lead you to your goals, which faculty in particular you would like to work under, and what preparations you have made to best take advantage of their program and successfully graduate. Make a case that their program is a great fit for you, and that you have a lot to bring to the department.

The Hypothetical, but Representative, Graduate School Application Questions

What is your G.P.A?
Cumulative:________
Last two years:_____
Major G.P.A.________

What are your GRE Scores?
Verbal________
Quantitative________
Subject________

List your psychology courses along with the grades you earned in each of them.
(Once again, did you complete the Graduate School Track?)

What research experiences have you had?
Possible answers include:
- PS322 Research Methods I
- PS324 Research Methods II
• PS380L Human Memory & Cognition Laboratory
• PS424 Research Methods III
• PS461 Independent Research

Identify papers you have presented at conferences.
Possible answers include:
• The Ohio Undergraduate Psychology Conference
• Midwestern Psychological Association

What honors have you earned?
Possible answers include:
• Psi Chi, The National Honor Society in Psychology
• College Scholarships
• Dean's and President's semester grade lists

List your volunteer experiences.
Possible answers include:
• local hospitals, clinics, rest homes, research laboratories, industry, etc. (depending upon your career goals)

Personal Statement:
• Why do you want to be a ______ psychologist?
• What do you consider to be your strengths?
• What do you consider to be your weaknesses?
Where Are Ursuline College Psychology Graduates Accepted for Graduate School?

University of Akron, Akron, Ohio
- M.A. Industrial/Organizational Psychology
- M.A. Counseling
- M.S.W. in Social Work
- J.D. Law School

Argosy University
- PsyD. Clinical Psychology (Chicago, IL)
- M.A. Mental Health Counseling/Marriage and Family Therapy (Sarasota, FL)
- M.A. Clinical (Chicago, IL)

Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio
- M.S. Social Work
- J.D., Law School
- Ph.D. Experimental Psychology

The Chicago School of Professional Psychology
- PsyD. Clinical Psychology (Chicago)
- PsyD. Clinical Psychology (Los Angeles)

Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio
- M.A. Clinical/Counseling Psychology
- M.A. Experimental Psychology
- M.A. Consumer/Industrial
- J.D., Cleveland Marshall Law School
- M.A. Social Work

Edinboro University, Edinboro, Pennsylvania
- M.A. Counseling and Human Development- Community Counseling

The Florida Institute of Technology
- Psy.D. Clinical psychology

The University of Houston
- Ph.D. School Psychology

The University of Indianapolis
- M.A. Clinical Psychology
Illinois School of Professional Psychology
  • Psy.D. Clinical Psychology
  • M.A. Industrial/Organizational Psychology

John Carroll University, University Heights, Ohio
  • M.A. Counseling and Human Services
  • M.Ed./Ed.S. School Psychology

Kent State University, Kent, Ohio
  • Ph.D. Counseling Psychology
  • Ph.D. Experimental Cognitive Psychology
  • M.Ed. Rehabilitation Counseling

Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
  • M.A. Clinical Psychology

Michigan State University
  • M.S. in Criminology

Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
  • J.D., College of Law
  • Ph.D. Experimental Psychology

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania
  • M.Div.

Walden University
  • M.A. Clinical Psychology

Wright State University
  • Psy D. Clinical Psychology
  • Ph.D. Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Xavier University
  • Psy D, Clinical Psychology
  • M.A. Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Villanova University
  • M.A. Experimental Psychology

Ursuline College
  • M.A. Art Therapy Counseling