

The Department of Psychology

Introduction to Psychology and the Major

What is Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of human behavior. Although a fairly young science, it is reasonably broad, spanning areas such as biology and sociology in its attempt to understand the biological and environmental determinants of behavior. Psychology examines the

- physiological
- sensory and perceptual
- cognitive
- learning and memory
- developmental
- social
- and personality processes

as the means by which behavior can be explained and understood.

Biologists are interested in the structures and functions of living organisms, sociologists investigate the manner in which groups function in society, and psychologists study the relationships between:

- brain function and behavior
- the environment and behavior.

Psychologists are scientists and make use of available scientific methods such as careful observation, experimentation, and analysis. In addition, psychologists need to be creative in their application of scientific findings, evolving new approaches from established knowledge to meet the changing needs of people and societies, and developing and evaluating theories through research. As the research creates new knowledge, this becomes part of the body of knowledge that practitioners call on in their daily work.

Psychology is a tremendously varied field as the overview of the sub-disciplines in psychology and the variety of graduate degrees (detail for both presented later) suggests. However, the study of psychology also provides excellent preparation for careers in a variety of other professions. It turns out that the skills that psychology majors have in understanding their own and other's behavior, in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, and their experience with statistics and experimental design make them very attractive to employers from a variety of fields. Finally, psychology is a discipline with a bright future as, among those fields requiring a college degree, it is expected to be the third fastest-growing field in America through the year 2005 and to continue to grow steadily for at least another dozen years after that.

Psychology at Notre Dame

The mission of our undergraduate program is primarily to provide students with the preparation necessary for admission to, and the successful completion of, graduate studies in psychology. Thus, the program strives to provide students with a balance between exposure to the basic psychological principles, research methods, and theories and their extension to more applied areas such as child education and development, counseling, and developmental disabilities. The curriculum provides undergraduates with a broad exposure to the various sub-disciplines together with a strong emphasis on quantitative and research methods and the opportunity for close faculty-student involvement in research projects.

Although our primary focus is on preparation for graduate school, the curriculum also serves the needs of students who are interested in psychology as part of a general liberal arts program as well as those who want to supplement their major interest. In reality, most careers involve interpersonal interactions/relationships with clients, superiors, subordinates and peers, and the ability to understand one's own behavior as well as the behavior of others is an invaluable tool that can make the difference between success and failure. Managing one's own emotions and behavior is critical to the achievement of success in the workplace and the study of psychology can lead to an improved understanding of the self and of others. In addition, the critical thinking, data analysis and research methods skills acquired in completing the major are skills that are invaluable to all who are interested in white collar careers.

Why major in psychology?

Although there are a variety of answers to the question, the most important reason for choosing psychology as your major should be that it is something that you are interested in and passionate about. In fact, choosing your major based upon any other factor (business or career opportunities, ease of completion, or lack of work etc.) would be a mistake if that major is something that you are not passionate about. Studying something if it is something you do not enjoy or love makes for a very dissatisfying experience – being unfulfilled or unhappy 8 hours per day 5 days per week will ultimately (if not sooner) negatively influence your quality of life.

Unless you are considering graduate studies in psychology, it is not a major that leads to an obvious career path (like accounting or engineering, for example). There are however a wide variety of potential career paths open to a psychology major – unfortunately, too many choices can often seem as bad as having no choices at all, especially if you do not know what you are interested in doing. Therefore, part of what you should be doing while at college and in searching for or completing your major of choice is trying to learn more about what it is you are interested in and what opportunities are available to you. This process begins with your understanding of what it is you are

interested in and is discussed in more detail in the section titled **Deciding what you want to do with your major**.

Psychology Major Course Requirements:

The psychology major at Notre Dame requires a minimum of 30 (thirty) credit hours of psychology courses. Of these 30 credit hours 9 (nine) are required courses, and the remaining 21 (twenty-one) credit hours students are able to select from the available 300 level content area courses and 400 level senior seminar courses (refer to the requirement checklist on the following page). Typically psychology majors are encouraged to complete more than the minimum 30 course credit hours required for graduation, especially if they are considering graduate school. Note that Introductory Psychology, while not a requirement for the major per se, is a prerequisite for access to the 300 level content area courses.

Research in Psychology

All students, especially those considering graduate school, are encouraged to complete special studies credits which involve working with faculty members on research projects as these credits are critical in:

- exposing undergraduates to research
- providing a practical/applied forum to utilize the research and analytical skills learned in their statistics and methods courses
- providing undergraduates with some insight into the nature of graduate programs
- allowing students to develop closer relationships with faculty members as mentors that enhance the quality of their educational experience
- serving as a source of recommendation letters for graduate training
- allowing undergraduates to gain some perspective in the manner in which knowledge is created in psychology.

Typically students enroll for a specific number of credits (typically 3 credit hours) with a specific faculty member and then work a set number of hours per week assisting the faculty member on a research project.

Note:

- these credits do not count as psychology graduation requirements
- they do count towards your 120 hours in the college
- they are important in terms of your graduate school application
- prerequisites:
 - completion of Psy 30100 (Statistics)
 - enrollment in Psy 30160 (Methods).

The College of Arts and Letters recognizes the value of research opportunities and provides financial support to students interested in independent research and creative projects. Refer to this website: <http://www.nd.edu/~isla/ISLA/>

Maximizing your Psychology Experience at Notre Dame Why is this important?

Understand that the habits you learn and practice at college will form the basis of your habits in graduate school, in the workplace, or in your life more generally. In other words, time management and learning skills will generalize to your post graduate life. Practice procrastination now and your skills in procrastination become more entrenched and instinctive and more difficult to change in the future. If your current behavior is not conducive to maximizing your intellectual, personal, social, and spiritual growth, now is a great opportunity to think about implementing some of the suggestions in this section. Start small and as you notice improvements, try implementing others.

What can you do to maximize your experience at Notre Dame as a student and as a Psychology major? Clearly being an effective, active, and engaged learner is critical in acquiring skills that will benefit you in your professional life. However, it is important to think about moving beyond simple academic survival towards becoming a scholar and connecting with the field of psychology in a real and exciting way. You should be focused on intellectual growth and learning for the sake of learning rather than simply playing the game to get good grades. I know what you are thinking: “here we go again, the same tired old rhetoric that really has no value or meaning for me.” Surprising as it may seem, the truth is that neither one of the two strategies - playing the game by simply studying for the grade alone (trying to identify what is going to be examined and only memorizing that) versus learning for the sake of learning (reading broadly around the topic, thinking about, debating the issues, trying to understand them and apply them to your life and the world around you rather than memorization) – gives you a greater guarantee of success.

The question you have to ask yourself then is if you are equally likely to do well in terms of grades with either, does either of the two have greater benefits? In terms of intellectual and personal growth the answer should be clear. In fact, research has actually shown that grade-oriented students (doing only what it takes to get the grade) actually achieve lower grades than those students who are learning-oriented and learn for the sake of learning, in other words, for intellectual growth (Eisen, Janzrow, & Pollio, 1993). The fact of the matter is that if you actually enjoy what you are learning, you probably will achieve better results, and will find the process more rewarding.

Tips for maximizing your academic experience:

- come to classes prepared by reading course material prior to the lecture
- be an active participant in class:

- take notes, ask questions, and participate in discussions
- listen actively and process the information covered in terms of what you know (i.e., how does this fit in with what I have learned thus far?)
- get organized:
- manage your time by budgeting time for homework, studying, socializing, and physical activity
 - use a daily planner – keep track of deadlines via a to-do list that you regularly update
- organize your physical space:
 - identify an appropriate location to work in terms of:
 - adequate space and light; peace and quiet
- use small amounts of time for specific studying tasks
- learn the flexibility to work in a variety of environments
- avoid procrastinating: this typically occurs when you have many tasks competing for your time or the projects appear overwhelmingly large and can be minimized by:
 - dividing large tasks into smaller components
 - reward yourself for completing the smaller components
 - schedule additional time for large projects
- become a more effective learner:
- study on a daily basis instead of cramming (especially in subjects where the knowledge is cumulative in nature)
- read to maximize comprehension:
 - overview/survey what it is you are to read
 - identify the critical/key issue within each section
 - read each section keeping in mind the key issue
 - reread the entire reading reviewing the key issues
- take effective notes:
 - do not try to write every word down
 - focus on the meaning and express this in your own words
 - rewrite/reorganize the notes later, incorporating the readings
- use time effectively – small blocks of time (15 minutes) can be used to review notes/create note cards

Make learning enjoyable:

What can be done to move away from the grade-oriented perspective that the ‘system’ has inculcated within many of us through our school experiences? Research shows that the following tips may be useful in shifting our focus from the grades to the learning:

- do something ‘real’ to connect what it is you are learning with your life:
- service learning opportunities may be useful
- in psychology much of what we learn plays itself out in our daily lives and relationships – use what you learn in gaining a greater understanding of yourself and others

- become involved with others who share your interests:
- join the psychology club and become a student member of the American Psychological Association
- debate and discuss the issue you are studying with others
- read more broadly than required for class:
- pursue those areas that you find most interesting
- develop relationships with professors outside of the classroom:
- get involved with research
- find a mentor on the faculty

Deciding what you want to do with your major

Once you have decided upon psychology as a major (because you are interested in it and enjoy studying it), you have a variety of options available to you both in terms of particular areas of interest within the major itself as well as postgraduate educational and professional options. Clearly these should be related in that where you choose to spend your research and elective hours should feed into your interests as they relate to later postgraduate options. A little later more detailed information is presented on the sub-disciplines within the field as well as graduate school and career choices. At this point, I would like to focus on how you can go about discerning what your particular interests are.

Self Awareness: Your Interests, Abilities, and Attributes

As you begin to consider your interests and options, you need to focus on gaining insight into the attributes and qualities that you possess. This process typically involves effortful self-reflective thought in that you need to consider your

- Strengths, skills and weaknesses
- particular interests and attitudes
- knowledge and values

and then identify the overlapping areas between these domains. To facilitate the self-assessment, each of these domains is now examined in more detail.

Strengths

These can be thought of as positive personality traits such as tolerance, patience, determination, and reliability to name a few. In evaluating this aspect of yourself you should simply be identifying as many of your personal strengths as possible. If you have trouble in doing this, you may want to consult an adjective checklist like the one provided in Appendix A and circling those adjectives that you think describe you best. It may also be worthwhile asking those who know you best to evaluate the list and circle those traits that they believe are most descriptive of you.

Skills

These are the things that you can do or will likely be learning to do. One place to start in identifying these is to look at your major and to assess the types of skills that you will be given the opportunity to develop. The following table presents a list of the skills that you are likely to develop (or should develop) as a result of studying psychology (Hayes, 1997). Refer to the Hayes article for a more complete list of examples.

Skills developed through the psychology major	
<u>Skills:</u>	<u>Specific examples:</u>
Literacy	The ability to write concise reports
Numeracy	Knowledge /understanding of statistical procedures
Computer	Familiarity with computers and software
Research	Expertise in observation, surveying, and sampling methods
Environmental awareness	Understanding how the environment (situation) influences human behavior in various settings
Interpersonal awareness	Self-knowledge that enhances work performance and learning
Problem-solving	The ability to apply different approaches to the understanding of problems and implementing solutions

You should also consider the other courses/experiences you have had that have shaped the skills you possess. For example, have your English courses aided you in your communication skills – be it written or oral?

Interests

These are the things that you enjoy doing and can be identified by examining:

- how you spend your free time (talking and debating with people versus fixing and upgrading computers)

- your personal fantasies about what you would do if you were free from financial constraints – think about and explain the choices and they may lead you in the direction of your interests
- complete an interest inventory – contact the Career and Placement Center and enquire about the availability of such measures

Values

Values reflect your fundamental beliefs and views about work and life, and, as such, provide the basis for working. These define what it is you would like to accomplish in your work and life and are clearly related to your interests. Your interests provide insight into what it is you enjoy doing while values tell you why it is you enjoy that and what the purpose for doing it is. For example, your interests inform you that you like working with people while your values (a belief in social justice for example) lead you to choose to work with those less fortunate rather than in any other interpersonal capacity.

Conclusion: Some important points to note:

First, the process of self evaluation identified above is not necessarily an easy process – in fact, it is more than likely effortful and demanding in nature. Like many things in life, what you will gain from it DOES depend on what you put into the process. Some people know what they want to do with some certainty early on – many others do not and often struggle with this question. Do not be discouraged – do your best and understand that the answers you find may NOT be set in stone and may in fact change and develop as you continue to learn and grow. Be open to change and growth.

Second, do not panic even if after going through this process you are not convinced that you know exactly what is you are meant to do with your life. Life is a journey – and not a race to a particular destination. Reread the **Major Decisions** article and think about the comments in terms of your life more broadly. Pursue those things that interest you most and trust that they will lead you in the right direction. It is a mistake to select careers or majors on the basis of factors other than your interests, values, and abilities.

Third, think about what a successful life means to you!!! And then live your life in pursuit of that success. Despite the images that our popular culture constantly bombards us with, do not be fooled into thinking that money, fame, and material goods are the road to success and happiness. Pursue your passions!

Goal Setting

Why are goals necessary/important?

- Goals are the means by which you explicitly identify and articulate what it is you want to accomplish, and therefore, what it is you will spend your time doing.
- Goals can provide organization and structure that can improve productivity.

- Goals make explicit who is responsible for your future in that they recognize that you can shape your own future through certain actions.

Goal Setting Strategies:

- Review your values as these should provide the context for your goals
- Think about your goals in terms of three dimensions:
- Life experiences you desire
- Tangible achievements and outcomes you desire
- The kind of person you would like to be
- Take a two-pronged approach:
- Long term goals: long run career aspirations
 - e.g., becoming a school counselor
- Short term goals: actions/steps need to achieve the long term goals:
 - taking the appropriate undergraduate classes
 - getting the appropriate research experience
 - applying to the appropriate graduate programs
- Challenge yourself:
- Your career goals need to be challenging and specific enough that you have the incentive to pursue them
- Set reasonable yet challenging career goals in which the potential benefits outweigh the costs:
- How does the ratio of costs to benefits of pursuing a Ph.D. compare with that of pursuing a Masters degree? (see later section comparing degrees)
- Select career goals that are compatible with the other important dimensions in your life (such as your desire to have a family, to be healthy, to continue your spiritual development, etc.)
- Write out your goals and review your progress toward them on a regular basis.

Time assessment project:

To gain some insight into how effectively (or ineffectively) you are using your time in working towards your goals, you should study your time usage over several days. Keep track of how you spend your time – divide your chart/journal into three time periods (morning, afternoon, and evening) and as you go through your day note how you spend it – what you do and how long you spend doing it as follows:

- do this task over several days (including the weekend)
- complete the chart regularly during the day, noting all activities
- after several days evaluate the contents of the chart: in terms of different themes/areas in your life such as:
 - academics
 - socializing
 - working out
 - how well does your time usage fit in with your goals for yourself?

- how can you adjust your time usage to create a better fit?

Undergraduate Advising and Mentoring

There are a number of resources available to you outside of the classroom that can enhance the quality of your undergraduate experience and assist you in making the choices that will define the postgraduate options you pursue.

Advising Resources:

Advising can be an important resource in obtaining the information needed to make good decisions about the choices you face in college and beyond. The quality of the relationship you have with your advisor is often critical in enhancing the nature of your college experience. Notice that advising within the College of Arts and Letters occurs via a two-tiered system wherein advising about college or university requirements is handled by the Assistant Deans within the College, and major related and career issues are handled by the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Psychology (Dr. Anre' Venter – see below).

College Advising:

As a student in the College of Arts and Letters, the Office of Undergraduate Studies in the College of Arts and Letters (105 O'Shaughnessy, the Dean's office) is available to assist you with advising issues and questions relating to the completion of College and University requirements. If you are in another College (science for instance), you need to go to the Dean's office in that particular college. The Deans will assist you in ensuring that you fulfill the graduation requirements within the university and college and will assist you in college related course selection questions and problems. It is worthwhile developing relationships with the Deans that allow you to keep them informed of your progress and any potential issues or problems as they arise.

Psychology Department Advising:

Formal advising within the Department of Psychology is the responsibility of the Office of Undergraduate Studies is located in 118 Haggar Hall and is staffed by:

- the Director of Undergraduate Studies: Dr. Anre' Venter
- the assistant Ms. Rhonda Singleton

The office provides the following services to students:

- assistance with major declaration and orientation to the major
- advising about graduation requirement completion
- assistance in course scheduling issues:
- selecting appropriate courses and research opportunities
- resolving course scheduling problems

- obtaining authorization numbers (permission required courses)
- study abroad planning and authorization
- approval of transfer credits counting towards the major requirements
- career and postgraduate counseling
- general advising/assistance with concerns/issues as they may arise
- distributes PIN numbers for psychology majors – you need to come in to the Advising office to pick up your pin number (from Rhonda or Dr. Venter) – this is also a good time to check on your progress to graduation and ascertain what requirements you still need.

Mentoring Resources:

As you work your way through the major, you should also be focused on developing relationships with members of the psychology faculty that exceed the bounds of the classroom. As you begin to form a clearer understanding of your interests in psychology you should consider exploring these in greater depth within the research domain where you can work in close contact with faculty on research projects. You should find a faculty member in your area of interest and ask him/her to be your mentor – even if there is no one whose interests match yours it is well worth your while to find a faculty member you connect well with and to enter into a relationship in which they can serve as your mentor.

These relationships have various benefits such as:

- gaining insight into the world of academic psychology and the skills and abilities necessary for success
- providing you with insight into the world of research, which is critical if you are considering a graduate degree in psychology
- developing a relationship that can provide you with an excellent in-depth letter of recommendation
- deepening the quality of your education in psychology

The following section lists the psychology faculty and provides a brief description of their specialty and research interests.

Psychology Faculty: Sub-disciplines and Research Interests

Developmental Psychology Faculty:

Cindy S. Bergeman (Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University, 1989): Human Development and Family Studies

Dr. Cindy Bergeman is a gerontological behavioral geneticist with research interests that focus on genetic and environmental influences on individual differences in social support, life events, family environment, mental health, cognitive functioning and personality.

John G. Borkowski (Ph. D., Iowa): High Risk Adolescent Mothers and their Children; Abuse and Neglect; Cognition and Intelligence in Developmentally Delayed Children

Dr. Borkowski is currently engaged in a multi-site intervention project designed to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect in adolescent and adult mothers. Data from four cities is being collected in an attempt to understand the factors that produce neglect, how it impacts child development, how it can be prevented, and how to develop more sensitive and responsive parenting practices. A second major longitudinal project has followed children born to adolescent mothers in the late 1980s, as they enter their turbulent teenage years; academic success, delinquency, and depression are among topics currently under investigation.

Julia M. Braungart-Rieker (Ph.D., The Pennsylvania State Univ.): Socioemotional Development, Infancy/Early Childhood.

Dr. Braungart-Rieker's research examines issues surrounding social and emotional development in infancy and early childhood. Her research focuses on how children's characteristics (e.g., gender and temperament), parenting practices, contextual factors (e.g., family earner status and marital satisfaction), and the fathers' role relate to outcomes such as children's ability to regulate their emotions, parent-child attachment security, and the development of children's compliance and autonomy.

E. Mark Cummings (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles): Children and Families: Developmental Psychopathology

Dr. Cummings' research focuses on family factors, such as the quality of emotional relations between parents and children and between the parents, associated with normal development and the development of psychopathology in children. Current concerns include emotional security as a general theoretical model from a developmental psychopathology perspective for children's development in families, and research-based prevention and parent-educational programs.

Jeanne D. Day (Ph.D., University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana): Developmental

Dr. Day's research interests are in the area of cognitive development and educational processes and focus on finding better ways to teach young disadvantaged children so as to improve their preparation for later school success. Thus she studies individual differences in the ease with which children learn with an eye toward creating educationally useful profiles of ability, and has taught children attending Head Start literacy and math concepts. She has also conducted research on measuring "social intelligence" with the eventual aim of finding ways to improve children's social skills.

Dawn M. Gondoli (Ph.D. University of Arizona): Adolescent Social Development

Dr. Gondoli's research interests focus on adolescent development within family and peer contexts with a special emphasis on parenting practices and the determinants of

parenting. Currently, she is directing a 5-year longitudinal study of adolescent and mother adjustment as children make the transition to adolescence examining how mothers' adapt their parenting as their children become teenagers, and determining whether certain forms of adaptation are more or less beneficial for mother and adolescent well-being and the mother-adolescent relationship.

Darcia Narvaez (Ph.D., University of Minnesota): Educational Psychology

Dr. Narvaez' research centers around issues of moral development and education. She is particularly interested in how individual differences such as cognitive development, culture, and domain expertise influence the understanding and perception of moral situations. She is working on tools for moral education such as a research-based approach to teaching 'character skills;' scales for rating ethical content in stories and films; scales measuring socio-moral factors related to avoidance of risky behavior and to adoption of ethical identity and global citizenship. See her web page for more information: www.nd.edu/~alfac/narvaez/

Julianne C. Turner (Ph.D., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor): Educational/Developmental

Dr. Turner's interests are in the relationship between student motivation and learning and instruction in literacy and mathematics. She has investigated factors that contribute to motivation for literacy in primary grade children, focusing on individual differences in children and on the effects of literacy instruction on children's motivation to learn. Her recent research is on children's intrinsic motivation for and involvement in learning mathematics in upper elementary and middle school classrooms. She is also investigating the classroom influences on the development of students' avoidance goals in mathematics across the transition to middle school. She teaches courses related to educational psychology such as motivation, and learning and instruction in literacy and mathematics.

Thomas L. Whitman (Ph.D., University of Illinois): Early Childhood Development

Dr. Whitman's research is focused in the areas of early development and intervention. He has been involved in two large longitudinal studies, one evaluating the effects of hospital and parenting environments on the socioemotional and cognitive development of premature infants and the other examining parental and social factors that influence the development of children of adolescent parents. He has a special interest in studying the factors that are associated with resilient behaviors in populations at risk for developmental problems. He is writing a book on autism and teaches courses in behavior therapy, autism and developmental disabilities, psychology and medicine, and human resiliency.

Counseling/Clinical Psychology Faculty:

Alexandra F. Corning (Ph.D, Ohio State University): Counseling Psychology

Dr. Corning is interested in the perception and impact of social inequity on the individual. Presented with a situation, people often have different perceptions of the situation; this is commonly the case in instances of possible discrimination. Using theory and methods from social cognition, Dr. Corning's research is focused on identifying individual-difference as well as situational factors that influence the perception of discrimination. She is also interested in the proposed negative and beneficial aspects of perceiving oneself a recipient of discrimination, including psychological health outcomes, propensity to engage in social action, and efficacy for various performance tasks.

George S. Howard (Ph.D., Southern Illinois): Counseling, Methodology, and Philosophy of Psychology

Dr. Howard's research centers on improving research methodology in several applied areas of psychology. His research with assertion training, communication skills, interviewing skills, teaching improvement, and social skills training suggests that several traditional research practices are inadequate to many of the tasks to which they are put. These inadequacies often result in misleading or incorrect conclusions. More appropriate alternative research procedures are then developed, and the adequacy of these innovations documented. Teaching interests include courses in research methodology, counseling theory and practice, program evaluation, personality, narrative psychology, consultation, ecological psychology, and philosophy of the social sciences.

Anita E. Kelly (Ph.D., University of Florida): Counseling Psychology

Dr. Kelly is interested in exploring how people construct their identities through presenting either negative or positive information about themselves to others and interpreting the corresponding feedback from those audiences. She has been studying self-presentational processes in both counseling contexts and everyday interactions. Currently, she is assessing the role of the confidant (e.g., counselors or friends) in determining whether people benefit from revealing their negative, personal secrets. In addition, she is examining how keeping secrets from oneself, or engaging in thought suppression, may lead to problems for some people but may be an effective thought-control strategy for others. She has developed a model for when people should and should not reveal their secrets to various confidants.

Irene Kim, Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara): Clinical Psychology

Dr. Irene Kim's research focuses on understanding the relations between culture, family functioning, and mental health in diverse contexts. More specifically, she is interested in examining how culture (e.g., cultural values, acculturation, interdependent and independent concepts of self) influences family processes (e.g., parenting), which in turn may serve as risk or protective factors in the development of psychopathology or psychosocial well-being in underserved populations (e.g., ethnic minority adolescents). Dr. Kim is especially interested in cultural influences on parent-child socialization strategies for emotion regulation and the development of externalizing/internalizing symptoms. Other related research areas include intimate partner violence and adolescent

substance use prevention, respectively, particularly among Asian immigrant populations. Finally, Dr. Kim studies clinical implications of this research for cultural competence in the mental health care of diverse populations.

Thomas V. Merluzzi (Ph.D., Ohio State): Counseling/Health Psychology

Dr. Merluzzi's research interests in health psychology have focused on coping with chronic and terminal illness and on stress resistance processes. In his research in psychoncology he has used a model of coping with cancer that is based on social learning and control theories. Within the context of that model, coping, resiliency, "fighting spirit", and social support have been conceptualized from the perspective of self-efficacy theory. Dr. Merluzzi has developed the Cancer Behavior Inventory, a widely used measure of self-efficacy for coping with cancer. Current projects include a National Cancer Institute funded treatment study to enhance cancer patients' coping efficacy, the development of the Symptom Impact Inventory, and the development of the Caregiver Inventory.

Donald B. Pope-Davis (Ph.D., Stanford University): Counseling Psychology

Dr. Pope-Davis's primary research interests are in the areas of multicultural psychology, counseling, and education. Specifically, he is interested in cultural and racial identity development, cultural competency training, development, and assessment. Other areas of research include multicultural supervision in professional psychology, acculturation, and issues of mental health for persons of color. He is currently the editor of the *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*.

David A. Smith (Ph.D., State University of New York at Stony Brook): Clinical Psychology

Dr. Smith's research has been in two non-overlapping areas, marital discord and schizophrenia, with his most recent emphasis in the marital area. In particular, he has examined the links between depression and marital discord with observational studies of inter-spousal criticism, multi-level modeling of daily diary data, and psychometric investigations. He also researches diagnostic agreement statistics. Dr. Smith has also been conducting laboratory studies of the development, maintenance, treatment, and prevention of destructive marital attributions, using an experimental gaming model. His schizophrenia studies have concerned sensory gating phenomenology, brain event-related electrical potentials, and affect.

Cognitive Psychology Faculty:

Laura A. Carlson (Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign): Cognitive Psychology

Dr. Carlson's research interests are in the areas of spatial cognition and visual perception. With respect to spatial cognition, her research interests are in how we talk about the things (objects, events and so on) that we encounter in the world. Dr. Carlson's particular

focus is on spatial language, as exemplified by giving someone directions to a destination or telling someone where to find something. With respect to visual perception, Dr. Carlson is interested in our failure to notice substantial changes to objects in the world when these changes occur during a saccadic eye movement. Such findings disconfirm the strong intuition that we encode rich highly detailed information, and suggest instead that we remember only general information about the objects surrounding us, often discarding the details such as color or size.

Charles R. Crowell (Ph.D., Iowa): Learning & Motivation

Website: <<http://www.nd.edu/~ccrowell>><http://www.nd.edu/~ccrowell>

Dr. Crowell's interests focus on questions related to how and why people learn and what motivates human action in various situations. Along with basic research on these topics, Dr. Crowell's work includes application and extension of principles and methods to improve human performance in real-world settings like the workplace, the classroom, or the sports arena. Dr. Crowell teaches courses in research methods, physiological psychology, learning, performance improvement techniques, educational technology, and computer methods. He is also Director of the Computer Applications Program (CAPP) for the College of Arts & Letters.

William E. Dawson (Ph.D., Harvard): Perception-Psychophysics

Dr. Dawson's research has mainly dealt with the scaling and measurement of sensory and perceptual variables. He has been particularly interested in the assessment and development of procedures used to produce these scales and he has applied some of these procedures to the measurement of social attitudes and opinions. Other research includes studies in visual and auditory perception. Sensory processes, perception, psychophysics, scaling, and experimental psychology are among his teaching interests.

Kathleen M. Eberhard (Ph.D. Michigan State University): Psychology of Language (Psycholinguistics)

Dr. Eberhard's research investigates the mental processes underlying the ability to produce and comprehend fluent speech. Her work in language production examines the process by which speakers formulate unambiguous referential expressions, and the processes involved in establishing agreement relations among words in sentences. Her research in language comprehension focuses on the information that is used by listeners to identify the intended referents of spoken utterances, and the influence of bilinguals' native language on their interpretation of words in their second language. Courses taught: Cognitive Psychology, Cognitive Science, and Psycholinguistics.

Bradley S. Gibson, Ph.D. (University of Arizona): Cognitive Psychology.

Dr. Gibson's research interests are in the areas of perception, attention, and visual cognition. A fundamental attribute of visual perception is the organization of visual

inputs into perceptual objects. Dr. Gibson's research has focused on "top-down" and "bottom-up" influences on the perceptual organization of visual objects. The salience of objects in visual processing might also be reflected in the way visual attention is allocated in the visual field. The focus of this research has been to show that attention can be directed to object representations as well as to representations of the spatial locations occupied by objects. Dr. Gibson has also studied the recognition of misoriented objects as a means of characterizing the nature of the representations underlying object recognition.

Gabe Radvansky (Ph.D., Michigan State): Memory and Cognition

Dr. Radvansky's research is focused on the testing and development of mental model theory for human memory and cognition. Mental models are a person's representation of a situation that they either experienced or read/heard about. Most of this research is aimed at understanding how people create, organize, store and retrieve mental models. This research is also directed at understanding how younger and older adults differ on their use of mental models.

Robert West (Ph.D., University of South Carolina): Cognitive Neuroscience

Dr. West's research explores the cognitive neuroscience of goal-directed action and cognitive aging. In his research, Dr. West seeks to understand the neuro-cognitive processes that support goal-directed thought and action and the conditions under which these processes are disrupted. One line of research employs event-related brain potential (ERPs) to study differences in neural (i.e., brain) activity when task performance is goal-directed, compared to when task performance is inconsistent with the goals of the individual. A second line of research uses behavioral methods to study prospective memory, or the realization of delayed intentions. Dr. West's teaching interests include Learning and Memory, Cognitive Neuroscience, Cognitive Development, and Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience.

Quantitative Psychology Faculty:

Steven M. Boker (Ph.D., University of Virginia 1996): Quantitative Psychology

Dr. Boker's current research interests include the application of dynamical systems analytic techniques to psychological and physiological data. An NIH sponsored project is measuring and modeling age related changes in the dynamic coupling between visual, proprioceptive and vestibular input during the process of postural stabilization. Dr. Boker's lab at Notre Dame uses state of the art computerized motion capture technology to test cognitive theories of interpersonal coordination and perception-action coupling during conversation, dance, and imitation learning tasks. His awards include the Raymond B. Cattell Award for distinguished early career contributions to multivariate psychology. Dr. Boker also is the series editor for the Notre Dame Series on Quantitative Methodology published by LEA Associates, is a co-author of the Mx Structural Equation

Modeling Software, and is a statistical consultant for the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Sy-Miin Chow (Ph.D., University of Virginia): Quantitative Methods

Sy-Miin Chow is currently a research assistant professor in quantitative psychology at the University of Notre Dame. Chow's research focuses on the development and adaptation of modeling and analysis tools that are suited to evaluating linear and nonlinear dynamical models. In particular, Chow has applied Bayesian estimation approaches such as the Kalman filter to fitting linear and nonlinear dynamic models. Her current work involves using dynamical systems models to represent the dynamic structure of cognition and emotion, and age-related differences in potential linkages between them.

Scott E. Maxwell (Ph.D., University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill): Quantitative Methods

Dr. Maxwell's research interests are in the areas of research methodology, statistics, and individual differences especially in the domains of abilities and intelligence. His research includes statistical analyses of discrimination in employment selection, college admissions, and salary administration. Dr. Maxwell's teaching interests span courses in research methodology, statistics, structural equation modeling, tests and measurement, and differential psychology.

Gitta Lubke (Ph.D. Free University Amsterdam): Psychometrics

Dr. Lubke's research interests include both applications of latent variable modeling and purely methodological topics. Current applied research is mainly in the field of psychiatric genetics, with a focus on the question whether a disorder is best described in terms of qualitatively different subtypes or in terms of a continuous underlying risk factor. The methodological topics are in the area of measurement invariance, factor mixture modeling as an extension of latent class analysis, multi-group factor analysis including longitudinal analysis, analysis of categorical data, and genetic statistics.

Ke-Hai Yuan (Ph.D., UCLA): Quantitative Methods

Ke-Hai Yuan's research interests are in the areas of psychometric theory and applied multivariate statistics. His research includes structural equation modeling, meta-analysis, multilevel modeling, classical testing theory and item response theory. His teaching interests span courses in psychometric theory, structural equation modeling, item response theory, and simulation based research methodology.

Social Psychology Faculty:

Anre Venter, Ph.D. (University of Notre Dame): Social Psychology.

Dr. Venter’s research interests fall in two broad areas: Social and Quantitative Psychology. Within the domain of Social Psychology, he has examined the manner in which factors such as the affective quality and the valence of interactional outcomes influence how we form impressions of other people. This research is in the process of comparing two basic models (assimilation-contrast models versus polarization models) of impression formation in terms of their ability to adequately explain the process of impression formation. Within the domain of Quantitative Psychology, his interests are in the areas of statistical power in small samples.

Graduate School Considerations
Psychology Graduate Degrees

Various degrees are available at the graduate level ranging from the Ph.D. (Doctor of philosophy in psychology), through the Psy.D. (Doctor of psychology), to the masters’ level degrees (MA. or MS. in psychology; the MSW: social work or clinical social work masters). Many of the subfields are research and scientifically oriented and most graduate degrees involve some training in research methods and quantitative analysis. There are more applied degree options available that train people for the practice of psychology. The type of degree you choose to pursue and the sub-discipline within which this occurs depends on your interests. Avoid the temptation to pursue the Ph.D. ONLY because it is the ‘ultimate’ or most respected degree. The following grid details the various degrees in terms of their training and the career options so you can begin to think about your career aspirations and relevant training.

<u>Degree</u>	<u>Training</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Career Options</u>	<u>\$ Costs</u>
Ph.D.	<p>Located in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o graduate programs in university departments <p>Requires completion of appropriate course work as well as research based thesis and dissertation (research forms the bulk of the work)</p> <p><i>Scientist-practitioner</i> perspective with the emphasis on the scientist. Some practicum experience required (clinical/counseling psychology).</p>	5 to 7 yrs	Academic and applied settings	Low due to tuition waivers & stipends
Psy.D.	<p>Located in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o graduate programs in 	4 to 7 yrs	More applied settings	Fairly expensive (no/few

	<p>university departments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o in a university affiliated psychology school o in an independent professional psychology school (eg: CSPP) <p>Requires completion of appropriate course work as well as research based thesis and dissertation (research requirement lower than the Ph.D)</p> <p><i>Scholar-professional</i> model: emphasis on the professional/practice component.</p> <p>Some practicum experience required (clinical/counseling psychology)</p>			tuition waivers or stipends)
MA/MS MSW/ CSW	<p>Requires completion of appropriate course work and practicum experience.</p> <p>Some programs require research (masters thesis) some do not.</p>	2 years	Applied settings	Fairly expensive (no/few tuition waivers or stipends)

Psychology Sub-disciplines

Although many people tend to think of psychologists simply in terms of clinical/counseling psychologists, there are in fact many sub-disciplines that offer excellent career opportunities. In fact, graduate education in psychology involves specialized training within one particular sub-discipline and these typically lead to particular career paths. While some of the subfields may be more applied and others more research and scientifically oriented, most graduate degrees involve some training in research methods and quantitative analysis.

Your focus should be on gaining some insight into which of the particular sub-disciplines you are most interested in and then learning as much as you can about them so that you can understand the options you have available. The information below is not intended to be exhaustive – it simply should provide some insight into what psychologists from the various sub-disciplines do. You are encouraged to follow up with the suggested readings to get even more information about the sub-disciplines that interest you. A great beginning resource is the American Psychological Association webpage at [apa.org](http://www.apa.org) (check out the student section at <http://www.apa.org/students/student1.html>).

Clinical Psychologists:

- work with mentally/emotionally/behaviorally disturbed clients/patients (severe mental illness)
- found in independent/group practices, mental health providers, hospitals/clinics, community mental health sites, or college/university settings
- services range from diagnostic tests, individual/marital/family/group therapy, designing and implementing behavior modification programs, teach and research at colleges/universities
- may focus exclusively on particular problems/issues (such as phobias or depression) or on particular populations (such as the elderly or adolescents)
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department
- the Psy.D. is appropriate for those interested in practice only

Counseling Psychologists:

- work with the worried well - adjustment to everyday living issues
- found in counseling centers, hospitals, and private practice
- provide individual/marital/family/group therapy
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within an education department
- the Psy.D. is appropriate for those interested in practice only

School Psychologists:

- work in schools (elementary and secondary) and school district offices
- focus on identifying, diagnosing, and resolving learning and behavioral problems
- work with teachers and parents to counter substance abuse, improve teaching and learning strategies, and provide services to students with disabilities
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within an education department

Educational Psychologists:

- investigate how effective teaching and learning take place, taking into consideration factors such as individual abilities, motivation, and the role of diversity in influencing the classroom environment
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within an education department

Industrial-Organizational Psychologists:

- apply psychological principles/research methods within the workplace
- focus on improving productivity and work-life quality, research management and marketing problems, involved in applicant screening, training and development, counseling, and organizational development
- frequently serve as outside consultants brought in to deal with particular issues/problems
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department

Developmental Psychologists:

- study human development across the physiological, cognitive, social and emotional domains throughout the lifespan
- subspecialties include: infant-child development, adolescent development, gerontology (study of the aged)
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department

Cognitive Psychologists:

- focus on human cognition, including human memory, attention, psycholinguistics, perception, sensation, and higher-order processes
- often also gain expertise in experimental methods and quantitative analysis
- neuropsychologists focus on the relation between the brain and human behavior – examining the mind-body connection
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department

Social Psychologists:

- study human behavior as it is shaped and influenced by relationships with other people and the environment
- prominent areas include: group behavior, leadership, interpersonal relationships, attitudes, aggression, and prejudice
- work in applied (organizational and community) and academic settings
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department

Quantitative Psychologists:

- study statistical models and techniques as they apply to psychology and the understanding of human behavior
- work in applied, academic, and research settings providing technical and statistical input to the measurement, quantification, and analysis of human behavior; also develop mathematical models for psychological tests
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department

Forensic Psychologists:

- apply psychological principles to legal issues
- areas include child custody evaluations, mental competence issues, child neglect and abuse issues, and jury selection questions
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department although some programs provide both legal and psychological training
- Governing association: American Board of Forensic Psychology (abfp.com)

Health Psychologists:

- examine the relationship between biological, social, and psychological factors and health and illness
- focus on pain management, why certain people do not adhere to their treatment plans, what social and psychological factors are related to cancer survival, and developing health care strategies that foster emotional and physical well-being
- work in private practice, academic settings, and hospital settings
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department

Sports Psychologists:

- work with athletes, coaches, and educational institutions
- focus on improving concentration and reducing the effects of stress, improving motivation, assisting athletes in dealing with fear and anxiety
- also focus on examining how sports influence character and the development of ethics and moral principles
- Ph.D. training typically occurs within a psychology department

Graduate Study in Psychology

Key Factors for Getting in to Graduate School:

Persistence: remain dedicated to your goals and career plans (despite obstacles).

Preparation: build credentials:

- good GPA
- good GRE scores
- applicable coursework
- strong research experience
- practical/volunteer/field experience

Application Know-How:

- Know where to get information on programs: Literature, psychology department faculty, and research journals. Useful resources are:
 - the Office of Undergraduate Studies in Psychology: 118 Haggard Hall: Dr. Anne Venter
 - the Graduate Study in Psychology manual published every two years by the American Psychological Association offers complete practical information about over 500 psychology programs in the United States and Canada. This edition provides current facts about programs and degrees offered, admission requirements, application information, financial aid, tuition, and housing.
 - Check the website: www.apa.org/books/4270087.html
- Insider's Guide to Graduate Programs in Clinical & Counseling Psychology published by Guilford Press which provides specific detailed information for APA accredited clinical and counseling psychology programs. Can be purchased from Guilford Press from the following website: www.guilford.com and clicking on the *Psychology* link and under the categories clicking on the *Student & Academic Resources* link which will take you to the page for this publication.
- how many programs to select: No less than 10 (12 to 15 is suggested as appropriate), covering a range of geographic locations, quality, and level of degrees offered. Include 3-4 reach programs, 4-5 programs for which you are fairly competitive, and 2-3 programs for which you are almost certain you will be accepted.
- Start the Application Process Early (Summer Before the Fall you Apply): Complete your most impressive coursework as soon as possible, start selecting possible programs early, give recommenders plenty of time for letters of recommendation.

Timeline for Graduate School Preparation and Requirement Completion

The purpose of this timetable is to serve as *a guide* in helping students' decide when to complete psychology course requirements and how to approach the task of applying to graduate school. When used along with the "Psychology Major Checklist" which is also provided, it should prove helpful in making sure that students complete psychology requirements in the most efficient way. However, it is important to remember that this

sheet is only a *guide* and may not be applicable to all students, especially those who declare psychology as their major relatively late or those for whom psychology is a second major. If in doubt or experiencing problems, students should always approach the undergraduate advising office in 118 Haggard Hall (see Advising section).

First Year:

- complete Introductory Psychology, the *prerequisite for entry into the 300 level psychology classes*, (Psy 10000, 20000, 20001) if not tested out.

Sophomore Year:

- if necessary take Introductory Psychology, the *prerequisite for entry into the 300 level psychology classes*, (Psy 20000, 20001)
- complete general education requirements and begin psychology requirements:
 - Psy 20010: Psychology: Science, Practice, & Policy Seminar
 - Psy 30100: statistics (fall semester)
 - Psy 30160: methods (spring semester)
 - begin special studies (research) credits in the spring semester
- 300 level content area courses.
- become acquainted with faculty.
- write a preliminary resume.
- attend department colloquia.
- join the Psychology Club

Junior Year:

- continue with psychology requirements.
- continue with special studies credits (research).
- think about who you want to write your letters of recommendation.
- join Psi Chi, American Psychological Association, etc.
- revise resume.
- keep attending department colloquia
- do fieldwork in psychology.
- meet with Director of Undergraduate Studies to begin graduate school application preparation.

Summer Before Senior Year:

- buy study guides for the GRE. And start studying
- begin to research prospective graduate programs and revise resume
- write drafts of your personal statement – obtain feedback from your references
- request application materials/brochures from the programs:
 - check to see if there are any additional requirements

Senior Year:

- complete 400 level courses and continue with research
- September:, register for GRE, and request letters of recommendation
- have letter of intent and final resume finished by November
- try to send out applications by late December

General Career Information for Psychology Majors

There are psychology based career options for those psychology majors who choose not to attend graduate school though these positions are often difficult to find. People may, for example, work in rehabilitation centers as assistants or within organizations such as child protective services as case managers. In addition, graduates can teach psychology in high school if they meet state certification requirements.

As stated earlier, the study of psychology at the bachelor's level is also excellent preparation for many other professions. Psychology is the second most popular undergraduate major behind business administration and research indicates that many who graduate with a psychology major are not necessarily interested in a career as a psychologist. In fact it seems that less than 1 in 10 psychology graduates in 1996 enrolled in graduate work in psychology. Psychology graduates typically possess:

- good research and writing skills
- excellent problem solving skills
- well-developed higher-level thinking ability in analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information
- excellent people skills (an understanding of their own and the behavior of others)

There are a number of excellent resources available to undergraduates in identifying potential careers. The first place to start is the Career Center located in 248 Flanner Hall. Check out their website: <http://careercenter.nd.edu/>. Also visit the Career Center and make use of their excellent facilities and resources.

In addition, the **Occupation Outlook Handbook** published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which can be accessed at: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>. Use their keyword search, their alphabetical index, or their occupational cluster search to access potential jobs available to psychology majors. A recent keyword search using the term psychology identified 77 different documents such as psychologists, counselors, urban planners, social and human services assistants, human resources, social workers and teachers. Exploring any of these documents turns up additional career options.

Developing an Appropriate Resume

Resume Preparation:

The resume is a business document that should be presented in a professional manner, containing enough information to pique the interest of potential employers. Your resume should consist of the following categories:

- personal information:
- typically your name, address, phone number, and email address
- statement of objective:

- ensure that it fits the position/program you are applying for
- your education and experiences: various presentation options:
- chronological order (reverse order – listing the last items first)
- functional order – highlighting certain categories
- a combination of the two approaches
- references: typically stated as available upon request
- Important tips to keep in mind about preparing your resume:
- keep it simple, uncluttered and easy to read
- ensure that it is free of grammatical error, typos, or misspelling
- get feedback from others (career center and faculty)
- keep it short – no longer than one page
- ensure that the contents match the position you are applying for
- be as specific as possible

Critical Issues in Preparing your Resume:

- begin developing your resume early on so it helps focus your thinking about courses, volunteer, and work experiences you might pursue
- match your resume with the organization and specific position – highlight your skills and education as they apply to the specific job:
- do not have a generic resume
 - present realistic goals and objectives – again suited to the specific position and organization you are applying to
 - do not sell yourself short

Links to Sample Resumes at Notre Dame’s Career Center:

Check out examples of correct and incorrect resumes at the following website:

<http://careercenter.nd.edu/undergrad.php?cwebmenu=undergrad>

Developing an Appropriate Cover Letter

Your resume should be accompanied by a cover letter when it is sent to a potential employer. This letter is critical in shaping the impression the prospective employer is going to form of you as a potential employee and you need to consider the following points in writing this letter:

General Issues:

- keep your letter simple in format and free from errors
- try to address your letter to a particular (relevant) person rather than the generic “To whom it may concern”
- be brief and concise
- write a separate letter for each position

What to include:

- an introductory paragraph explaining why
 - you are applying for the position
 - why you are interested in the organization/employer
- a second paragraph explaining why:
 - you should be hired
 - how your experience, education, and skills match their position
- a final paragraph indicating how you will follow up on your application
- a simple closing such as “Sincerely yours” followed by your signature

Developing References

At this stage you have a strong resume and a well written cover letter that presents you in the best light and hopefully lands you the interview. Now you need good strong references that will attest to your skills and abilities, the quality of your work, and your personal character. Developing good references are critical to success in landing jobs or being accepted into graduate programs.

Key Points to Consider:

- begin by building and strengthening good relationships with potential references such as faculty and advisors by:
 - meeting with faculty regularly outside of class
 - discussing your academic and career interests
 - working with faculty on research (special studies credits)
 - meeting regularly with your advisor and/or mentor
 - maintaining regular contact with all of the above
- only ask those that know you well for references and do so in the context of a personal visit and only ask those you are sure will write you a good strong reference:
 - if you are not sure about this – ask!!!
- provide your references with enough information about the program or position you are applying for so they can understand the context for the reference
- simplify the process for your referees by providing them with:
 - your resume
 - information about the position/program
 - sufficient time to complete and mail the reference
 - the relevant forms if necessary and clear instructions as to what should be done with it (mailed directly to the organization/school or returned to you in a sealed envelope)

Developing a Professional Portfolio

An additional way of presenting yourself is to develop and maintain a professional portfolio which consists of a collection of documents that highlight your recent work as a

student, part-time employee, or volunteer. Often employers or graduate programs want to see writing samples and knowing that you can use your work aid your career aspirations also serves as a motivation to do good work.

Helpful Readings/Readings Cited

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9. Mayne, T. J., Norcross, J. C., & Sayette, M. A., (2000). *Insider's guide to graduate programs in clinical & counseling psychology*. The Guilford Press: New York
10. Notre Dame Career Center located in 248 Flanner Hall. Check out their website: <http://careercenter.nd.edu/>
11. Notre Dame College of Arts and Letters Undergraduate Research Opportunity program located in O'Shaughnessy in the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts. Check out their website: <http://www.nd.edu/~isla/ISLA/> and click on the UROP link.
12. Williams, R. L., & Long, J. D. (1991). *Manage your life*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin