

Department of Psychology - Valparaiso University

NEW UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT INTRODUCTION TO THE V.U. PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

I. Greetings! On behalf of the students and faculty in our department, welcome to VU!!! We hope that you will have a great experience studying and living in our community, and want to do everything we can to make things that way!

II. Introductions: meet the faculty

A. Experimental Faculty--primarily oriented to teaching and research

- Dr. Daniel Arkkelin: Social & Environmental
- Dr. Kieth Carlson: Cognitive
- Dr. David Rowland: Biopsychology
- Dr. Angela Vernon: Animal behavior
- Dr. Jennifer Winquist: Social & Industrial/Organizational

B. Clinical/counseling Faculty--oriented to both clinical/counseling and teaching/research

- Dr. Stanley Hughes: Child and adolescent clinical
- Dr. Jim Nelson: Adolescent and adult clinical
- Dr. David Simpson: Counseling

C. Adjunct Faculty-contribute several courses each year

- Dr. Stewart Cooper: Director of VU Career Development & Counseling Center
- Dr. Jeanne Brown: Practicum Coordinator

III. What is psychology, or how can I make a living and do something worthwhile and interesting at the same time?

- Teaching and Research: usually requires a doctoral degree
- Business: bachelors or masters degree
- Clinical/counseling or education: masters or doctoral degree, though opportunities do exist for the BA/BS degrees

People generally orient themselves in 1 or 2 of these tracks. This starts to make a difference in the courses you take about your junior year

The time frame for graduate degrees is 2-3 years for masters, 4-5 years for masters plus doctorate.

Click the link on the left for the Psychology Majors Student Manual for more information about career opportunities.

IV. The psychology program at VU

Your adviser is available to help you with all aspect of your program in and out of the department, including your eventual search for a job or graduate school. Use this resource!!!

A. Psychology courses:

We offer both BA and BS degrees. Requirements are slightly different. The BS is generally recommended if you are planning on graduate school, but there are important exceptions to this.

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Initial courses in the psychology department:

- General psychology (PSY 110), preferably with the lab (PSY 111)
- The Statistics/Methods sequence: Statistics (PSY 201), Methods (PSY 202)

An introductory course in your track:

- For business: Social (PSY 125) or Organizational (PSY 265)
- For Clinical/counseling: Abnormal (PSY 235)
- Upper-level Experimental/lab courses are taken after the statistics/methods sequence

Other important parts of your psychology program

- Independent Study/Independent Research, usually in Junior Year
- The apprenticeship/field experience program, usually in the Junior Year
- The practicum/placement program, usually in the Senior Year
- Graduate school application and preparation, beginning in the Junior Year; taking the GRE; the importance of advising and recommendation letters
- Job searching

Special Opportunities in the VU Psychology Department--earn money & gain valuable experience!

- PSY 111 Lab Teaching Assistants
- PSY 201 Statistics Tutors
- Upper-level Lab Assistants
- Animal Care Assistants

B. The rest of your program:

General education

- See the planning sheets in the Student Guide.
- In general, the majority of classes you take during the first two years are general education courses, including Freshman Core or CC Core
- However, each semester you take at least one course because it interests you, not just because it “meets a requirement!”

Choosing a minor or second major

- Pick a major or minor that is interesting, complements your major and career/graduate school choice
- If chosen early enough, a double#major is doable within the normal four#year course of study
- Students in the BS degree have some limitations on the types of minors they can choose
- Common minors or second majors with psychology are: Art, Biology, Education, Music, Philosophy, Political Science, Social Work, Sociology, Theater, Theology or Pre#Seminary, Gender Studies, Human Aging, and Liberal Arts#Business.

Overseas study

- An excellent experience
- Best done in the first semester of your Junior year
- Program include Cambridge, Reutlingen (Germany), Hangzhou (China), Puebla (Mexico)

To plan your curriculum, be sure to examine your student handbook, the undergraduate catalog (available through the registrar), and visit with your advisor.

V. Student life:

- Psychology Club
- Psi Chi, National Psychology Honorary Society

VI. Fall events and advising

- Freshman picnic: TBA - watch for announcements
- Departmental preregistration and advising: TBA - watch for announcements
- Careers & Graduate school Info Night: TBA - watch for announcements

VII. What to do next?

- Go to your classes! Study! Get involved and have fun!
- If you have any questions or problems, make an appointment to see your advisor!
- Come to the Fall events!

VIII. Need Help or Information???Contact ...

- VU Psychology Department Website
 - o www.valpo.edu/psych - an excellent resource with useful information and links!
- Terri Hendle (Dept. Secretary)
 - o Phone: 219-464#5440
 - o Email: Terri.Hendle@valpo.edu
- Dan Arkkelin (Dept. Chair)
 - o Phone: 219-464#5441
 - o Email: Daniel.Arkkelin@valpo.edu