

The Passion

Psychology is the science of behavior and the mind. Those few words describe a discipline that is diverse and complex. Students who possess a critical curiosity about the functions and causes of behavior and mind are invited to join the psychology faculty in the pursuit of psychology's fundamental goals. At Gonzaga University, those who teach and study psychology seek to develop empirically-supported explanations for people's feelings, thoughts, and actions.

The Program

Gonzaga's Psychology Department faculty have expertise in a wide variety of subject areas and perspectives; however, we emphasize the observable and experiential aspects of human behavior, which ensures that students truly appreciate the scientific method upon which modern psychology is based. Consequently, psychology majors are required to develop a foundation in general psychology, statistics, and research methods in psychology before taking their upper-division courses.

Over the past several years, the Psychology Department has been engaged in assessment and program review projects and, as a result of this work, has revised its curriculum to better serve our students. Majors will now take a variety of upper-division courses in each of four cluster areas.

More specifically, students will complete 24 upper-division credits, including a minimum of 6 credits (2 classes) in Cluster A: Basic Psychological Processes (e.g., Biological Psychology, Emotion); a minimum of 6 credits in Cluster B: Social/Developmental/Interpersonal (e.g., Personality, Child Psychology); a minimum of 3 credits in Cluster C: Applied/Clinical (e.g., Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Psychopathology); and a minimum of 3 credits in Cluster D: Advanced Research, Theory, and Application (e.g., Advanced Research Methods, Practicum).

Students may also take courses in our electives area (e.g., Forensic Psychology, Marriage & Family). Students interested in graduate study in psychology are encouraged to complete additional coursework in Cluster D: Advanced Research, Theory, and Application.

The Department includes two "Teacher of the Year" winners, two recipients of exemplary faculty awards, one recipient of a service-learning faculty award, and one recipient of the faculty diversity leadership award.

Most professors have active programs of research and encourage students to join one of the research projects conducted or to conduct independent research under the supervision of a faculty member. These projects develop useful research skills while broadening and deepening knowledge on specific subjects. A number of these research experiences result in co-authored papers presented at regional and national psychology conferences and published in psychological journals. Two years ago, our students won top student research awards at both of the large national conferences in psychology: the annual conference of The American Psychological Association and the annual conference of The Association for Psychological Science.

Students who join a faculty member as a research assistant may have the opportunity to participate in studies ranging from parent-child attachments to human flourishing to psychophysiology. Professors come from a wide range of academic disciplines within psychology, including cognitive, social, clinical, behavioral, and developmental.

Furthermore, Spokane, the largest city in the Inland Northwest, offers a variety of service-learning and practicum experiences. These experiences range from providing support for homeless mothers and children to staffing Spokane's Crisis Hotline to learning skills related to neurological psychology. These unique learning experiences are available to students who meet academic requirements and have a strong desire to apply classroom knowledge to real-life situations.

The psychology curriculum is designed to prepare students for the rigors of graduate study. However, not all students pursue a graduate degree. Many choose to establish careers in education, business, law, and medicine where they have discovered their background in psychology to be beneficial. Because psychology relates to so many other fields, students are encouraged to pursue additional studies in other various disciplines.



The Potential

Current psychology students are passionate about gaining hands-on experience by working at the Department of Social and Health Services, Spokane Mental Health, and the Vanessa Beehan Crisis Nursery. Others are hired as crisis-line counselors at Spokane's First Call for Help. Students interested in attending graduate school also pursue research opportunities to understand better both the theory and practice of psychology. Most recently, the Psychology Department has developed a study abroad program in Zambia, Africa. Students attending can study comparative psychology at the world's largest chimpanzee sanctuary as well as engage in social outreach with Zambian families.

The top psychology students at Gonzaga University are elected to Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology. In recent years, GU Psi Chi members have been published in its yearly journal. Students who do research also may have the opportunity to present at psychology conferences. At a recent annual Western Psychology Association Conference, a GU student provided research on the development of an at-risk mother's ability to parent through her participation in an intensive therapy program. In the last couple of years, a number of students have presented at the prestigious annual conference of the Association of Psychological Science on their work with professors specializing in human attention and emotion.

For the past several years, strong students, especially those who have obtained research experience, have been highly competitive applicants for master's and doctoral programs throughout the country.

Recent psychology graduates are attending the following graduate schools:

Ph.D. Programs

University of Iowa	University of Nebraska
University of Washington	University of Illinois
University of Denver	Washington State University
University of Oregon	Northeastern University
University of Alabama	University of Montana
University of North Carolina-Greensboro	University of California-Los Angeles
Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (CA)	

Psy.D. Programs

George Fox University	M.A. Programs (Washington)
Loyola University Maryland	Eastern Washington University
Pacific University	Gonzaga University
	University of Washington
	Washington State University
	Western Washington University

Additionally our graduates are competitive applicants for service programs such as Teach for America and Jesuit Volunteer Corps. Still others have gone on to law school, medical school, or to business, education, and non-profit settings.

The People

Monica Bartlett, Ph.D., Northeastern University; specialties include social psychology, positive psychology, influence of positive emotions (e.g., gratitude, humility) on social behavior, prosocial behavior, human flourishing. (bartlettm@gonzaga.edu)

Mark Bodamer, Ph.D., University of Nevada-Reno; specialties include animal (chimpanzee, orca) behavior, communication and intelligence, language acquisition and development, psychological well-being of primates, human relationships with nature. (bodamer@gonzaga.edu)

Molly Kretchmar-Hendricks, Ph.D., University of Texas; specialties include infant, child, and adolescent development, attachment theory, and parent-child relationships. (kretchmar@gonzaga.edu)

Anna Marie Medina, Ph.D., University of Southern California; specialties include child clinical psychology, development of emotion and cognition in children, family violence and consequences for children exposed to violence. (medina@gonzaga.edu)

Sam Leigland, Ph.D., University of New Mexico; specialties include learning, behavior analysis, and the history, systems, and philosophy of psychology. (leigland@gonzaga.edu)

Michael McBride, Ph.D., St. Louis University; specialties include social, industrial, and environmental psychology. (mcbride@gonzaga.edu)

Mike Nelson, Ph.D., Dartmouth University; specialties include cognition, sensation and perception, and cognitive neuroscience of vision and visual attention. (nelson2@gonzaga.edu)

Gary Thorne, Ph.D., University of Southern California; specialties include biological psychology and psychophysiology (thorne@gonzaga.edu).

Nancy Worsham, Ph.D., University of Vermont; specialties include child clinical psychology, community psychology, and attachment to companion animals. (worsham@gonzaga.edu)

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