Department of Cognitive Sciences

The Department of Cognitive Sciences offers an undergraduate degree program (B.A.) in Psychology and a program of graduate study leading to a Ph.D. degree in Psychology or a Ph.D. degree in Psychology with a concentration in Cognitive Neuroscience. The Department’s graduate program provides research concentrations in cognition and information processing, cognitive neuroscience, perception and action, and mathematical behavioral sciences. The dynamic and interdisciplinary nature of cognitive science is reflected in the research programs in the Department of Cognitive Sciences. These programs span a broad spectrum ranging from perceptual mechanisms, to language, memory, and attention, through to higher cognitive abilities such as reasoning and decision-making. The studies in these areas use a variety of methodological approaches including collection of behavioral data, psychophysics, computational modeling, neuropsychology, and functional brain imaging. The faculty emphasize formal models as instrumental in understanding the nature of the human mind.

Representative Areas for Coursework
Perception and Sensory Processes
Learning and Cognition
Language Sciences
Cognitive Neuroscience

Honors Opportunities
The Honors Program in Psychology (Cognitive Sciences) is an advanced educational and research program for outstanding undergraduate students in the major. The program is designed for students who are interested in pursuing graduate study in psychology or seeking challenging research experiences as a capstone to their undergraduate experience.

The program emphasizes advanced competence in scientific research and requires two years to complete. It begins in the fall quarter of the junior year and ends in the spring quarter of the senior year. The program includes advanced courses in Experimental Psychology, three seminar classes, and, crucially, research experience under faculty supervision that culminates in an honors thesis.

Career Opportunities
The psychology major gives students a strong foundation in general psychology and provides a suitable background for post-graduate training and careers in all branches of psychology. It also provides training in critical thinking, experimental design, and data analysis that are important in a wide range of other careers.

Department of Psychology and Social Behavior

The Department of Psychology and Social Behavior offers an undergraduate degree program (B.A.) in Psychology and Social Behavior and a graduate program leading to a Ph.D. in Psychology and Social Behavior in the following concentrations: Developmental Psychology, Health Psychology, Psychopathology and Behavioral Disorder, and Social/Personality/Environmental Psychology.

The faculty are prominent scholars whose specialties include developmental, social, personality, health, cognitive, clinical, cultural, and community psychology. Research and courses reflect an overarching interest in understanding the psychological, social, and biological origins of human behavior across the life course, across stressful life situations, and in diverse cultural contexts. Students learn how individual and group behavior is shaped by the varying contexts in which people live and function — families, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, and cultures.

Representative Areas for Coursework
Developmental Psychology
Health Psychological
Preclinical Psychology
Social, Personality, and Environmental Psychology

Honors Opportunities
The Honors Program is designed for students who are interested in pursuing graduate study in psychology or seeking challenging research experiences as a capstone to their undergraduate experience. The program includes rigorous courses in Experimental Psychology, seminar classes, research experience under faculty supervision, and culminates in an honors thesis. Students are encouraged to apply in the summer following their sophomore year but may also apply during the summer of their junior year if they have met additional eligibility requirements.

Career Opportunities
The major in psychology and social behavior provides students with a strong foundation in many areas of psychology, and provides preparation for students who choose to continue their education at the graduate level. Graduates have gone on to pursue advanced degrees in psychology, education, human development, law, public health, social work, counseling, environmental design, program evaluation, and business. The major also prepares students to pursue a variety of careers. Graduates of the program have assumed positions in the public and private sectors, including schools, counseling centers, community agencies, hospitals, and other health-care settings, industry, and business.