

2007-2008

EIU PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Curriculum Committee Report

Undergraduate Psychology Major
Advising Handbook

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR

Psychology Major

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Is Psychology the Right Major for Me?

P sychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. Because many fields rely on the understanding of human behavior, psychology has widespread applications. If you enjoy working with people, are interested in human behavior, and have a scientific view of the world, then majoring in psychology may be of interest to you.

This handbook is designed to answer the most frequent questions that students ask their advisers. It functions as an excellent reference for finding out requirements and resources found in the Psychology Department. It also provides links to resources on the internet that are relevant to psychology majors.

The curriculum of the psychology department is centered on meeting the following learning goals for undergraduate students:

1. **Content Area Knowledge:** Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding representing appropriate breadth and depth in the primary content areas of psychology.
2. **Research:** Students will demonstrate skills in designing and conducting research, analyzing data, and interpreting results in the context of current theories in psychology
3. **Technology:** Students will demonstrate familiarity with computer technologies used in conducting psychological research and learning psychological principles.
4. **Critical Thinking:** Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills with regards to psychology.
5. **Communication:** Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate information about psychology effectively.
6. **Global Citizenship/Ethical Behavior:** Students will interact effectively, sensitively, and ethically with people from diverse backgrounds and demonstrate understanding of the sociocultural contexts that influence individual differences.

What can I do with a Bachelor's Degree in psychology?

| AREAS | EMPLOYERS | STRATEGIES |
|--|--|---|
| HUMAN SERVICES Counseling, Advocacy, Human Health Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Government Depts of Health & Human Services, Veterans' Administration, and Justice State Govt Depts of Human Services, Mental Health, and Mental Retardation, psychiatric hospitals, community mental health centers, facilities for the mentally retarded, and probation/parole depts Local Government: senior citizens' centers Non-Profit Organizations such as United Way, Goodwill Industries, Boys and Girls Clubs, and YWCA/YMCA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain essential practical experience such as residence hall adviser or camp counselor Enroll in an internship or practicum Perform volunteer services such as Special Olympics, Big Brother/Sister, or crisis hotline Learn foreign language for multi-cultural clients Become familiar with government hiring procedures Be willing to relocate Be prepared to obtain a masters degree for more substantive counseling work |
| ADMINISTRATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal, state, and local governments National headquarters and local branches of nonprofit organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a business double major or minor Gain experience in counseling, advocacy, or administration Need masters in health care administration for advancement |
| COMMUNITY RELATIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal, state, or local government Local branches of national non-profit organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain experience in counseling, advocacy, or administration Gain knowledge of community problems and govt resources |
| PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal, state, or local government Headquarters and branches of non-profit organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain experience in counseling, advocacy, or administration Obtain graduate degree for advancement |
| RESEARCH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal government, especially Dept of Health & Human Services and National Institute of Education National headquarters of non-profit organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strong quantitative, statistical, and research skills Obtain graduate degree for advancement |
| HUMAN RESOURCES Employment & Recruitment, Labor Relations, Compensation & Benefits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human resources (personnel) departments of companies Government personnel agencies and departments Employment agencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire related experiences such as a residence hall adviser, new student orientation leader, admissions office tour guide/recruiter, or member of committees that make policy, settle disputes, or adjudicate cases |
| PUBLIC RELATIONS Research, Programming, Fund-Raising, Writing & Editing, Special Events, Media Placement, Public Speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public relations and advertising firms Companies with in-house PR depts Trade associations Federal, state, and local government Colleges and universities Non-profit organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strong writing and speaking skills Obtain related experiences with campus newspaper, TV, or radio, Admissions office tour guide or recruiter, Student activities office planning Serve as a fund raiser or political canvasser Find internship through Public Relations Society of America |
| ADVERTISING Creative, Media, Account Services, or Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising agencies Companies with in-house advertising agencies or depts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain experience with campus TV, radio, or newspaper Work with a student-run business Find an internship with a market research firm or a member of the American Advertising Federation Develop a portfolio for a creative position Business minor or double major for Account Services jobs |
| MARKET RESEARCH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market research firms Market research departments of consumer goods and manufacturing firms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strong math/statistics skills Become involved in the American Marketing Association Obtain a part-time or summer job with a market research firm (see Marketing Services in the yellow pages), perform a Business Dept practicum, become a reporter for campus newspaper, serve as a canvasser/phone interviewer for a charity or political campaign |
| TEACHING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public and private schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain a teaching certificate for public school positions Seek guidance from the Education Dept in your school Volunteer as a tutor |
| RETAIL / SALES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All major retail firms including pharmaceuticals, specialty, variety, and department store chains Wholesalers, manufacturers, insurance companies, and real estate companies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain related sales experiences with part-time or summer retail job or work with campus newspaper or yearbook Secure leadership position in campus organization Perform an internship with a retail store |

Job Titles in Human Services for Students with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology

"What can I do with a bachelor's degree in psychology?" This is a question that often concerns psychology majors who plan to enter the job market immediately after graduation. Zeller (1988) attempted to answer the question by compiling the following list of human services job titles whose descriptions and qualifications are compatible with the knowledge and skills of a college graduate with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Although it took Zeller a whole year to compile his list from a wide variety of sources, it should be noted that there are also many other human services jobs for psychology majors that are not on this list.

- activity director
- addiction counselor
- administrative program assistant
- admissions market analyst
- admissions public relations director
- admissions recruiter
- admissions representative
- adolescent care technician
- adolescent chemical dependency counselor
- advertising trainee
- adviser-educator
- affirmative action officer
- agency representative
- airline reservations clerk
- alcohol counselor
- alcoholism unit manager
- area administrator
- arena and sports facility instructor
- assistant residence manager
- assistant youth coordinator
- association manager
- behavior analyst
- camp staff director caretaker
- case tracking specialist
- case worker
- center supervisor
- chemical dependency advocate
- chemical dependency coordinator
- chemical dependency counselor
- chemical dependency secretary
- chemical dependency technician
- child care counselor
- child care worker
- child development worker
- child protection worker
- circulation manager
- collection assistant
- collector
- college admissions representative
- community activist
- community correctional service worker
- community outreach coordinator
- community organizer
- community service coordinator
- community worker
- compliance officer
- consultant
- cottage treatment team
- counselor
- counselor aid
- counselor/therapist
- county personnel officer
- crime prevention coordinator
- customer relations
- customer service trainee
- daily living aid
- day-care aid
- demonstration coordinator
- deputy juvenile probation officer
- developmental reading instructor
- development officer
- director of activity and recreation
- director of alumni relations
- director of day-care center
- director of displaced homemakers
- director of human services
- director of education
- director of planned parenthood
- director of planning director of security
- director of youth service bureau
- driving instructor
- drug counselor
- early childhood specialist
- education prevention specialist
- education daytime coordinator
- educational coordinator
- educational representative
- educational salesperson
- educational textbook representative
- employee assistance program specialist
- employment counselor
- employment representative
- executive director
- export order coordinator
- field representative
- foster home parent
- grants coordinator
- group home coordinator
- group home counselor
- group home parents
- group leader
- group worker
- head of alumni affairs
- head of fund raising
- host/hostess
- houseparent
- human relations director
- human services technician
- infant stimulation teacher
- information specialist
- information referral specialist
- inservice director
- instructor
- instructor-handicapped adult program
- insurance agent
- interviewer
- investigator
- juvenile justice planner
- juvenile prevention program coordinator
- juvenile specialist
- living unit assistant
- loading dock superintendent
- management trainee
- marketing manager
- mental retardation professional
- mental retardation unit manager
- neighborhood outreach worker
- occupational information developer
- park and recreation director
- patient service representative
- personnel analyst
- personnel coordinator
- personnel generalist
- planner-assistant
- planner-evaluator
- private school representative
- private tutor
- probation officer
- program consultant
- program coordinator
- program director
- project learning instructor
- police training coordinator
- public information officer
- rehabilitation aid
- relief houseparent
- research analyst/planner
- research assistant
- research trainee
- residence counselor
- resident aid
- resident caretaker
- residential assistant
- residential director
- residential service coordinator
- residential supervisor
- resource developer
- retail manager
- salesperson
- secretary
- security officer
- service advisor
- social service director
- social services supervisor
- social studies teacher
- social worker
- social worker coordinator
- statistical assistant
- student activities adviser
- supervisor
- support service manager
- task force coordinator
- temporary admissions clerk
- textbook coordinator
- trainer
- trainer-coordinator
- veteran's adviser
- volunteer coordinator
- work activity program director
- youth worker

In-Depth Job Description Information

The [Occupational Information Network](#) (O-net OnLine) provides in-depth job description information, including required knowledge and skills, job duties, wages, and projected growth for thousands of different careers, including many in psychology and psychology-related fields. For example, here is a portion of the information listed for a school counselor.

Tasks

- Counsel students regarding educational issues such as course and program selection, class scheduling, school adjustment, truancy, study habits, and career planning.
- Counsel individuals to help them understand and overcome personal, social, or behavioral problems affecting their educational or vocational situations.
- Maintain accurate and complete student records as required by laws, district policies, and administrative regulations.
- Confer with parents or guardians, teachers, other counselors, and administrators to resolve students' behavioral, academic, and other problems.
- Provide crisis intervention to students when difficult situations occur at schools.
- Identify cases involving domestic abuse or other family problems affecting students' development.
- Meet with parents and guardians to discuss their children's progress, and to determine their priorities for their children and their resource needs.
- Prepare students for later educational experiences by encouraging them to explore learning opportunities and to persevere with challenging tasks.
- Encourage students and/or parents to seek additional assistance from mental health professionals when necessary.
- Observe and evaluate students' performance, behavior, social development, and physical health.

Wages & Employment Trends

NATIONAL

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Median wages (2005) | \$22.33 hourly, \$46,440 annual |
| Employment (2004) | 248,000 employees |
| Projected growth (2004-2014) | ■ Average (10-20%) |
| Projected need (2004-2014) | 94,000 additional employees |

When deciding what you want to do with your psychology degree after you graduate, you may find the [Career Decision Tree for Psychology Students](#) at Western Kentucky University to be helpful.

Advising

Who is my adviser?

Each undergraduate student majoring in psychology is assigned a faculty member to assist with academic planning each semester. You may find out who your adviser is in the psychology department office, room 1151 in the physical sciences building (217/581-2127); the name of your academic adviser should also be listed with your student information on [Panther Access to Web Services \(PAWS\)](#). A list of students new to the psychology major and their advisers' names is located on the [Psychology Department's Advising website](#).

Students who plan on transferring to EIU from another college meet with a member of the Psychology Department faculty, typically the chair of the department, during their transfer orientation day on campus. An advisement folder is developed for each student and transfer students are assigned an adviser once their folders reach the psychology department's office. New transfer students with any advisement questions or concerns may contact the psychology department (217/581-2127).

When should I see my adviser?

You will need to meet with your adviser each semester to discuss your progress toward graduation and to receive the alternate pin number you will need to register for classes for the next semester.

How should I prepare for my advising appointment?

It is best to schedule an appointment with your adviser after you have reviewed the schedule of classes for the next semester and the general education and psychology courses that you still need to complete. This advanced preparation will enable you to be better prepared to discuss your academic progress and ask relevant questions when you meet with your adviser. You should come to the advising meeting with an outline of courses you are considering for the next semester and a list of any questions you may have. Be prepared to take notes. Remember, your adviser's job is to provide you with advice and guidance related to your progress toward graduation; do not expect your adviser to choose which specific classes you should take and what time of day to take them.

How long will my advising appointment last?

The typical meeting with your adviser lasts between 15 to 30 minutes. If you have reason to believe that you will require more than 30 minutes, then you should mention this to your adviser when scheduling your appointment.

When can I register?

The day you can register depends on your class standing, for example junior or senior. The chart with registration dates is available from the [registration office's](#) website or you can find it when you login to [PAWS](#). The chart can also be found by going to the EIU homepage and selecting "On Campus", under "class schedules."

Psychology Major/Minor Requirements

This section includes a description of psychology courses, when they are offered, prerequisites, requirements for the major and minor, general education requirements, and recommendations on which courses may be especially helpful for different careers in psychology.

Note: The semester(s) in which a course is offered (F=Fall, S=Spring, Su=Summer) may vary depending on departmental needs and availability of faculty.

Course Descriptions and Prerequisites

| Course Number | Title | Class Hours | Offered | Course Description | Prerequisites |
|---------------|---|-------------|---------|--|--|
| PSY 1879G | Introductory Psychology | (3-0-3) | F, S | An integrated overview of the basic methods and principles of psychology, including natural and social science contributions to the understanding of behavior and cognitive processes. Students will gain firsthand experience with psychological research by participating in psychological research and/or summarizing research articles in psychology journals. S6 900; SPE 912 | |
| PSY 1890G | Introductory Psychology, Honors | (3-0-3) | F, S | An integrated overview of the basic methods and principles of psychology, including natural and social science contributions to the understanding of behavior and cognitive processes. SPE 912 WI | Admission to the University Honors College. Credit not given for both PSY 1890G and 1879G. |
| PSY 2610 | Statistical Methods of Psychology | (3-2-4) | F, S | Application of statistical methods to behavioral data. | PSY1879G AND [MAT1271 or higher level math course with grade of C or better OR ACT math score of 26 or higher] |
| PSY 2999 | Psychological Forum | (1-0-1) | F, S | A variety of methods and resources (e.g., surveys, archival data, Internet sites) will be used to introduce students to the profession of psychology. Includes coverage of such topics as sub-fields in psychology, careers in psychology, and graduate training in psychology and related fields. | PSY 1879G, academic standing as a sophomore psychology major. |
| PSY 3260 | Introduction to Group Dynamics | (1-2-2) | F, S | Introduction to group dynamics and therapeutic group procedures. Laboratory and classroom experiences will be used to provide direct group experiences and information on the theoretical and empirical literature pertaining to group psychotherapy. | PSY1879G AND approval of instructor prior to registration. |
| PSY 3310 | Biological Psychology | (3-0-3) | F, S | An overview of the biological bases of behavior, addressing the role of the nervous and endocrine systems in such behaviors as sensation, movement, sleep, reproduction, and mental disorders. | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3515 | Child Psychology | (3-0-3) | F, S | A survey of the progression of human development through middle childhood and of the processes involved in the physical, cognitive, social, and affective domains. PSY 901 | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3521 | Psychology of Adolescence and Young Adulthood | (3-0-3) | F, S | A survey of development during adolescence and young adulthood, and the influences of biological, cognitive, and social factors on psychological development and behavior. PSY 902 | PSY1879G |

| Course Number | Title | Class Hours | Offered | Course Description | Prerequisites |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------|---|--|
| PSY 3525 | Psychology of Maturity and Old Age | (3-0-3) | F, S | A survey of age-related psychological development during the adult years. Covers such areas as intelligence, personality, relationships, sexuality, and mental health from post-adolescence to old age and death. The demographics of the adult population and methods for studying adult development are also covered. PSY 903 | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3530 | Industrial/Organizational Psychology | (3-0-3) | F | Applications of the methods and principles of psychology to the workplace, with particular emphasis on the human resource function. Topics may include job analysis, performance appraisal, personnel selection, employee training, worker motivation, and worker stress. PSY 906 | PSY1879G OR permission of the instructor |
| PSY 3590 | Theories of Personality | (3-0-3) | F, S | A comparison of the four major perspectives in personality theory: Psychoanalytic, trait and type, social-behavioristic and cognitive-humanistic. Special emphasis is placed on basic concepts and principles, assessment, research and techniques used in the treatment process. PSY 907 | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3620 | Psychology of Learning | (3-0-3) | F, S | Introduction to the principles of learning derived from animal and human research, with particular emphasis on the application of these concepts to problems of human learning. | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3680 | Sensation & Perception | (3-0-3) | F, S | Survey and study of the basic principles of sensation and perception relative to a person's interaction with the environment. Significant applied and life span trends are considered. | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3690 | Controversial Topics in Psychology | (3-0-3) | S | Exploration of special interest or controversial topics in psychology as: Hypnosis, drugs, behavior, transcendental meditation, gay liberation, biofeedback, ESP, and IQ controversy. | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3720 | Psychology of Gender | (3-0-3) | S | Examines the biological, psychological, and social influences related to gender and how gender-related expectations interact with other cultural assumptions and stereotypes to affect experiences and behavior. Research and theories relevant to understanding gender are emphasized. | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3765 | Methods in Behavioral Management | (3-0-3) | F | The basic concepts of human operant conditioning. Emphasizes applied research and techniques of behavior management applicable to a wide variety of settings and problems. | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3780 | Abnormal Psychology | (3-0-3) | F, S | A study of the etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of psychological and associated disorders. Topics include theoretical and empirical perspectives on abnormality, assessment of mental illness, and various diagnostic categories including anxiety disorders, mood disorders, and schizophrenia. PSY 905 | PSY1879G |

| Course Number | Title | Class Hours | Offered | Course Description | Prerequisites |
|---------------|---|-------------------|---------|---|---|
| PSY 3805 | Research Methods and Experimental Design | (2-4-4) | F, S | Examination of research methodology in psychology, including observational, experimental, and survey techniques. Provides opportunity to design research, analyze data, and write scientific reports. WI | PSY1879G AND PSY 2610 with a grade of C or better |
| PSY 3830 | Cognitive Processes | (3-0-3) | F, S | A survey of research and theory in the "core topics" of cognitive psychology, i.e., perception, memory, language, and problem solving. | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3870 | Social Psychology | (3-0-3) | F, S | Survey of research on social cognition & behavior. Includes coverage of such topics as person perception, social memory, affect, attitude change, social influence, group dynamics, prejudice, and interpersonal attraction. PSY 908 | PSY1879G |
| PSY 3900 | Independent Study in Psychology | (Arr.- Arr.-1-6) | F, S | The study of topics in psychology through directed readings and individual instruction. Students planning to conduct empirical research should enroll in Psychology 4100. | |
| PSY 3970 | Study Abroad | (Arr.- Arr.-1-15) | Su | See STA 3970. | |
| PSY 4000 | Psychology of Problem Solving and Reasoning | (2-2-3) | | This laboratory course focuses on the theories and research that have established the cognitive science of problem solving and reasoning. | PSY3830 OR permission of professor. |
| PSY 4100 | Supervised Research in Psychology | (Arr.- Arr.-1-6) | F, S | An opportunity to design and conduct empirical research in psychology under the close guidance and sponsorship of a psychology faculty member. Approval of instructor is required prior to registration. May be repeated for credit. A maximum of nine semester hours may be earned in this course. A maximum of three hours may be applied to the major in psychology. | PSY 2610 AND PSY 3805 with a grade of C or better in both, OR permission of the instructor. |
| PSY 4250 | History and Systems | (3-0-3) | F | A survey of historical and contemporary systems and theories devoted to the study of mind and behavior, and their contributions to the development of psychology as a scientific discipline. | 15 semester hours in psychology. |
| PSY 4260 | Crisis Intervention | (3-0-3) | S | A comprehensive survey of psychological intervention theories along with practical and realistic guidelines for psychological interventions in personal, family, legal, and organizational crises. | 20 semester hours in psychological or related areas. |
| PSY 4270 | Theories of Psychotherapy | (3-0-3) | F | A detailed survey of theories, techniques, and research involved in contemporary systems of psychotherapy, including issues relating to the nature of the therapeutic process, assessment and diagnostic practices, and ethical, legal and medical perspectives. WI | PSY3590 AND PSY3780 |
| PSY 4274 | Orientation to Undergraduate Internship | (1-0-1) | F, S | An introduction to undergraduate internship experience, professional behavior and ethics, and delivery of psychological services in applied settings. | Psychology major, 20 hours of psychology course work or permission of instructor. |

| Course Number | Title | Class Hours | Offered | Course Description | Prerequisites |
|---------------|---|------------------|---------|--|--|
| PSY 4275 | Undergraduate Internship in Psychology | (Arr.- Arr.-3-6) | F, S | Supervised undergraduate internship that familiarizes students with the delivery of psychological services in applied settings. | Psychology major, PSY 4274, 20 hours of psychology course work and permission of the instructor. Six hours is the maximum number of hours permitted. |
| PSY 4444 | Honors Independent Study | (3-0-3) | F | Consideration of special topics in Psychology. Special emphasis on an area of interest to the student approved by faculty supervisor and Departmental Honors Coordinator. | Admission to the Departmental Honors Program, Permission of the Departmental Honors Coordinator. |
| PSY 4515 | Children With Exceptionalities | (3-0-3) | F | This course focuses on children whose physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and/or social functioning requires intervention. Causes and treatments for exceptionalities are emphasized. | PSY1879G AND PSY3515 |
| PSY 4590 | Psychology Seminar | (3-0-3) | F, S | Specific areas within the discipline will be given intensive study through lectures, readings, reports, and discussion. The topic for each semester will be announced in advance by the department chairperson | Major or minor in psychology. |
| PSY 4610 | Advanced Statistics in Psychology | (3-2-4) | F | This course continues students' introduction to theory and application of statistical analysis necessary for psychological research, including the use of computers for advanced data analysis (e.g., analysis of variance; multiple regression; factor analysis). | PSY 2610 OR equivalent with a grade of C or better. |
| PSY 4620 | Psychological Measurements : Fundamental Principles | (3-0-3) | F | Introduction to psychometric theories and procedures for the construction and evaluation of intelligence, achievement, aptitude, personality, interest, and special ability tests. Emphasis is on reliability, validity, norms, test construction and standardization, interpretation, and the ethical uses of tests and test data to help the student become better informed and a critical consumer of tests and measurement procedures. | PSY 2610 OR equivalent with a grade of C or better. |
| PSY 4644 | Honors Thesis | (Arr.- Arr.-3) | S | Intensive research in preparation of a thesis on a topic in psychology under the supervision of a faculty sponsor. | Admission to the Departmental Honors Program and permission of the Departmental Honors Coordinator. |
| PSY 4666 | Honors Seminar | (3-0-3) | S | A writing-intensive examination of theory and research in various areas of psychology, built around student-selected readings. May be taken twice. | Admission to the Departmental Honors Program and permission of the Departmental Honors Coordinator. |
| PSY 4700 | Prejudice and Discrimination | (3-0-3) | | Study of causes, consequences, and possible remedies of prejudice and discrimination as directed toward a variety of groups. | PSY1879G OR SOC2710G |

Graduation Checklist for Psychology Major/Minor
FA2007 through Current Catalog, as of June 11, 2007

Criteria for Admission to the Psychology Major:

1. Completion of MAT 1271 or higher level math course, with a grade of C or better; or ACT math score of 26 or higher.
2. Completion of PSY 1879G (or equivalent) with a grade of C or better.

Major in Psychology: A grade of C or better is required in all Psychology courses counting towards the major. All of these courses are required:

- ___ **MAT1271** or higher level math course, with grade of C or better, or ACT math score of 26 or higher: 0-3 hrs.
- ___ **PSY1879G** Introductory Psychology: 3 hrs
- ___ **PSY2610** Statistical Methods of Psychology (prereq. PSY1879G & Math above): 4 hrs
- ___ **PSY2999** Psychological Forum (prereq. PSY1879G): 1 hr
- ___ **PSY3805** Research Methods & Experimental Design (prereq. PSY1879G & PSY2610 (w/ grade of C or better): 4 hrs.

Group A: Abnormal/Social Group – Minimum of two from:

- ___ **PSY3590** Theories of Personality (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs
- ___ **PSY3780** Abnormal Psychology (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs
- ___ **PSY3870** Social Psychology (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs

Group B: Biopsychology Group – Minimum of one from:

- ___ **PSY3310** Biological Psychology (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs (formerly Physiological Psychology)
- ___ **PSY3680** Sensation & Perception (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs

Group C: Cognitive/Learning Group – Minimum of one from:

- ___ **PSY3620** Psychology of Learning (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs
- ___ **PSY3830** Cognitive Processes (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs

Group D: Developmental Group – Minimum of one from:

- ___ **PSY3515** Child Psychology (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs
- ___ **PSY3521** Psychology of Adolescence & Young Adulthood (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs.
- ___ **PSY3525** Psychology of Maturity & Old Age (prereq. PSY1879G): 3 hrs.

Electives: 9 sem. hrs from any Psychology Courses except PSY4274 & PSY4275. No more than 3 sem. hrs. each of PSY 3900 or 4100 may count toward this requirement. **At least 3 sem. hrs. of this requirement must be at the 4000-level.** May include any courses from Groups A, B, C & D above the minimum requirement. Please read catalog for course prerequisites.

- ___ PSY3260 Group Dynamics: 2 hrs
- ___ PSY3530 Industrial/Organizational Psychology: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY3690 Controversial Topics: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY3720 Psychology of Gender: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY3765 Methods in Behavioral Management: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY3900 Independent Study: 1-6 hrs
- ___ PSY4000 Problem Solving & Reasoning: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY4100 Undergrad. Supervised Research: 1-6 hrs
- ___ PSY4250 History and Systems: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY4260 Crisis Intervention: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY4270 Theories of Psychotherapy: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY4590 Psychology Seminar
- ___ PSY4515 Children with Exceptionalities: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY4610 Advanced Statistics: 4 hrs
- ___ PSY4620 Psychological Measurements: 3 hrs
- ___ PSY4700 Prejudice and Discrimination: 3 hrs
- OTHER: _____

___ Beginning FA07, majors are required to complete the [Psychology Comprehensive Exam](#) at least 10 days prior to the closing date of the term of graduation.

___ Complete the [Graduating Senior Exit Survey](#) by the closing date of the term of graduation.

MAJOR TOTAL: 36-39 sem. hrs.

Minor in Psychology: A grade of C or better is required in all Psychology courses counting towards the minor.

- ___ PSY 1879G Introductory Psychology: 3 hrs
- ___ Electives in Psychology selected to meet the particular educational goals of individual students in consultation with a Psychology advisor. Must include at least nine hrs. of courses numbered 3000 or above: 15 hrs

MINOR TOTAL: 18 HOURS

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT HONORS: CONTACT DR. JOHN BEST, RM. 1440

Do I need a minor?

A minor in another field of study is not required for graduation. However, after adding the number of hours needed to fulfill the general education requirements and the number of hours required for a psychology major, you may still need to take 25-30 semester hours to meet the 120-hour graduation requirement. Thus, choosing a minor can help guide the selection of these remaining courses for graduation. Furthermore, if you plan to go into a particular field of psychology, having a minor can be helpful. For example, a minor in business may be wise if you plan to go into industrial/organizational psychology.

Generally speaking, psychology faculty are not familiar with other departments' minor requirements and will not be able to advise you beyond what is already stated in the [online catalog](#) regarding majors and minors. If you have questions about requirements for a minor, please ask the department that offers the minor.

What psychology classes are Writing Intensive?

- PSY 1890G, Principles of Psychology, Honors
- PSY 3805, Research Methods and Experimental Design
- PSY 4270, Theories of Psychotherapy

These courses offer opportunities to complete a writing assignment that can be submitted to the [Electronic Writing Portfolio](#). However, please note that the requirements for submitting to the Electronic Writing Portfolio have changed for students who choose to graduate under the Fall 2008 catalog. [View approved changes](#), effective Fall 2008.

What classes should I take first?

After taking Psy 1879 (Introductory Psychology) or Psy 1890 (Honors), and once you decide to major in psychology, take the Psychological Forum class (Psy 2999), which provides a good overview of the major. Then, take Statistics (Psy 2610) and Research Methods (Psy 3805) as soon as possible, in that order.

Unless you are seeking guidance for a particular specialty in psychology, do not expect your adviser to tell you exactly which psychology classes to take. However, the table on the next page lists strongly recommended (potentially required) classes if you are interested in pursuing a graduate degree in Clinical, Counseling, Developmental, or School Psychology. You must still meet all the other requirements for the major. For recommended courses in other areas of psychology (industrial/organizational, cognitive, physiological, social, forensic, etc.), please talk to your adviser or a faculty member of the psychology department with expertise in that area.

For an excellent overview of courses generally required for graduate programs in psychology, see Dr. John Norcross's article "[Which Course, Which Course? The Undergraduate Courses Expected by Graduate Psychology Programs](#)" found on the National Psi Chi web site. He also mentions courses in areas outside of psychology that would be helpful for students planning to go to graduate school.

Suggested Courses for Graduate School Programs in Selected Areas

| Clinical | Counseling | Developmental | School | Required | |
|----------|------------|---------------|--------|-------------------|--|
| √ | √ | √ | √ | PSY1879G | Introductory Psychology |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | PSY2610 | Statistical Methods of Psychology |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | PSY2999 | Psychological Forum |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | PSY3805 | Research Methods & Experimental Design |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | Group A: | Abnormal/Social Group – Minimum of two from: |
| | | √ | | PSY3590 | Theories of Personality |
| √ | √ | | √ | PSY3780 | Abnormal Psychology |
| √ | | | | PSY3870 | Social Psychology |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | Group B: | Biopsychology Group – Minimum of one from: |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | PSY3310 | Biological Psychology |
| | | | | PSY3680 | Sensation & Perception |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | Group C: | Cognitive/Learning Group – Minimum of one from: |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | PSY3620 | Psychology of Learning |
| √ | | | | PSY3830 | Cognitive Processes |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | Group D: | Developmental Group – Minimum of one from: |
| | | √ | √ | PSY3515 | Child Psychology |
| | | √ | | PSY3521 | Psychology of Adolescence & Young Adulthood |
| | | √ | | PSY3525 | Psychology of Maturity & Old Age |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | Electives* | |
| √ | √ | | | PSY4274 | Orientation to Undergraduate Internship |
| √ | √ | | | PSY4275 | Undergraduate Internship in Psychology |
| | | | | PSY3260 | Group Dynamics |
| | | | | PSY3530 | Industrial/Organizational Psychology |
| | | | | PSY3690 | Controversial Topics |
| | | | | PSY3720 | Psychology of Gender |
| | | | √ | PSY3765 | Methods in Behavioral Management |
| | √ | | √ | PSY3900 | Independent Study |
| | | | | PSY4000 | Problem Solving & Reasoning |
| √ | | √ | √ | PSY4100 | Undergraduate Supervised Research |
| | | | | PSY4250 | History and Systems |
| | | | | PSY4260 | Crisis Intervention |
| | | | | PSY4270 | Theories of Psychotherapy |
| | | | | PSY4590 | Psychology Seminar |
| | | √ | | PSY4515 | Children with Exceptionalities |
| | | | √ | PSY4610 | Advanced Statistics |
| √ | | | √ | PSY4620 | Psychological Measurements |
| | | | | PSY4700 | Prejudice and Discrimination |

EIU General Education Checklist

Name _____
 SS#: _____
 EIU catalog year _____

EIU General Education 2007 Checklist

_____ Transfer Hours
 _____ AA, AS or AAT?
 _____ IAI?

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Language (9 hrs) 2 from English, 1 from Speech (C or better) ENG 1001G _____ WC ENG 1002G _____ WC CMN 1310G _____</p> | <p>Social and Behavioral Sciences (9 hrs) Must be from 2 different disciplines Must have PLS 1153G or HIS 3600G for Teacher Certification ANT 2200G* _____ PHI 2500G _____ CSC 3001G* _____ PHI 3050G _____ WI ECN 2800G* _____ PHI 3700G _____ WI ECN 2801G _____ PLS 1153G _____ ECN 2802G _____ PLS 2253G* _____ GEG 1100G* _____ PSY 1879G _____ GEG 1200G* _____ REC 3400G* _____ WI HST 2200G* _____ WI SOC 2710G* _____ HIS 3600G _____ WI SOC 2750G* _____ HIS 3700G _____ WI WST 2309G* _____ WI JOU 2001G _____</p> |
| <p>Mathematics (3 hrs) MAT 1160G _____ MAT 1170G _____ WI MAT 1441G _____ MAT 2110G _____ MAT 2120G _____ MAT 2250G _____ MAT 2420G _____</p> | <p>Humanities and Fine Arts (9 hrs) Must have at least 1 Humanities and 1 Fine Art <u>Humanities</u> AFR 1000G _____ WI FLx 2202G* _____ WI AFR 2000G _____ WI HIS 1500G* _____ WI ENG 2009G _____ WI HIS 1510G* _____ WI ENG 2011G _____ WI HIS 1520G* _____ WI ENG 3009G* _____ WI HIS 2010G _____ WI ENG 3010G _____ WI HIS 2020G _____ WI ENG 3100G* _____ WI PHI 1000G _____ ENG 3110G* _____ WI PHI 1200G _____ FLE 2061G* _____ WI PHI 1900G _____ FLE 2062G* _____ WI PHI 3100G* _____ WI FLE 2063G* _____ WI PHI 3110G* _____ WI FLx 2201G* _____ WI <u>Fine Arts</u> ART 2012G* _____ WI MUS 3553G _____ ART 2310G _____ MUS 3562G* _____ WI ART 2330G _____ PED 2900G _____ WI ART 2601G _____ THA 2010G _____ ART 2602G _____ THA 2012G* _____ WI ART 3340G* _____ THA 2140G* _____ ART 3610G* _____ THA 3751G* _____ WI ART 3611G* _____ WI THA 3752G* _____ WI ART 3612G* _____ WI THA 3753G _____ MUS 2555G _____ THA 3754G _____ MUS 2557G _____ THA 3755G* _____ MUS 3550G _____</p> |
| <p>Scientific Awareness (7 hrs) Must have at least one biological science and one physical science Must have at least one laboratory course <u>Biological Sciences</u> BIO 1001G(3)+ _____ BIO 1300G(4)+ _____ BIO 1002G(3)+ _____ BIO 2001G(4)+ _____ BIO 1003G(3)+ _____ BIO 2002G(3) _____ BIO 1004G(3)+ _____ BIO 2003G(3) _____ BIO 1200G(4)+ _____ BIO 3888G(4)+ _____ <u>Physical Sciences</u> CHM 1040G(4)+ _____ INT 2200G(3) _____ CHM 1310G(3) _____ INT 2300G(3) _____ WI CHM 1315G(1)+ _____ PHY 1051G(3) _____ CHM 2040G(3) _____ PHY 1052G(3) _____ ESC 1300G(4)+ _____ PHY 1053G(1)+ _____ ESC 1400G(4)+ _____ PHY 1055G(3) _____ ESC 2450G(3) _____ PHY 1056G(1)+ _____ ESC 3010G(3) _____ PHY 1151G(3) _____ GEL 1300G(4)+ _____ PHY 1152G(1)+ _____ GEL 2450G(3) _____ PHY 1351G(3) _____ GEL 2300G(3) _____ WI PHY 1352G(1)+ _____ GEL 3010G(3) _____ PHY 3050G(3) _____ (Hours) + Lab course</p> | <p>Foreign Language (0-8 hrs) Exempt if 2 years in HS with "C" average 2 courses in single foreign language FLx 1101 _____ FLx 1102 _____</p> <p>Senior Seminar (3 hrs) EIU 41xxG _____ WI</p> <p>* Cultural Diversity (1 required) Writing Portfolio YR 1 _____ YR 2 _____ YR 3 _____ YR 4 _____</p> <p>Writing-Intensive - WI Writing-Centered - WC</p> <p style="text-align: right;">10/25/2007</p> |

Undergraduate Internship

The undergraduate internship program in psychology involves preparation for and completion of an internship in a site such as human services, human resources, child and/or adolescent services, or the criminal justice system. Academic credit for both the orientation to undergraduate internship prerequisite course (PSY 4274) and the internship itself (PSY 4275) is generic; it does not count either toward the major or toward general education requirements. The orientation course covers the “nuts and bolts” of setting up an internship, including ethical issues pertinent to the sites in which students intern, the enrollment process, the dual supervision requirement, matching interests to site, and interviewing skills relative to acquiring an intern position. In addition, some time is spent exploring the connection between the internship experience and future academic and/or occupational goals.

In the Coles County area, there is a wide range of undergraduate internship sites available to psychology students. Some of the general areas in which to intern include women’s services, children’s services, mental health, public health, hospital settings, day-treatment programs, developmental disabilities agencies, chemical dependency treatment programs, educational settings, family law and forensic settings, sexual assault victim services, and domestic violence programs. Industrial psychology sites, typically in the human resource departments, are also available. On occasion, students choose to intern in other parts of the state when a summer internship is secured.

The following requirements must be met in order for a student to complete an undergraduate internship in psychology:

- Completion of PSY 4274-Orientation to Undergraduate Internship
- The fall orientation class is for students planning to do an internship the subsequent spring semester.
- The spring orientation class is for students planning to do an internship the subsequent summer or fall semester. However, there are a limited number of summer internships.
- Acquisition of both a departmental and an on-site supervisor
- 135 or 270 working hours: equivalent to 3 or 6 credit hours
- Completion of integrative paper regarding internship experience
- Receipt of positive evaluation from on-site supervisor

Completion of an undergraduate internship has improved some students’ chances of admission to certain applied graduate programs. In other cases, completion of an internship has led to employment in a school-based, chemical dependency, domestic violence, mental health, or human resources setting upon graduation.

Independent Study/Supervised Research

What is the difference between independent study and supervised research?

Independent study (Psy 3900) is typically for students who want to pursue a topic of particular interest that is not covered by a regularly scheduled class or seminar. For example, a student may be interested in studying subjective well-being or ape language research. Under the direction of a faculty member, the student may be given a list of special readings or be asked to do a literature review and write a paper about the topic. Alternatively, some faculty use independent study as a way for students to gain experience assisting a faculty member in their research.

Supervised research (Psy 4100) is intended for a student conducting research. This may be the outgrowth of an independent study project. Thus, a student may take one semester of independent study, during which she develops a research proposal, followed by a semester of supervised research during which she conducts the proposed research. However, students can take one course without the other. Independent study and supervised research differ in the prerequisites typically desired by supervising faculty. In particular, most faculty prefer students to have had coursework in statistics and research methods before taking supervised research. Prerequisites for independent study vary according to the faculty member.

The Psychology Department Web site maintains an updated list of [faculty research interests and their requirements](#) for students doing independent study or supervised research.

What are the benefits of doing independent study or supervised research?

Independent study and supervised research are an excellent means for a student to personalize their course of study through intensive exploration of a topic that is of particular interest to them. Many students report this to be a highlight of their college experience. In addition, student seeking admission to graduate school can expect a graduate admissions committee to value the ambition and intellectual curiosity demonstrated by supervised research. Both independent study and supervised research allow students to have more extensive and personalized attention than can be obtained in the classroom. Since a letter of recommendation is strongest when a faculty member can report knowing the student quite well, this more extensive contact with a professor can result in a particularly strong letter of recommendation.

When should I take independent study or supervised research?

If you plan to use the experience to strengthen your application to graduate school, you should start the first semester of your junior year (as long as your coursework meets the requirements of the individual faculty member). Graduate school applications and letters of recommendation are often due midway through your senior year, so it is better to have a good start on your undergraduate research experience prior to this.

How do I get started?

First, you should decide which faculty member you would like to have supervise your research. Before approaching this faculty member, you should have some idea of the research topic that you are interested in pursuing so the faculty member can decide if they feel comfortable supervising the project. Many faculty do not require student research interests to match their own research interests, but it is helpful.

If the faculty member is willing and able to supervise your research, then you need to get the appropriate form (Psy 3900 or Psy 4100) from the psychology department office. Fill out the top portion of the form and have your faculty supervisor complete the rest. Return the form to the department secretary who will register you for the appropriate class and credit hours.

Transfer Students

Which classes will transfer to EIU?

The Illinois Articulation Initiative specifies which courses will transfer among Illinois Schools. This ensures that quality coursework is maintained and that courses will be accepted by other institutions who have agreed to participate in the initiative. You can find out which courses will transfer to/from EIU, including psychology courses, by accessing the Course Applicability System at <http://www.ibhe.org/cas/>

Why don't I get upper-division credit when transferring psychology courses?

When transferring psychology courses to EIU, you will not receive upper-division credit for those courses, even though EIU may offer an upper-division course by the same title. The transferred course(s) will count towards the number of hours required for graduation, but EIU generally does not consider courses taught at the community college level to have the same rigor and demands of upper-division courses taught at EIU.

Graduation (You're almost there!)

How and when do I apply for graduation?

Students may apply for graduation when they have completed 60 semester hours. It is strongly recommended that you apply for graduation at least one year before you plan on graduating in order to ensure that you have met or will meet all of the graduation requirements during your last two semesters on campus. This is especially true for students who have transferred hours from other institutions to EIU.

Currently, you may apply for graduation through the PAWS System. When you submit your application for graduation, your billing account will automatically be charged the \$25 application fee. See the [Records Office web site](#) for additional information on deadlines for application, Cap & Gown, Diploma Covers, and Reapplication for Graduation.

Several weeks after you have applied for graduation, a staff member from the College of Sciences Dean's office will contact you about scheduling a time to go over your degree audit. This audit includes an evaluation of your overall progress toward graduation, as well as a review of the remaining courses and requirements that must be completed. You will be provided with a written statement of the requirements you still need to complete prior to graduation, as well as an opportunity to ask any questions about the graduation requirements that pertain to you.

Psychology Department Assessment

In their last semester at EIU, psychology majors must take the Psychology Comprehensive Exam (offered in WebCT) as a graduation requirement. There is no minimum score required to graduate. Graduating seniors also complete an [exit survey](#).

Graduate School

Overview for Applying to Graduate School in Psychology

What are the basic steps involved in deciding and applying for graduate school in psychology? What timeline should you follow? Many students do not realize that the process of deciding and applying for graduate school can be quite a long one. In fact, one should plan at least a full year in advance. Most of the preparation work should begin as early as your junior year or even possibly your sophomore year.

The application process has three major components. The first consists of all the steps you have to take from deciding whether you would like to go to graduate school, to completing the application packet, to finally receiving your admissions letters. For very detailed discussion and helpful advice concerning these steps, check the references found below. Likewise, read the section on asking for recommendation letters found in this handbook. The second major component is studying and taking the GRE Tests. Besides the references provided below, consult the handbook's section on the GRE Tests. The third component refers to other preparations you can take to improve your chances for admission to graduate school. Since you will be asking for recommendation letters from faculty during your senior year, they should have the opportunity to get to know you well before that. Involvement in research or practicum experiences will enhance your credentials and are often the bases for recommendation, and should be engaged in as early as your junior year. As such, finishing your statistics and research methods before or by your junior year is recommended. For more advice, see the references below.

If you plan to enter graduate school immediately after finishing your undergraduate degree, here is a suggested timeline for going through the basic steps:

| Year | Semester | Application Activities | GRE Tests | Other Preparations |
|--------|----------|--|---|--|
| Junior | Fall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide on whether you need to go to graduate school. Decide on area of specialization in psychology. Decide on whether you'd like to obtain a master's or doctoral degree. Research various graduate programs. Research financial aid information. Identify graduate faculty you might like to work with. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain information about the GRE Tests. Study for the GRE Tests. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain research and/or practicum experience. Take recommended classes for graduate school (see section on what classes to take in the handbook) |
| | Spring | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register for taking the GRE Tests. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain research and/or practicum experience. Take recommended classes for graduate school (see section on what classes to take in the handbook) |
| | Summer | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the GRE Tests. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain research and/or practicum experience. Take recommended classes for graduate school (see section on what classes to take in the handbook) |
| Senior | Fall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for application forms. Ask for recommendation letters. Request for copies of transcripts. Write your personal statement/statement of interest/autobiographical statement. Send off applications for Fall deadlines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Last chance to take or re-take the GRE Tests. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain research and/or practicum experience. Take recommended classes for graduate school (see section on what classes to take in the handbook) |
| | Spring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send off applications for Spring deadlines. Go for interviews (if applicable). Receive admissions letters. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain research and/or practicum experience. Take recommended classes for graduate school (see section on what classes to take in the handbook) |

References on the application process

- American Psychological Association (2007). [Getting in: A step-by-step plan for gaining admission to graduate school in psychology](#). Second edition. Washington, D. C.: APA.
- Keith-Spiegel, P. & Wiederman, M. W. (2007). [The complete guide to graduate school admission: Psychology, counseling, and related professions](#). Second edition. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

The following book lists schools and graduate programs in psychology and can be checked out from the psychology department office:

American Psychological Association (2007). Graduate study in psychology, 2007 edition. Washington, D. C.: APA.

How do I get letters of recommendation from faculty?

Graduate admissions committees take letters of recommendation seriously because they provide information about you beyond the objective information that they can glean from your GRE scores and grades. These letters offer an overall account of your academic abilities and promise, and may weigh in a lot in the committees' decisions for admitting you. They ought to speak about a host of factors that indicate your potential for graduate school work such as your intellectual ability, motivation, integrity, work ethic, creativity, capacity for independent thought, communication skills, research experience, general and special knowledge, leadership, and ability to work with others. As such, it is very important to choose recommenders who can describe you extensively and very positively on those elements. They must have had considerable contact with you and have been involved closely in your education, research activities, or practica/internships. Do not ask letters of recommendation from those who hardly know you academically, or those whose involvements with you are not within the academic context, including public officials, ministers, or therapists. Likewise, avoid those who will be perceived as being unable to give an objective portrayal of you, such as family, relatives, or friends. Lastly, do not ask letters from those who you anticipate will not give you a positive evaluation, or those who you believe will only harm your application.

Once you have picked out potential references, do not simply ask if they are willing to write a letter of recommendation for you. Ask if they believe they know you enough to write a strong one for you. Some professors may ask you to complete a form that they have created to gather more specific information about your goals, accomplishments, and academic interests ([Dr. Brito's form](#), [Dr. Stowell's form](#)). If the person you ask doesn't use a unique form, you can use the Psychology Department's [standard form](#). On this form, you should complete the table that lists the schools you are applying to, the full titles of the graduate programs, the addresses for mailing, as well as the deadlines for the letters. An example of this table is found below. Graduate schools vary on how they would like to receive the recommendation letters. Some require that the recommenders send the letters directly to them while others request that you include those letters in your application packet. Indicate this information in the summary table so that the recommender would know who to hand the letter.

| University | Degree Sought | Mailing Address | Who to Send Letter (Applicant or Directly to School) | Deadline |
|------------|---------------|-----------------|--|----------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

References

- Appleby, D. C., & Appleby, K. M. (2006). Kisses of death in the graduate school application process. *Teaching of Psychology, 33*(6), 19-24.
- Hayes, L. J. & Hayes, S. C. (1989) How to apply to graduate school. Retrieved November 6, 2007 from <http://psych.hanover.edu/handbook/applic2.html>
- Appleby, D. C., Keenan, J., & Mauer, B. (1999). Applicant characteristics valued by graduate programs in psychology. Retrieved November 6, 2007 from http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_108.asp

When should I take the GRE?

Most graduate admissions committees require that you submit scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The GRE consists of the following: a General Test with three parts (verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing) and the Subject Test in Psychology. The latter will test your knowledge of psychological theories and concepts while the General Test examines your general intellectual ability. Not all graduate programs ask for the Subject Test in Psychology.

It is very important to do well on these exams since they are often used as a predictor of your success in graduate school. Many graduate schools will tell you what minimum scores they require for admission. Most doctoral programs expect a combined score of 1200 on the verbal and quantitative sections of the General Test, while master's programs typically require a combined score of 1000. For detailed information about the content of the tests, check www.gre.org.

Because some deadlines for graduate school application begin as early as December, plan to take the GRE in October or November at the latest. It takes 10 – 15 days after taking the test for graduate schools to receive your General Test scores, while it takes about six weeks after taking the test for the Subject Test scores to be reported to you and to the schools. You must make sure that your scores will be available in time for your earliest admissions deadline.

The GRE test can also be taken more than once. If you did not do well on the exams, you can certainly try again. This is why you should take the test even earlier than October or November to give you time to prepare should you decide to have a retest. You can re-take the General Test only one time per month, and only five times in a year. Below is an example of a timeline for studying and taking the GRE tests that you can follow.

With regards to registering for the exams, do so early enough so that you have more freedom to choose test dates. November, December, and January are considered as the busiest testing periods. Note that you need to register at least six weeks in advance for the Subject Test. For more specific information about registering for the tests, check www.gre.org.