Department of Psychological Sciences – Learning Goals and Outcomes

Upon completion of a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, students will be prepared in content related to the eight learning goals described below. In addition students will have the opportunity to develop transferable skills (e.g., read with comprehension and identify major points, write in a particular style, work as a productive member of a team) that will provide further preparation for workforce entry or continued education at the graduate level.

I. Learning Goal and Outcomes Aligned with Guidelines for Undergraduate Education from the American Psychological Association (Version 2.0)

1. **Demonstrate a fundamental knowledge and comprehension of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, historical trends, and empirical findings in psychology and be able to apply this knowledge.**

    1.1. Describe key concepts principles, and overarching themes in psychology
    1.1.1.   use and evaluation of theories to explain and predict behavior;
    1.1.2.   explain why psychology is a science with the primary objectives of describing, understanding, predicting, and controlling behavior and mental processes
    1.1.3.   interpret behavior and mental processes at the appropriate level of complexity
    1.1.4.   examine the sociocultural and international contexts that influence individual differences and evaluate applicability of research findings across diverse groups
    1.1.5.   compare and contrast the nature of psychology with other disciplines and recognize the benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration

    1.2. Develop a working knowledge of psychology's content domains
    1.2.1.   Compare and contrast psychology's major subdisciplines
    1.2.2.   Speculate about why content domains differ in the kinds of questions asked and the methods used to explore them
    1.2.3.   Summarize important aspects of the history of psychology, including key figures, central concerns, methods used, and theoretical conflicts
    1.2.4.   Explain complex behavior by integrating concepts from different content domains
    1.2.5.   Predict how sociocultural and international factors influence how scientists think about behavioral and mental processes

    1.3. Describe applications of psychology
    1.3.1.   Articulate how psychological principles can be used to explain social issues, address pressing societal needs, and inform public policy
    1.3.2.   Evaluate how the mind and body interact to influence psychological and physical health

1.3.3. Identify and evaluate appropriate psychology-based interventions in applied settings

1.3.4. Explain how individual differences influence beliefs, values, and interactions with others, including the potential for prejudicial and discriminatory behavior in oneself and others

2. **Demonstrate the ability to design, conduct and interpret basic psychological research and to use scientific reasoning to interpret psychological phenomena**

   2.1. Use scientific reasoning to interpret psychological phenomenon.
   2.1.1. Describe the value and limitation of using theories to explain behavioral phenomena
   2.1.2. Develop plausible behavioral explanations that rely on scientific reasoning and evidence rather than anecdotes or pseudoscience
   2.1.3. Use an appropriate level of complexity to interpret behavior and mental processes
   2.1.4. Generate alternative explanations based on perceived flaws in behavioral claims
   2.1.5. Use strategies to minimize committing common fallacies in thinking that impair accurate conclusions and predictions

   2.2. Demonstrate psychological information literacy
   2.2.1. Read and summarize complex ideas accurately, including future directions, from psychological sources and research
   2.2.2. Describe the characteristics and relative value of different information sources (e.g., primary vs. secondary, peer reviewed vs. nonreviewed, empirical vs. nonempirical)
   2.2.3. Develop a comprehensive strategy for locating and using relevant scholarship (e.g., databases, credible journals) to address psychological questions
   2.2.4. Evaluate psychological information based on the reliability, validity, and generalizability of sources
   2.2.5. Interpret simple graphs and statistical findings, including the influence of effect size, and explain these findings using common language

   2.3. Engage in innovative and integrative thinking and problem solving
   2.3.1. Describe problems operationally to study them empirically
   2.3.2. Select and apply the optimal problem-solving strategy from multiple alternatives
   2.3.3. Evaluate the effectiveness of selected problem solving strategies

   2.4. Interpret, design, and conduct basic psychological research
   2.4.1. Evaluate the effectiveness of quantitative and qualitative research methods in addressing a research question
   2.4.2. Limit cause-effect claims to research strategies that appropriately rule out alternative explanations

2.4.3. Accurately identify key research concepts in existing and proposed research projects.

2.4.4. Replicate or design and conduct simple scientific studies (e.g., correlational or two-factor) to confirm a hypothesis based on operational definitions

2.4.5. Design and adopt high-quality measurement strategies that enhance reliability and validity

2.4.6. Use quantitative and/or qualitative analyses to argue for or against a particular hypothesis

2.4.7. Apply knowledge of research skills necessary to be an informed consumer of research or critic regarding unsupported claims about behavior.

2.5. Incorporate sociocultural factors in scientific inquiry

2.5.1. Recognize the systemic influences of sociocultural, theoretical, and personal biases on the research enterprise and evaluate the effectiveness with which researchers address those influences in psychological research

2.5.2. Analyze potential challenges related to sociocultural factors in a given research study

2.5.3. Describe how individual and sociocultural differences can influence the applicability/generalizability of research findings

2.5.4. Evaluate the generalizability of specific findings based on parameters of the research design, including caution in extending western constructs inappropriately

3. **Develop ethically and socially responsible behaviors for professional and personal settings in an increasingly diverse landscape**

3.1. Apply ethical standards to evaluate psychological science and practice

3.1.1. Evaluate psychological research from the standpoint of adherence to the APA Ethics Code in psychological research involving human or nonhuman research participants

3.1.2. Identify obvious violations of ethical standards in psychological contexts

3.1.3. Discuss relevant ethical issues that reflect principles in the APA Ethics Code

3.1.4. Evaluate critically or complete an IRB application that adheres to ethical standards

3.2. Build and enhance interpersonal relationships

3.2.1. Exhibit high standards of positive personal values in interpersonal and work-related relationships

3.2.2. Promote civility in self and others

3.2.3. Predict and explore how interaction across racial, ethnic, gender, and class divides can challenge conventional understanding of psychological processes and behavior

3.2.4. Maintain high standards for academic integrity, including honor code requirements

3.3. Adopt values that build community at local, national, and global levels

3.3.1. Exhibit respect for members of diverse groups with sensitivity to issues of power, privilege, and discrimination
3.3.2. Recognize potential for prejudice and discrimination in oneself and others
3.3.3. Explain how psychology can promote civic, social, and global outcomes that benefit others
3.3.4. Describe psychology-related issues of global concern
3.3.5. Articulate psychology's role in developing, designing, and disseminating public policy
3.3.6. Accept and/or seek opportunity to serve others through volunteer service, practica, and apprenticeship experiences

4. **Demonstrate competence in writing and in oral and interpersonal communication skills**.

   4.1. Demonstrate effective writing for different purposes
      4.1.1. Construct arguments clearly and concisely using evidence-based psychological concepts and theories
      4.1.2. Craft clear and concise written communications to address specific audiences
      4.1.3. Use grammar appropriate to professional standards and conventions
      4.1.4. Employ APA writing style to make precise and persuasive arguments
      4.1.5. Tailor length and development of ideas in formats that fit the purpose
      4.1.6. Communicate quantitative data in statistics, graphs, and tables
      4.1.7. Use expert feedback to revise writing of multiple drafts

   4.2. Exhibit effective presentation skills for different purposes
      4.2.1. Create coherent and integrated oral argument based on a review of the pertinent psychological literature
      4.2.2. Deliver brief presentations within appropriate constraints
      4.2.3. Achieve effective delivery standards in professional oral performance
      4.2.4. Integrate visual and oral elements
      4.2.5. Anticipate answers to questions about psychological content

   4.3. Interact effectively with others
      4.3.1. Employ careful listening and decoding of overt and covert information
      4.3.2. Recognize that culture, values, and biases may produce misunderstandings in communication
      4.3.3. Interact sensitively with people of diverse abilities, backgrounds, and cultural perspectives
      4.3.4. Generate questions to reduce ambiguous communications
      4.3.5. Use social media responsibly

5. **Demonstrate student readiness for postbaccalaureate employment, graduate school, or professional school.**

   5.1. Apply psychological content and skills to career goals

5.1.1. Recognize the value and application of research and problem-solving skills in providing evidence beyond personal opinion to support proposed solutions

5.1.2. Disregard or challenge flawed sources of information

5.1.3. Expect and adapt to interaction complexity, including factors related to diversity of backgrounds, in work organizations

5.1.4. Describe how psychology's content applies to business, health care, educational, and other workplace settings

5.1.5. Adapt information literacy skills obtained in the psychology major to investigating solutions to a variety of problems

5.1.6. Describe how ethical principles of psychology have relevance to nonpsychology settings

5.2. Exhibit self-efficacy and self-regulation

5.2.1. Recognize the link between efforts in self-management and achievement

5.2.2. Accurately self-assess performance quality by melding external standards and expectations with their own performance criteria

5.2.3. Pursue and respond appropriately to feedback from educators, mentors, supervisors, and experts to improve performance

5.2.4. Attend to and monitor the quality of their own thinking

5.3. Refine project management skills

5.3.1. Develop and execute strategies for exceeding project criteria or, in the absence of such criteria, to meet their own project performance criteria

5.3.2. Identify appropriate resources and constraints that may influence project completion

5.3.3. Evaluate how well the processes and strategies used help a project fulfil its intended purposes

5.4. Enhance teamwork capacity

5.4.1. Collaborate successfully on complex group projects

5.4.2. Describe problems from another's point of view

5.4.3. Generate, apply, and evaluate potential solutions to problems that develop when working with teams

5.4.4. Assess the basic strengths and weaknesses of team performance on a complex project

5.4.5. Demonstrate leadership skills by effectively organizing personnel and other resources to complete a complex project

5.4.6. Describe the importance of working effectively in diverse environments

5.5. Develop meaningful professional direction for life after graduation

5.5.1. Formulate career plan contingencies based on accurate self-assessment of abilities, achievement, motivation, and work habits

5.5.2. Develop evidence of attaining skills sets desired by psychology-related employers

5.5.3. Evaluate the characteristics of potential work settings or graduate school programs to optimize career direction and satisfaction

5.5.4.   Recognize the importance of having a mentor
5.5.5.   Create and continuously update a curriculum vitae or resume
5.5.6.   Recognize how rapid social change influences behavior and affects one's value in the workplace

II. Global Diversity Initiative Learning Goals and Outcomes

6. Environmental Sustainability: Understand and apply psychological principles to environmental sustainability issues.

6.1. Demonstrate understanding of environmental sustainability concepts and issues, and the need for a multi-disciplinary approach to addressing environmental issues.
6.2. Develop creative, adaptive, solutions to environmental sustainability challenges using psychological theories, principles and research findings.

7. Global Education: Recognize, understand, and respect the complexity of globalization and international diversity.

7.1. Demonstrate an understanding of the interpersonal and international contexts that influence individual differences and human behavior.
7.2. Describe the psychological, physical, cognitive, sexual, gender, and social development of humans within varied global contexts.
7.3. Explain how different empirical and theoretical strategies in psychology are employed to study human behavior within varied global contexts and cultures and the limitations of each approach.

8. Diversity Education: Recognize, understand, and respect the complexity of psychosocial and cultural diversity and incorporate this awareness into the understanding of psychological phenomena, application of psychological science, and the process of scientific inquiry.

8.1. Identify both the commonalities and diversity of humans in today's multicultural society (intrapersonal and interpersonal).
8.2 Demonstrate an understanding of the sociocultural contexts that influence individual differences and anticipate that psychological explanations may vary across populations and contexts.
8.3. Challenge claims that arise from myths, stereotypes, or untested assumptions related to culture and diversity.