

## LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE PSYCHOLOGY MINOR

### Goal 1. Knowledge Base of Psychology

Demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

### Learning Outcomes

1.1 Characterize the nature of psychology as a discipline.

- a. Identify and explain the primary objectives of psychology: describing, understanding, predicting, and controlling behavior and mental processes.
- b. Compare and contrast the assumptions and methods of psychology with those of other disciplines.

1.2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding representing appropriate breadth and depth in selected content areas of psychology:

- a. theory and research representing each of the following general domains:
  - (1) learning, cognition, and developmental changes across the life span
  - (2) social processes
  - (3) biological bases of behavior and mental processes, including physiology, sensation, perception, comparative, motivation, and emotion
- b. relevant levels of analysis: cellular, individual, group/systems, and culture
- c. relevant ethical issues, including a general understanding of the APA Code of Ethics

1.3 Use the concepts, language, and major theories of the discipline to account for psychological phenomena.

- a. Describe behavior and mental processes empirically, including operational definitions
- b. Identify antecedents and consequences of behavior and mental processes
- c. Use theories to explain and predict behavior and mental processes
- d. Integrate theoretical perspectives to produce comprehensive and multi-faceted explanations

## **Goal 2. Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology**

Respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.

### **Learning Outcomes**

2.1 Use critical thinking effectively.

- a. Evaluate the quality of information in terms of its source, context, and potential bias
- b. Differentiate empirical evidence from speculation
- c. Recognize and defend against common fallacies in thinking
- d. Avoid being swayed by appeals to emotion or authority
- e. Demonstrate an attitude of critical thinking that includes persistence, open-mindedness, tolerance for ambiguity and intellectual engagement
- f. Make connections between diverse facts, theories, and observations

2.2 Use reasoning to recognize, develop, defend, and criticize arguments and other persuasive appeals.

- a. Identify components of arguments (e.g., conclusions, premises/assumptions, gaps, counterarguments)
- b. Distinguish among assumptions, emotional appeals, speculations, and defensible evidence
- c. Weigh support for conclusions to determine how well reasons support conclusions
- d. Develop sound arguments based on reasoning and evidence

**Knowledge, Skills, and Values Consistent with Liberal Arts Education  
that are Further Developed in Psychology**

**Goal 3. Communication Skills**

Communicate effectively in a variety of formats.

**Learning Outcomes**

3.1 Demonstrate effective writing skills in various formats (e.g., essays, correspondence, technical papers, note taking) and for various purposes (e.g., informing, defending, explaining, persuading, arguing, teaching).

- a. Demonstrate professional writing conventions (e.g., grammar, audience awareness, formality) appropriate to purpose and context
- b. Use APA style effectively in empirically-based reports, literature reviews, and theoretical papers