Psychology examines human behavior through environmental, genetic, physiological, and social determinants and correlates. The department strives to train students with a strong general background in psychology and an ability to think clearly and critically in a wide variety of settings. Students must fulfill distribution requirements in a variety of psychological topics.

Faculty and students work with related University units, including the Institute of Child Development, the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, the Carlson School of Management, the Departments of Psychiatry and Educational Psychology, the Department of Neuroscience, and affiliated research units within the department, such as the Center for Cognitive Sciences, the Center for Interest Measurement Research, and the Minnesota Center for Twin and Family Research. While a B.A. in psychology has proved to be a valuable and useful background for a wide variety of careers, a professional career as a psychologist requires further training.

The B.S. in psychology offers students rigorous scientific training in biological and quantitative psychology, complimented by a broad education in such related fields as neuroscience, cognitive science, computer science, biology, chemistry, and mathematics. This degree is intended to prepare students for graduate work in psychology, as well as in related fields such as cognitive science, neuroscience, and medicine.
The B.S. degree in psychology emphasizes coursework in biological and quantitative/cognitive sciences. The biological courses are appropriate for students interested primarily in specializations such as the biological basis of psychopathology, the brain-behavior relation, evolutionary psychology, and behavior genetics. The quantitative/cognitive science courses are appropriate for students interested primarily in statistics and methods used in psychological research, in mathematical models of perception and cognition, and in psychological measurement. Students interested in the biological area are encouraged to choose heavily from outside foundation courses in the life sciences (e.g., biochemistry, biology, genetics and cell biology, evolution and behavior), whereas students focusing upon quantitative/cognitive science courses are encouraged to select more outside foundation courses in mathematics and the physical sciences (e.g., computer science, mathematics, physics, statistics).

A psychology B.S. is a valuable and useful background for a variety of careers and graduate and professional academic programs. A professional career as a psychologist requires further training. Students completing the baccalaureate degree in psychology may not receive a second baccalaureate degree in child psychology.

The College of Liberal Arts Advantage: More Than a Major

When you study Psychology at the University of Minnesota, you gain the added advantage of a College of Liberal Arts education. At CLA, the liberal arts mean you get more than just a degree in one major or another; it means you will be exposed to different areas of study, to different ways of thinking and learning. In fact, the liberal arts teach you how to learn—how to ask the right questions, how to problem solve, and how to innovate. The liberal arts highlight the complexities of our world, because here at CLA you will study not just, say, politics or art but also where politics and art intersect, where science and ethics intersect, where economics and the environment intersect.

Meet Our Students
“Once I started working in the mental health field I never really looked back.” Psychology student Hayley Brendalen has already begun using her life experience to benefit others. She currently volunteers at the Defense of Veterans Brain Injury Center. It’s there that she finally found something she wants to spend her life doing.

Read more about Hayley's story, and learn more about our undergraduate program.

“I was not tied down to a major or a specific track in my life,” senior Shivani Venkatesh says. Her interest in psychology and the human mind prepared her for a path she didn’t expect to take, and “being in CLA made that an easy transition.”

Read more about Shivani’s story.

Student Experiences

Internships in Psychology: Gain Valuable Experience in the Twin Cities and
Beyond

Did you know? Our department has its very own internship reflection course! Students taking an internship can use this course to reflect on ways that their work experience is preparing them for successful careers - and receive credit for the work.

Learning Abroad Options in Psychology: Prepare to Lead in a Global Economy

- Learn more about study abroad for Psychology majors.

Student Organizations: Find Friends and Grow as a Leader

- Psi Chi/Psychology Club
- Psychology International Student Association
- Industrial-Organizational Psychology Club

Undergraduate Research: Turn Curiosity into New Knowledge

The psychology department offers undergraduate students the unique opportunity to gain firsthand experience in the research lab of a distinguished faculty member. Research is a valuable addition to any student's academic program. Getting involved in research in psychology can help you:

- discover your strengths, explore your interests, and develop transferable skills that can help build your résumé and secure future employment.
- gather information that can help you make future decisions about graduate school and become more competitive for psychology graduate programs.
- gain firsthand experience and be part of a team whose goal is to make a contribution of knowledge to the field of psychology.
- connect with other members of the department for future networking.

Meet Our Faculty
On the surface, Minnesota stacks up as one of the healthiest states in the US on average. But it’s also home to some of the nation’s biggest racial and ethnic disparities. Richard Lee and his team of collaborators aim to reduce this gap by focusing on the wellbeing of some of Minnesota’s youngest residents. Read more about Richard's story.

What makes a winning smile? This question is of interest to social psychologists, facial reconstruction surgeons, computer scientists, everyday people, and even late-night talk-show hosts. A team of University of Minnesota researchers took to the Minnesota State Fair to find out. The findings are worth smiling about. Read more about Nathaniel's story.

Meet Our Alumni

CLA Graduates: Successful Careers and Purposeful Lives
CLA graduates succeed in many different careers — law, health care, medicine, business, government, teaching, advertising, arts and entertainment, international relations, and more — precisely because they understand how to navigate a complex and interconnected world. As our alumni explain below, “Being a good employee means being curious, and continuing to evolve, and learn, and educate yourself, and I can think of no stronger foundation for doing that than a liberal arts education.

“An education in the liberal arts is a springboard to lifelong career success”
-- Dean John Coleman

You might also explore

- Child Psychology
- Neuroscience
- Sociology
- Sociology of Law, Criminology, and Deviance

Admission Information

FRESHMAN: [Admission information]

TRANSFER STUDENTS: [Requirements for the College of Liberal Arts]
Beyond admission, if you have questions about transferring, the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) has transfer advisors to help. Please feel free to contact them about any of the topics below!

- Course plans before transferring
- Estimated time to graduation
- Career preparation in CLA
- Getting ready for orientation, if admitted
- Connecting with major/minor departments