

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, B.S.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Abington

Program Description

Building on the interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary strengths of Penn State Abington, the Psychological and Social Sciences B.S. is designed to respond to the demand for a program emphasizing the social and behavioral sciences leading to an understanding of human behavior and its influence upon society as well as the influence of social forces on individuals. The program is distinguished by its interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary coursework and required field experience. The degree program offers students a choice of course clusters focused on specialized areas such as social psychology, developmental studies, organizational behavior and leadership, bio-behavior and diversity, and counseling. The B.S. provides a broad theoretical foundation in social and psychological theory as well as the opportunity to engage in supervised field experience. In addition, the B.S. degree emphasizes quantitative research skills and requires the completion of a senior thesis. The major is designed to prepare students for a variety of career fields including human resources, business administration, mental health, and social work as well as for continued study in graduate or professional school.

What is Psychological and Social Sciences?

Psychological and Social Sciences fosters an understanding of human behavior and its influence on society as well as the impact of social forces on individuals. It includes the disciplines of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and human development and family studies.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You are curious about people's behavior.
- You are interested in knowing why people behave the way they do.
- You possess a keen interest in how culture and society impact individuals.
- You are a critical thinker and want to develop strong research and communication skills.
- You are interested in a career in mental health or counseling, market research, consulting, occupational therapy, or research oriented careers.
- You want to go to graduate school (Masters or Ph.D. level).

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (<https://www.abington.psu.edu/academics/majors-at-abington/pss-degree/>)

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science degree in Psychological and Social Sciences, a minimum of 121 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	22-23
Requirements for the Major	56-57

3 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 3 credits of GN courses.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
ANTH 45N	Cultural Diversity: A Global Perspective	3
PSYCH 100	Introductory Psychology	3
PSYCH 200	Elementary Statistics in Psychology	4
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
BBH 301W	Values and Ethics in Biobehavioral Health Research and Practice	3
or HDF5 301	Values and Ethics in Health and Human Development Professions	
HDFS 129	Introduction to Human Development and Family Studies	3
or PSYCH 212	Introduction to Developmental Psychology	
PSYCH 301W	Basic Research Methods in Psychology	3-4
or HDF5 312W	Empirical Inquiry in Human Development	
SOC 1	Introductory Sociology	3
or SOC 5	Social Problems	
Select 3 credits from the following:		3
ANTH 495	Internship	
HDFS 495C	Professional Practicum in Human Services	
PSYCH 495	Internship	
SOC 495	Internship	
Select 3 credits from the following:		3
ANTH 494	Research Project	
HDFS 494	Research Project	
PSYCH 494	Research Projects	
SOC 494	Research Project	
Select 4 credits from the following:		4
ANTH 494	Research Project	
HDFS 494	Research Project	
PSYCH 494	Research Projects	

SOC 494	Research Project	
Select 3 credits from the following:		3
BISC 4	Human Body: Form and Function	
BIOL 133	Genetics and Evolution of the Human Species	
BIOL 155	Introduction to the Biology of Aging	
BIOL 161	Human Anatomy and Physiology I - Lecture	
BIOL/PSYCH 169N	What it means to be human	
Supporting Courses and Related Areas ¹		
<i>Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 6 credits from PSYCH/HDFS (any level)		6
Select 6 credits of SOC/ANTH (any level)		6
Select 9 credits from PSYCH/HDFS/SOC/ANTH		9

¹ 15 credits of PSYCH/SOC/HDFS/ANTH must be at the 400 level. Of these 15 credits, 6 credits must come from this list: ANTH 408, ANTH 428, ANTH 458, HDFS 401, HDFS 415, PSYCH 404/EDPSY 450, PSYCH 406W, PSYCH 407, PSYCH 408, PSYCH 439, PSYCH 492, SOC 405, SOC 413/CRIMJ 413, SOC 423, SOC 470, SOC 471.

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the

requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Program Learning Objectives

- **Critical Thinking and Scientific Reasoning:**
 - Understand and utilize the scientific method and basic research methods.
 - Demonstrate critical thinking in the analysis and evaluation of information to distinguish the scientific from the nonscientific.
- **Effective Communication (Writing and Speaking):**
 - Communicate social scientific knowledge orally in a clear and accurate manner.
 - Communicate social scientific knowledge in writing in a clear and accurate manner.
- **Ethics and Diversity:**

- Evidence knowledge of and appreciation for cultural diversity and relativity in human experience, and for the complexity of human behavior and interactions.
- Acquire an ethical lens that applies to concrete professional situations and broader issues in society and culture.
- Knowledge and Application:**
 - Describe key psychological and sociological concepts and theories.
 - Apply concepts and theories to empirical and real life situations.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

Abington

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Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

Psychological and Social Sciences, B.S. at Abington Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
ENGL 15 or 30H*	3	3 PSYCH 212 or HDFS 129*	3
PSYCH 100*	3	3 BISC 4, BIOL 133, BIOL 155, BIOL 161, or BIOL 169N*†	3

General Education Course	4	General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3	General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3	General Education Course	3
16		15	

Second Year

Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
PSYCH 200*	4	PSYCH 301W*	4
ANTH 45N*	3	ENGL 202A	3
SOC 1 or 5*	3	General Education Course	3
Humanities (GH) (US;IL)	3	General Education Course	3
CAS 100A or 100B	3	General Education Course	3
16		16	

Third Year

Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
400 level class from Methods and Analysis Section*	3	HDFS 301*	3
Major Selection any level* ¹	3	Elective	3
Major Selection any level* ¹	3	Elective	3
Elective	3	400 level class from Methods and Analysis Section*	3
Elective	3	Major Selection 400 level* ¹	3
15		15	

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
XXX 494 Senior Thesis 1*	3	XXX 495 Internship*	3
Major Selection 400 level* ¹	3	Major Selection 400 level* ¹	3
Major Selection 400 level* ¹	3	XXX 494 Senior Thesis 2*	3
Elective	3	Elective	3
Elective (US/IL)	3		
15		12	

Total Credits 120

¹ At least 15 of 21 required major selection credits must be at the 400 level.

6-15 credits of major courses are required in courses designated PSYCH and/or HDFS.

6-15 credits of major courses are required in courses designated SOC and/or ANTH.

0-9 credits of major courses are required in courses designated other Social Sciences from the approved PSS program list.

Methods and Analysis Section: Of your 15 credits of 400 level class, select 6 credits from ANTH 408, ANTH 421, ANTH 428, ANTH 458, HDFS 401, HDFS 415, PSYCH 404 (or EDPSY 450), PSYCH 406W, PSYCH 407, PSYCH 408, PSYCH 439, PSYCH 492, SOC 405, SOC 413 (or CRIMJ 413), SOC 423, SOC 470, SOC 471.

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

Advising Notes

PSYCH and/or HDFS courses for Major Requirements:

PSYCH 221, 281, 407, 412, 415, 416, 420, 422, 423, 424, 426, 438, 441, 470, 478, 479, 481, 484, 485, 496B, 497, HD FS 220, 239, 249, 250, 315, 432, 433, 445, 468

SOC and/or ANTH courses for Major Requirements:

SOC 003, 030, 035, 103, 109, 110, 309, 403, 405, 406, 409, 416, 429, 430, 455, 456, 462, 497, ANTH 002, 011, 022, 040, 146, 197, 199, 216, 321W, 380, 395, 448, 464

Other Social Sciences courses for Major Requirements:

BBH 302, 315, CAS 352, 415, 455, CN ED 404, 407, ED PSY 014, COMM 100, 120, 411, WMNST 471

Courses cross-listed with the above may be petitioned to meet the 400-level requirement.

Career Paths

A bachelor of science degree in Psychological and Social Sciences is designed to prepare students for a variety of career fields including human resources, business administration, mental health, and social work, or continued study in graduate and professional schools. The Penn State Abington Center for Career & Professional Development supports and serves students in all areas related to career development and preparation including career counseling and coaching, internships, resume creation, interview training, and job search strategies.

Careers

With a bachelor of science degree in Psychological & Social Sciences, you will be prepared for careers in child and geriatric care; counseling, clinical, and social work; education; human resources; marketing/marketing research; occupational therapy; and research.

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

A baccalaureate degree in Psychological & Social Sciences prepares students to earn graduate degrees in a variety of fields or obtain admission to MBA programs and law schools, among other post-graduate opportunities.

Contact

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<https://www.abington.psu.edu/academics/majors-at-abington/pss-degree> (<https://www.abington.psu.edu/academics/majors-at-abington/pss-degree/>)