



GUIDE TO MAJORS AT STERN COLLEGE FOR WOMEN: PSYCHOLOGY

Choosing a major can be stressful, but it is important to understand that you can pursue almost any career regardless of which major you choose. While there are some exceptions, most entry-level positions simply require general transferable skills—those that can be learned in one setting and applied in another. Relevant experience through internships and activities is generally more important to employers than a major. It is best to choose an area that you find interesting and where you have the ability to do well.

What is the Psychology Major?

The psychology major at Stern College for Women is designed to give students in-depth knowledge of the field of psychology and its applications. Psychology is the science of behavior and mental processes. Using studies of animals and humans, psychologists seek to explain and develop ways to understand and manage the behaviors and mental life of the individual. The psychology curriculum explores topics such as how brain function determines behavior; how we see, hear, and learn; what constitutes psychopathology; how people develop emotionally and cognitively; and how individuals work in groups. The department offers a wide variety of courses in clinical, biological, experimental, developmental and social psychology, as well as advanced courses and seminars in specialized areas. There are three tracks in the Stern College psychology major: General, Neuroscience, and Developmental. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in the Psychology Club and to qualify for Psi Chi, the psychology honor society.

What can I do with a Major in Psychology?

Students majoring in psychology develop many transferable skills which can be applied to a wide range of career fields. Directly related areas of focus can include clinical work, teaching, and/or research. Clinical careers can include therapy, counseling, and psycho diagnostic testing and evaluation. Psychology students can also pursue careers in neuropsychology, education, medicine, dentistry, law, marketing, social work, and many other areas. Some occupations to consider include:

Business

- Benefits Specialist
- Financial Analyst
- Investment Banker
- Human Resources Generalist
- Mediator
- Recruiter

- Training Coordinator

Communications

- Advertising Executive
- Editor
- Journalist
- Market Researcher

- Marketing Professional
- Public Relations Professional
- Television Producer
- Writer

Social Service

- Admissions Counselor
- Case Worker
- Higher Education Administrator
- Human Rights Advocate
- Legislative Aide
- Nonprofit Administrator
- Politician
- Researcher
- Teacher
- Volunteer Coordinator

- Addictions Counselor
- Genetic Counselor
- Guidance Counselor
- Marriage and Family Therapist
- Lawyer
- Neuropsychologist
- Nurse
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Physician
- Professor
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist
- Rehabilitation Worker
- Speech Therapist
- Social Worker

Graduate Study Required

Skills and Abilities

Whether in academic, business, or social change careers, majors in psychology learn and apply communication, research, planning, analysis, and critical thinking skills. Like all those studying the social sciences, psychology majors tend to be analytical problem solvers, with an emphasis on individual and group behavior. The following list provides a sample of the potential skills acquired through study in psychology.

Analysis

- Interpreting data
- Evaluating ideas and theory
- Analyzing information qualitatively and quantitatively
- Reasoning logically
- Understanding components of complex problems

Research and Project Development

- Defining hypotheses
- Planning/designing projects
- Gathering data
- Interviewing
- Data analysis
- Translating theory into action
- Working as a team member

Communication

- Articulating and defending positions
- Writing effectively
- Reading critically
- Presenting alternative explanations
- Understanding/ motivating groups
- Preparing reports

Human Relations

- Assessing needs
- Understanding human relationships
- Working as part of a team
- Recognizing social processes