Psychology at Haverford

Psychology applies the methods of the social and biological sciences to the problems of mind, brain, and behavior that have fascinated thinkers for eons. Some of the deepest puzzles ("How does the brain produce behavior? What is the nature of human memory? How do environments and genes produce normal and abnormal behavior?") are now yielding to systematic scientific investigation.

The psychology program at Haverford is designed to help students understand the evolutionary, physiological, cognitive, social, and intrapersonal processes underlying behavior and experience. It further aims to integrate this understanding with opportunities to engage in research projects that span a wide range of approaches to scientific psychology.

We emphasize research and the scientific approach to psychology because we feel that a liberal arts education and informed participation in the real world require a critical understanding of how scientific methods can (and cannot) be applied to human behavior. Our faculty members are active researchers as well as teachers who can offer students collaborative research opportunities.

Haverford Psychology Faculty in 2015-2016 (*teaching PSYC 100 in 2015-2016)

- Laura Been, Assistant Professor. Ph.D., Georgia State University. Behavioral neuroscience; neurobiology of motivated behavior.
- *Marilyn Boltz*, Professor. Ph.D., Ohio State University. Time perception, music, memory for naturalistic events, social perception, language and cognition.
- Rebecca Compton, Professor. Ph.D., University of Chicago. Cognitive neuroscience, psychophysiology, neuropsychology of emotion and attention. (on leave 2015-16)
- Paul Hemeren, Visiting Professor. Ph.D., Lund University. Cognitive and perceptual psychology; action perception and biological motion processing. (fall semester)
- Mary Ellen Kelly, Visiting Assistant Professor. PhD., Carleton University. CNS injury and the development of epilepsy. (spring semester)
- *Jake Kurczek*, Visiting Assistant Professor. PhD., University of Iowa. Cognitive neuroscience; memory and language.
- Benjamin Le, Department Chair and Associate Professor. Ph.D., Purdue University. Close relationships, commitment and relationship maintenance, social networks.
- *Jennifer Lilgendahl*, Associate Professor. Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley. Personality, self-identity and narrative life history.
- Thomas Wadden, Visiting Professor. Ph.D., University of North Carolina. Health psychology; the treatment of obesity

http://www.haverford.edu/psychology
Beginning Your Study of Psychology

For the vast majority of students, the first step in studying psychology at Haverford is to enroll in Psychology 100 (Foundations of Psychology). Three sections of the course will be offered in the fall semester, and three sections in the spring semester. This course serves as a broad introduction to the field of psychology, and is the launching point for more advanced studies in the discipline. A parallel course at Bryn Mawr (PSYC 105) can also be taken to substitute for the Haverford Foundations course. Students with AP or IB Psychology credit from high school may wish to consider waiving the Foundations course and enrolling in an upper-level course; this should be done only after consultation with a psychology faculty member.

The Psychology Major

Breadth requirement: Because psychology is a broad discipline, the major requires exposure to the variety of perspectives that comprise modern psychological inquiry. At the introductory level, students take the Foundations of Psychology course (PSYC 100), which introduces all of the perspectives represented in the department. In addition, students take six advanced courses, at least one from each of the following three areas:

- **Biological** (e.g., Behavioral Neuroscience, Cognitive Neuroscience)
- **Cognitive** (e.g., Memory and Cognition, Psychology of Language, Cognitive Neuroscience)
- **Social/Personality** (e.g., Social Psychology, Personality Psychology, Cultural Psychology)
- One of these six courses must be a full-credit 300-level course (i.e., a seminar)

Advanced courses offered in Bryn Mawr’s Psychology Department typically count toward the advanced course requirement.

Research requirement: The research requirement of the major has two primary goals—to train students to think scientifically about psychological questions and to understand the general empirical approach to the discipline. The other goal is for students to understand the nuts and bolts of how psychologists in specific areas of psychology address particular questions about behavior. Thus, majors obtain hands-on training in conducting original research in Psychology.

- **General Research Training**: Students take one semester of Experimental Methods and Statistics, a course that has a lab component (PSYC 200). In this course, students learn the principles of statistics coupled with principles of research design. In lab sessions, students put into practice the statistical techniques that they learn during lectures by designing and carrying out several different kinds of data collection and analyses during the semester. This course is equivalent to Psychology 205 at Bryn Mawr.

- **Discipline-Specific Research Training**:
  - **Lab courses**: After taking PSYC 200, psychology majors must take two half-credit 300-level lab courses to further their research training. These lab courses assume a prior working knowledge of statistics and research design principles. Students gain experience in designing and conducting small-scale research projects and interpreting data within the context of specialized methods in psychology sub-disciplines (e.g., neuroscience, personality, social, cognitive, cultural psychology).

  - **Senior Research**: By the time psychology majors reach the senior year, they will have completed PSYC 200 and preferably both of their lab course requirements. Therefore, students are well prepared to carry out their senior research requirement, a year-long original empirical project. Students are involved in all phases of the research process, from formulating the questions, the study’s design and the manipulations or measures, collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data, and presenting the research both orally and in writing.

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