

Academic Advising Resources

Our department is dedicated to providing psychology majors with the best possible academic advising. This advising takes two forms: prescriptive and developmental (Crookston, 1972). The purpose of **prescriptive advising** is to provide you with accurate advice about what classes you must take and when you should take them so you can graduate in a timely manner. But there is much more to an undergraduate education than passing a set of classes in the correct sequence. The purpose of **developmental advising** is to help you learn about yourself (i.e., your goals, values, and skills) and to enable you to know what you can do with a bachelor's degree in psychology and how the classes you take and the activities you choose to engage in (e.g., participating in research, serving as a teaching assistant, or becoming an officer in Psychology Club) can enable you to develop the knowledge, skills, and characteristics you will need for success after graduation (i.e., admission to graduate school or entrance into the job market). The result of combining these two types of advising is that you will “not only earn a college degree, but you will also become an educated person, a lifelong learner, and a contributing member of the workforce” (Smith & Gordon, 2003, p. 7).

Our department provides its majors with many sources from which they can obtain academic advising because we know that no two psychology majors have the same schedules, preferences, aspirations, and learning styles. The following list describes these sources.

Orientation

- The Psychology Department provides its entering students with an official orientation program prior to their first registration. This program takes the form of a presentation on the department's undergraduate program by the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
- Each new psychology major who participates in orientation is also introduced to the undergraduate section of the department's website, whose contents have been organized in a developmental sequence that can help psychology majors to be aware of the resources that can help them to be successful at each stage of their undergraduate education.

The Advising Office

- The Psychology Advising Office is the heart of our department's academic advising system. It is located in LD 123, which is across the hall from the main psychology office in the Science Building.
- This office is staffed by six junior or senior psychology majors (known as peer advisors) who have been carefully selected and thoroughly trained to provide accurate advice and helpful referrals to their fellow psychology majors. This office is the location for all psychology majors' files; a lending library of books about areas of specialization in psychology, graduate school in psychology, and careers in psychology; and an extensive collection of helpful brochures and handouts.
- You can schedule an appointment with your faculty advisor by contacting the Advising Office (274-6765 or psyadv@iupui.edu) or you may simply drop in for advice from the peer advisor on duty. The hours for the Advising Office are posted on its door; it is open approximately 35 hours a week.
- More than 2,500 students used the services of the Advising Office during the previous school year.

Academic Advisors

- There are eight faculty advisors in the department. All psychology students are requested to go to the Advising Office when they are admitted to the School of Science so they can select an advisor who is most appropriate for their academic and career interests.
- The peer advisors serve as valuable sources of information because they have actually taken many of the classes you are considering. It is important to note that the program designed to train these peer advisors received a “Best Practices in Advisor Training” award from the National Academic Advisors Association.
- We believe our department is the only IUPUI department that has created the positions of both Director of Student Development (Mrs. Cindy Williams) and Director of Undergraduate Students (Dr. Drew Appleby) to serve as special advocates for undergraduate psychology majors. In addition to overseeing the academic and extracurricular lives of psychology majors, a major part of their job descriptions is to insure the availability of high quality academic advising in the department.

Electronic Sources

- The Psychology Listserv is an electronic bulletin board where the department posts messages about upcoming events (speakers, social events, and club activities) and opportunities (research, jobs, and internships). All

psychology majors are encouraged to become members of this listserv, and they are urged to check their email regularly so they will not miss important events and opportunities. An essential component of academic advising is making sure that advisees know what is going on in the department, and that is the purpose of this listserv. A handout describing the procedure to become a member of the listserv is available in the Advising Office.

- The Psychology Department's website (www.psych.iupui.edu) is the source of an abundance of advising-related information. It contains information about the department's undergraduate and graduate programs such as course descriptions and syllabi, degree requirements, faculty research areas, down-loadable applications, research opportunities. It also contains PowerPoint presentations on advising resources in the department, the graduate school application process, and how to prepare for the recently revised Graduate Record Exam (GRE). It also includes links to other websites that contain information about volunteer activities, learning resources, psychology organizations, honors opportunities, and other psychology resources on the web. The undergraduate section of the website (www.psych.iupui.edu/ungrad/index.aspx) is organized developmentally so that psychology majors can obtain information that is relevant and appropriate to the particularly stage of their academic journey. Earning a bachelor's degree from the IUPUI Psychology Department is an academic journey that begins when you are admitted to the Purdue School of Science and ends when you graduate and enter graduate school or the job market. Like any other important trip, this voyage is composed of a series of stages that require careful planning and thoughtful preparation. The undergraduate section of the department's website will help you understand the step-by-step nature of this process and introduce you to the resources that can make your journey to a degree in psychology a successful and self-actualizing experience.
- The Psychology Department's annual *Newsletter* is available to all current and former students on the department's website. This publication describes the current events in the department and highlights the activities of the department's faculty, students, and alumni.

Events

- The department sponsors two Advising Nights each semester for students whose schedules prevent them from using the services of the Advising Office during the day. A team of peer and faculty advisors are available in an informal setting (including a dinner buffet) to meet the advising needs of psychology majors who drop in for advice. No appointment or reservation is necessary for these events.
- The Psychology Club and Psi Chi (the national honor society for psychology) host several Open Discussions and Meet the Faculty presentations each semester that provide attendees with valuable information about careers, research opportunities, and areas of specialization in psychology

Classes

- The purpose of B103 Orientation to a Major in Psychology is to provide psychology majors with an opportunity to better understand their strengths, weaknesses, values, and interests and to identify, clarify, and create a plan to accomplish their post-baccalaureate goals. Many students choose psychology as their major before they fully comprehend its nature as a research-based science. B103 has been designed specifically to insure that IUPUI psychology majors are fully aware of the nature of their major and what they can do with it after graduation. In B103 you will also begin to strengthen the written and oral communication skills you will need in all your remaining psychology courses.
- The Psychology Department offers three types of capstone classes. The first is a laboratory class in which students perform a supervised research project. The second is a practicum in which students apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in an on-the-job setting in the community. The third is a seminar that provides its enrollees with the opportunities to perform an in-depth examination of a sub-discipline of psychology in which they have an occupational interest and to create a professional planning portfolio designed to facilitate their transition to life after college. This portfolio contains documentation of all the activities needed to apply for a job or graduate school (i.e., a statement of immediate and long-term goals, a computerized job or graduate school search, a resume or curriculum vitae, proof of preparation for the GRE or job interviews, a cover letter, signed consent forms from three people who have agreed to write strong letters of recommendation, and a set of completed job or graduate school applications).

References

Crookston, B. B. (1972). A developmental view of academic advising as teaching. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 13*, 12-17.

Smith, D. C., & Gordon, V. N. (2003). *A family guide to academic advising*. Columbia, SC: The National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.