



*Undergraduate
Psychology
Student Handbook*

2019 – 2020

**Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
Minor in Psychology**

Student Informational Handbook

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Psychology at Avila University

Psychology is the scientific study of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Avila University offers a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a minor in Psychology.

Because psychology is a **science**, students develop critical reasoning, problem-solving, writing, observation, and data analysis skills. Because psychology is the **study of behavior**, students develop social, personal, and communication skills ("people" skills) such as the ability to:

- understand and communicate with others
- lead and work in groups
- take another person's viewpoint
- persuade
- recognize societal and cultural influences on behavior
- be aware of one's own impact on others
- facilitate change

For the **PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR**, Avila offers three areas of concentration:

- Mental Health. Designed for students interested in a liberal arts bachelor's degree. Students in this concentration typically find employment that utilizes their psychology skills, enter master's level psychology or counseling programs, or enter other graduate programs in areas such as law, medicine, or business. This concentration requires a practicum experience (PY 485 Field Experience).
- Research. Designed for students interested in pursuing a doctorate in psychology and/or a career in research. This concentration requires a research thesis (PY 498 Senior Thesis).
- General degree. Designed for students who need greater flexibility in their curriculum. This concentration requires a practicum experience (PY 485 Field Experience).

Students who would like to complete a **PSYCHOLOGY MINOR** have flexibility to choose courses that will meet their needs. Minors complete 18 hours in PY, including 6 hours at the upper level (300+).

Where to Find Information

Information about Avila University, the School of Psychology, the undergraduate psychology program, and your personal academic information can be found in the locations listed in this handbook. If you have a question about your program or your status and cannot find the answer from one of these sources, the psychology faculty and staff, and the Avila administrators (e.g., Student Records and Registration, Financial Aid) can assist you.

- This *Handbook* contains information about psychology policies and procedures and should be used to supplement additional policy manuals including the Undergraduate Catalog, and Avila University Student Handbook.
- The *Undergraduate Catalog* contains information related to all aspects of your Avila experience, including enrollment, financial aid, and course descriptions. The catalog is available on the Avila website. A student's catalog is determined by their year of entry and only that catalog should be referenced for degree information.
- *Avila University Email*: The University and School expect you to check your Avila email regularly, as you are responsible for any information sent via this email account. This includes during semesters and breaks.
- *Psychology Majors/Minors course in Canvas* is the primary way the School provides information to students and is the primary resource for School documentation on a variety of processes.
 - **Announcements**: The School posts announcements that cover a variety of topics including advising and registration information, School events, Psi Chi/Psychology Club events, research opportunities, and job/internship opportunities. You should check Canvas on a regular basis, and we recommend that you set up Canvas alerts so that you are notified about important information by email and/or text. These alerts can occur at preset times. Critical information from the School will be posted in Announcements and as well as emailed to all students directly.
 - **Files**: You have access to materials that you may need throughout your degree program (e.g., suggested plan of study, resources). These are organized in "Modules" in the course.
- The *Avila University website* (www.avila.edu) contains information about the entire university, including urgent announcements on the home page.
- *MyAU* (accessed through the main Avila website) is the primary source for personal, financial, and academic information such as class schedule, course history/unofficial transcript, degree audit, and tuition balance. Additional resources may also be linked through MyAU: career services, disability services, health and counseling services, and learning services. The web address is: <https://myau.avila.edu/ICS/>

Still don't know where to start? Call the School of Psychology at (816) 501-3661, or email psychology@avila.edu.

Program Requirements

Undergraduate Catalog

The catalog year is determined at the time of first enrollment in coursework at Avila University. You are required to follow your catalog in order to fulfill degree program requirements, unless you submit an official request to change to a subsequent catalog year while attending Avila. Once changed, students may not revert to an earlier catalog.

Requirements for the Avila Psychology Major

In addition to general university degree requirements, psychology majors must complete nine core PY courses, a 15-credit hour concentration, plus related requirements, as follows:

PY CORE:

- PY 101 General Psychology
- PY 102 Orientation Seminar in Psychology
- PY 208 Life Span Development *or* PY 326 Child & Adolescent Psychology
- PY 216 Social Psychology
- PY 224 Psychology of Communication
- PY 261 Statistics and Research Methods I (pre-req MA 115 or MA 120)
- PY 262 Statistics and Research Methods II (pre-req PY 261)
- PY 425 Senior Seminar in Psychology (pre-req PY262)
- Upper level PY elective

CONCENTRATIONS (choose one):

MENTAL HEALTH

- PY 201 Personality Psychology
- PY 210 Abnormal Psychology
- PY 332 Health Psychology *or* PY 383 Drug Addiction and Use
- PY/IS 350 Behavior and the Brain *or* PY 371 Cognitive Psychology
- PY 485 Psychology Field Experience (pre-req PY 425)

RESEARCH

- PY/IS 350 Behavior and the Brain
- PY 371 Cognitive Psychology
- PY 297/497 Research Experience I/II (2 credits)
- PY 333 Topics in Applied Research Methods (3 credits)
- PY 498 Senior Thesis (6 credits; pre-reqs PY 261, 262, 297/497, Research concentration, instructor approval)

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

- PY 485 Psychology Field Experience (pre-req PY 425)
- 12 additional hours PY electives (of which at least 6 hours must be upper division 300+ courses)

Additional requirements for PY majors:

- Foreign Language, SO 101 Introduction to Sociology, SW 205 Social Problems, *or* any WS course (3 credit hours)
- EN 112 Rhetorical Argument
- CS 111 Ethics in Technology or CS 210

Application for Degree

You must apply for graduation in order to complete your degree program. Graduation applications for psychology degree programs are available through MyAU and must be completed online. All applications submitted after the deadline communicated by Student Records will incur an additional fee that is assessed to your financial account.

Graduation, and Commencement

Graduation and commencement are different events. *Graduation*, or the conferring of a student's degree, occurs when all degree requirements are met and the student has submitted an application for graduation. Student Records confers degrees and this process may take up to six weeks post-completion of all required coursework. No student may claim to have completed a degree program before this occurs. This process triggers the notation of the degree on the transcript. *Commencement* is a ceremony held in May to recognize those students who graduate within an academic year. As an example, students completing their degree in December 2019, May 2020, or July 2020 would have the opportunity to participate in the May 2020 commencement ceremony.

4 + 1 Accelerated Option: BA/MS in 5 years

The School of Psychology offers an accelerated option to outstanding undergraduate Avila psychology students, allowing a bachelor's and master's degree in Psychology to be earned in as few as five years.

Through early admission to the master's program, undergraduate students with senior standing admitted to the accelerated 4+1 program may earn up to 12 credit hours at the graduate level to be counted toward both the bachelor's and master's degrees. Interested students should submit an application for admission to the School of Psychology. Contact your faculty advisor for more information.

Academic Standards

Attendance

The School of Psychology places a high value on the quality of learning that takes place in an interactive classroom. Therefore, attendance at class sessions is extremely important. Students should plan to attend all sessions to ensure progress and understanding of course material. The decision about grade reduction or failure is at the instructor's discretion and is included in the course syllabus.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

You must independently complete your own work, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor, and must cite appropriate sources when using others' work. Any failure to follow the university's academic code of conduct may result in consequences that could include automatic failure from the course in which the plagiarism or other form of academic dishonesty has occurred, academic probation or immediate dismissal from the university. Please see the Avila University catalog for details about university procedures.

Advising, Course Enrollment and Grading

Advising

Academic advising in Psychology is designed to service two purposes: guidance on the progression of your education while at Avila and support for your professional growth and goals. Every Psychology Major and Minor has a **faculty advisor**.

Your faculty advisor is determined by the first letter of your last name:

- Dr. Amy Bucher, amy.bucher@avila.edu (for last names A-F)
- Dr. Leah K. Gensheimer, leah.gensheimer@avila.edu (for last names G-K)
- Dr. Regina Staves, regina.staves@avila.edu (for last names L-R)
- Dr. Jordan Wagge, jordan.wagge@avila.edu (for last names S-Z)

The faculty advisor will assist you with course sequencing and institutional questions, as well as items pertaining to your career path and education goals. Examples include:

- Major/minor program changes
- Registration/Withdrawals
- Academic exceptions
- Elective selection
- Active research opportunities
- Post-graduation opportunities
- Master's and doctoral program advice and preparation
- Post degree career preparation
- Professional standards
- Work-life balance concerns
- School policy
- University policy

Advising is a process intended to assist students in their progression through a degree program. It is not meant as a substitute to students' understanding of, and adherence to, the policies and requirements necessary to graduate from Avila University. Students must take ownership of their education by understanding the degree requirements as listed in their undergraduate catalog.

Registration

Each student is responsible for meeting the graduate requirements listed in the undergraduate academic catalog of their entry year. Registration should be completed early to ensure course

availability. After the successful completion of the first semester, students will be expected to register for classes online through MyAU. Some courses will always require a separate enrollment process.

Undergraduate enrollment dates will be posted on the Academic Calendar early in the prior semester. This information is also provided by the School through Canvas.

Course Grades

A grade of “C” or better is required for all courses in the major and minor. Students should refer to their undergraduate catalog for the complete policy on course repeats, GPA requirements, and course grades.

ALERT: In order to graduate with a PY major in four years:

You *must* complete, with a C or better, PY 261 and PY 262 (Statistics & Research Methods I & II) *by the end of the third year*. We strongly recommend that you take these courses in your second year if possible.

Keep in mind the following:

- College math is a pre-requisite for PY 261.
- PY 261 is offered only in the fall, and PY 262 is offered only in the spring.
- PY 261 and PY 262 are pre-requisites for the PY capstone, PY 425 Senior Seminar, which is offered only in the fall.
- PY 425 is a pre-requisite for PY 485, Field Experience, which is required for the Mental Health and General concentrations, and is offered in Spring semester only.

Confused? Here’s the sequence, which requires a minimum of two years AFTER the math requirement is met:

(Developmental math if needed) >>

Math >>

PY 261 in Fall >>

PY 262 in Spring >>

PY 425 Senior Seminar in Fall >>

PY 485 Field Experience in Spring (MH & General).

Educational Outcomes and Assessment

Educational Outcomes

In addition to the general university degree requirements, psychology majors must meet School learning outcomes aligned with five major areas identified in the American Psychological Association Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (Version 2.0).

Outcome 1. Knowledge Base in Psychology

Students should demonstrate fundamental knowledge and comprehension of major concepts, theories, historical trends, and empirical findings to discuss how psychological principles apply to behavioral problems.

Outcome 2. Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking

Students should develop scientific reasoning and problem solving, including effective research methods.

Outcome 3. Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World

Students will apply psychological principles to communicate and interact effectively with members of diverse groups in various contexts. Students should develop ethically and socially responsible behaviors for professional and personal settings.

Outcome 4. Communication

Students should demonstrate competence in writing and in oral and interpersonal communication skills.

Outcome 5. Professional Development

Students should develop psychology-specific content and skills, effective self-reflection, teamwork skills, and career preparation.

Outcomes Assessment

The outcomes for the psychology major are assessed through a combination of: (1) written and performance examinations and assignments as specified in course syllabi; (2) self, instructor, practicum supervisor, and psychology faculty evaluations; and (3) completed projects assigned throughout the program. These outcomes will be outlined in detail in individual course syllabi.

Student Concerns and Appeals

Student Concerns about Courses

If you have a concern about a *specific course*, you should first address the issue with your course instructor, and then, if necessary, approach the School Chair. Please note that the Chair may intervene with the instructor without your direct knowledge and/or involvement. If the issue is with the Chair, the student may contact the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences with their concerns.

Grade Appeals

The School of Psychology follows the guidelines of Avila University. Please refer to the grade appeal policy in your undergraduate academic catalog.

Psychology Club / Psi Chi

The **Psychology Club** is open to all students, and typically meets once per month in the Learning Commons, in addition to hosting other events. Look for announcements in Canvas about meetings.

In addition, students who meet certain academic requirements can join **Psi Chi**, the International Honor Society in Psychology. Avila University has had an active chapter of **Psi Chi** for over forty years. You can go to www.psichi.org for information about Psi Chi, and see information in Canvas about how and when to apply for membership. Psi Chi holds a formal induction of members once per year, in the spring. The faculty advisor is Dr. Marcia Pasqualini.

Requirements for Membership in Psi Chi

- Completed at least 3 semesters of college, with cumulative GPA of 3.4 or higher
- Completed at least 9 hours of PY courses, with cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Note: Transfer students must complete at least 12 hours of PY courses at Avila

Who/Where is the School of Psychology?

The School of Psychology is housed in Foyle Hall. You can contact Psychology faculty and staff via telephone or Avila/Canvas email accounts to discuss issues of concern as well as to make an appointment. All full-time faculty members have regular office hours, which are written in course syllabi, and kept by the Psychology Office Manager, who is normally available from 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

Administration

Charlene Gould, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
Contact: charlene.gould@avila.edu; (816) 501-3689

Marcia Pasqualini, Ph.D.

Chair, School of Psychology
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Robin Lehman

Office Manager
Contact: psychology@avila.edu; (816) 501-3661

Full Time Faculty

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School of Psychology

Policy Acknowledgement

_____ I acknowledge my receipt of a copy of the Avila University Undergraduate Psychology Student Handbook (also located in Canvas). I understand that I am responsible for following the policies described herein, as well as the policies described in the Avila University Undergraduate Catalog. As an undergraduate student attending Avila University, I accept responsibility for keeping informed of changes in University and School of Psychology policies and procedures. I further acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding any provisions, policies, and/or procedures contained in the aforementioned Handbook.

_____ I understand that I must follow Avila University's academic code of conduct. I understand that academic dishonesty including plagiarism of any kind is not acceptable at Avila University and in the School of Psychology. Academic dishonesty, including acts of plagiarism, can lead to disciplinary action including a loss of grade, probation and dismissal from the University. Plagiarism resources are available from the School of Psychology.

Print your name

Student ID

Signature

Date