

Psychology Advising Handbook:

How to get the most out your EIU Psychology Degree (Online)

Department of Psychology Mission Statement

The Department of Psychology emphasizes the scientific study of behavioral, affective, and cognitive processes and their application to real-world issues by engaging students in integrative learning experiences such as undergraduate and graduate research, internships, and enhanced classroom experiences.

Faculty excellence in areas of teaching, research, and service provides the context for collaborative student-centered learning experiences that promote inclusion and diverse perspectives. The department's curriculum furthers the development of students' critical thinking, communication skills, research skills, quantitative reasoning, and ethical behavior in preparation for responsible citizenship, careers, graduate study, and lifelong learning.

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Is Psychology the Right Major for Me?

P psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. Because many fields rely on the understanding of human behavior, psychology has widespread applications. If you enjoy working with people, are interested in human behavior, and have a scientific view of the world, then majoring in psychology may be of interest to you.

This handbook is designed to answer the most frequent questions that students have about the psychology major. It functions as an excellent reference for understanding the requirements and resources found in the Department of Psychology. It also provides links to resources on the internet that are relevant to psychology majors. The [Department of Psychology Learning Goals](#) align with those of the American Psychological Association.

Advising

Have I been admitted to the Psychology Major?

Incoming students should declare their major as “online psychology,” but will be considered an online psychology major only after having completed the psychology major prerequisites (i.e., Introductory Psychology and College Algebra or higher math--see [Criteria for Admission to the Psychology Major](#)).

Who is my advisor?

You will be advised by a professional academic advisor from [Academic Advising](#)

When should I see my advisor?

Each semester, you should contact your advisor prior to the date when registration opens. You will need an alternate pin number from your advisor before you can register for classes.

How should I prepare for my advising appointment?

View the [Psychology Major Degree Requirement Checklist](#)

Please follow the instructions for [how to find the list of all online classes](#) offered at EIU, by term, and how to filter which courses fulfill different general education requirements.

It is best to schedule an appointment with your advisor after you have reviewed the schedule of classes for the next semester and any general education and psychology courses that you still need to complete. You can review your assigned advisor and your progress toward completing your requirements by conducting a “degree audit” using the Degree Works, described [here](#).

This advanced preparation will enable you to be better prepared to discuss your academic progress and ask relevant questions when you meet with your advisor. You should prepare for your advising meeting with an outline of courses you are considering for the next semester, a list of any questions you may have, and something for taking notes.

What classes should I take first?

First, you'll need to earn a C or better in PSY 1879G (Introductory Psychology) and meet the math requirement (MAT 1271 College Algebra or higher level math course, with a grade of C or better; or ACT math score of 26 or higher). If you have completed introductory psychology, but not met the math requirement, you can still take other psychology courses.

It is advised to take the Orientation to the Psychology Major (PSY 2999) and Psychological Statistics (PSY 3610), followed by Research Methods (PSY 3805) as soon as possible. Courses from Groups A and D are often recommended before courses from Groups B and C.

Registration Resources

When can I register?

The day you can register depends on your class standing, for example junior or senior. The chart with registration dates is available from the [Office of the Registrar](#).

How do I register for classes?

Watch this video [how to register for classes in PAWS](#).

If you are trying to add an online class in psychology that is already full, please contact the psychology department chair. In your request, please include your name and EIU E-number, mention that you are an online psychology major, and then list the specific psychology classes you want. For classes in other departments, you'll need to contact the instructor directly (and we recommend mentioning that you are an online psychology major).

How do I get my textbooks?

Depending on how far you live from EIU campus, books will be available for pickup at Textbook Rental, or mailed to you (see [further details](#)).

Accessing Online Classes at EIU

EIU's learning management system is **Brightspace D2L**.

After you [login](#), follow the link titled "D2L Student Orientation" in the D2L panel on the bottom of the page. This will give you an overview of all the major features of the learning management system used for delivery of our online courses.

Download the [Microsoft 365 Office Suite](#), which is free for all EIU students. Please also install Microsoft Teams ([see instructions here](#)), which may be used by faculty for advising appointments, group work in classes, or general communication with faculty and classmates.

EIU Graduation Requirements

Psychology Capstone Requirement

Literally, a capstone is a finish-quality stone placed on top of a structure. In the psychology major, it refers to a crowning experience that is designed to integrate the skills you have learned as a psychology major within the context of a capstone course. Graduation with a major in psychology requires the completion of a capstone experience entailing four components:

1. Oral presentation of information about psychology
2. Engagement with original primary literature in psychology
3. Written communication of information about psychology
4. Critical and integrative thinking about psychology

The capstone requirement must be met **after** you have completed 90 semester hours and PSY 3805 - Research Methods and Experimental Design, with a grade of C or better. Several courses are available that fulfill the capstone requirement, most typically the PSY 4590 Psychology Seminar course.

EIU Senior Seminar

The EIU Senior Seminar is completed after you have earned 90 hours and is a general education requirement as described in the [University Catalog](#). This is different than the Psychology Capstone requirement mentioned above.

Electronic Writing Portfolio

Prior to graduation, you will need two [Electronic Writing Portfolio \(EWP\) submissions](#)

Foreign Language Requirement

Students must complete two years of a single foreign language in high school with an average grade of C, or complete a second-semester course of a foreign language in college with a D or better. EIU offers Spanish online, but these courses fill up quickly so register early!

Do I need a minor?

A minor in another field of study is not required for graduation. However, after adding the number of hours needed to fulfill the general education requirements and the number of hours required for a psychology major, you may still need to take 25-30 semester hours to meet the 120-hour graduation requirement. Thus, choosing a minor can help guide the selection of these remaining courses for graduation. Furthermore, if you plan to go into a subfield of psychology, having a minor can be helpful. For example, a minor in business may be wise if you plan to go into industrial/organizational psychology.

Generally speaking, psychology faculty are not familiar with other departments' minor requirements and will not be able to advise you beyond what is already stated in the [online catalog](#) regarding majors and minors. If you have questions about requirements for a minor, please ask the department that offers the minor.

Check out the list of [current online minors at EIU](#).

To add or remove a major or minor, [fill out the form](#).

Transfer Questions

Which classes will transfer to EIU?

The Illinois Articulation Initiative specifies which courses will transfer among Illinois Schools. This ensures that quality coursework is maintained and that courses will be accepted by other institutions who have agreed to participate in the initiative. You can find out which courses will transfer to/from EIU, including psychology courses, by accessing the [MyCreditsTransfer tool](#)

Or, you can look up your community college course substitution list on the [EIU transfer website](#)

Why don't I get upper-division credit when transferring psychology courses?

When transferring psychology courses to EIU, the transferred course(s) will count toward the number of hours required for graduation and toward the psychology major requirements (usually as substitutions for the courses that EIU offers or as elective credit). However, you will not receive credit toward meeting the 40-hour upper-division credit requirement for graduation, even though EIU may offer an upper-division course by the same title. EIU does not consider courses taught at the community college level to have the same rigor and demands of upper-division courses taught at EIU. As stated in the catalog, "Courses from a community college or other two-year institution will not count in the 40 semester hours of upper-division credit."

Graduation (You're almost there!)

How and when do I apply for graduation?

Students should apply for graduation when they have completed 60 semester hours. It is strongly recommended that you apply for graduation at least one year before you plan to graduate to ensure that you have met or will meet all the graduation requirements during your remaining time at EIU.

Currently, you may apply for graduation through the PAWS System. When you submit your application for graduation, your billing account will automatically be charged the \$40 application fee. See the [Records Office web site](#) for additional information on deadlines for application, Cap & Gown, Diploma Covers, and Reapplication for Graduation.

Several weeks after you have applied for graduation, a staff member from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Dean's office will provide you a degree audit. This audit includes an evaluation of your overall progress toward graduation, as well as a review of the remaining courses and requirements that must be completed. You will be provided with a written statement of the requirements you still need to complete prior to graduation, as well as an opportunity to ask any questions about the graduation requirements that pertain to you.

Where can I go for more help?

We hope you have found this handbook to be a valuable resource to help guide you successfully in your experience as a psychology major. If you have questions that are not answered in this handbook, please contact us. Finally, here are some links to other helpful resources at EIU:

- [Office of the Registrar](#) (for AP/CLEP credit, transfer information, transcripts, forms, etc.)
- [Office of Financial Aid](#)



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