

# Psychology and Special Education

---

Maria Carlson (Department Head)

Psychology and Special Education Web Site (<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/educationHumanServices/psychologySpecialEducation/default.aspx>)

## Psychology

The Department of Psychology and Special Education offers the Bachelor of Science degree with a major in psychology. This major prepares students for graduate study in psychology and for careers in psychology-related fields. A graduate with a major in psychology should possess the following competencies:

1. understanding of basic psychological principles within the sub-disciplines of psychology,
2. knowledge of research design and statistics and their application in the study of human behavior and
3. promotion of the scientific method to solve problems and enhancement of critical thinking skills.

The department offers master's degrees and a doctorate degree in psychology. For information about all graduate programs, refer to the *Graduate Catalog*.

## Special Education

The Department of Psychology and Special Education offers an all-level generic special education certification program as a major area for the Bachelor of Arts or Science degree in Education. The generic special education program prepares graduates for careers as special education teachers or related service personnel. Specifically, a graduate with all-level Generic Special Education certification should possess the following competencies: knowledge of disabling conditions; knowledge of professional roles, strategies for promoting learning and development; and techniques to promote achievement in English language arts, reading and math.

Students pursuing teaching careers at the Elementary (EC-4), intermediate/middle school (4-8) and high school levels (8-12) may also select special education as a *supplemental* certification area. The certificate in special education provides the teacher with a knowledge of disabling conditions and their effects on learning, as well as adaptations, accommodations and modifications for providing instruction in the least restrictive setting.

The department also offers the following master's degrees and majors: the Master of Education or Master of Science degree with a major in generic special education; or special education with the educational diagnostician professional certification. For further information about graduate programs, refer to the *Graduate Catalog*.

*Students seeking a bachelor's degree with generic special education as either a supplemental area or an interdisciplinary studies major must complete:*

1. general requirements for a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree (refer to the bachelor's degree requirements section of this catalog);
2. Core Curriculum Requirements (refer to that section of this catalog);
3. requirements for admission to and retention in the Teacher Education Program (refer to Center for Educator Certification and Academic Services section of this catalog); and
4. professional development courses (refer to the Secondary Education section or interdisciplinary studies major of this catalog).

In addition, courses in the major must be completed as shown below.[BJ1] ([https://currentcoursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/psychology-special-education/#\\_msocom\\_1](https://currentcoursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/psychology-special-education/#_msocom_1))

Students interested in special education should seek early academic advisement for developing degree plans. Some courses in the undergraduate curriculum are offered on a schedule rather than every term.

All Level Special Education B.A./B.S. (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/psychology-special-education/special-education-ba-bs/>)

Generic Special Education: Supplemental Certification (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/psychology-special-education/generic-special-education-supplemental-certification/>)

Psychology Major B.S. (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/psychology-special-education/psychology-major-bs/>)

Psychology Minor (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/psychology-special-education/psychology-minor/>)

Mental Health Services Minor (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/psychology-special-education/mental-health-services-minor/>)

**PSY 2301 - Introduction to Psychology**

Hours: 3

The aim of this course is to provide a general understanding of the basic principles of psychology.

**PSY 2306 - Psychology of Sexual Behavior**

Hours: 4

A study of the physiological and psychological factors involved in normal and abnormal human sexual behavior with emphasis upon marital adjustment. In addition to the three hours per week of classroom instruction, the student attends a one hour laboratory per week to aid in the understanding of content learned in the classroom.

**PSY 2315 - Psychology of Adjustment**

Hours: 3

This course is a presentation of psychological principles which are fundamental to personal and social adjustment.

**PSY 205 - Applied Professional Ethics**

Hours: 3

This course follows the history of ethical thought from philosophers including Plato, Aristotle, Socrates and Kant in shaping current psychology and professional ethical thought in modern America. It examines the implications of ethical principals in professional applications. Existentialism, Rogerian principals and modern law will be examined. Comparisons of professional codes of ethics and their applications in modern society will be studied.

**PSY 210 - Sport Psychology**

Hours: 3

An overview of the principles of psychology as applied to sport or recreational activity for enhanced interactions and performance.

**PSY 211 - Diversity**

Hours: 3

This course will examine diversity in psychological functioning and the relationship between diversity and the self. This course will include, but is not limited to, topics relating to culture, intergroup relations, and the influence of one's own and others' cultural diversity for understanding others, one's self, and the world.

**PSY 297 - Special Topics**

Hours: 0-4

Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.

**PSY 300 - Learning Processes and Development**

Hours: 3

A course designed to provide the student with information about the application of psychological theory to the learning processes and development of children and adolescents. Principles and procedures of measurement and evaluation are also included. The primary objective is to facilitate a clear understanding of the complex, dynamic processes of learning and development. This course is required as part of the teacher preparation program.

**PSY 301 - Understanding Statistics Concepts and Controversies**

Hours: 3

An introductory applied statistics course that focuses on descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Emphasis will be placed on learning statistics through application and experience. Topics include visual displays of data, measures of central tendency and variability, standardized scores, normal distributions, probability, sampling distributions, hypothesis testing, correlation, and regression.

**PSY 302 - Statistics and Research Design I**

Hours: 4

Theoretical and practical approaches to research methodology, statistical analyses and techniques of reporting research. Prerequisites: (PSY 301 Min Grade C) or MATH 1342 or (Departmental Psychological Statistics Competency Exam Passed).

**PSY 305 - Statistics and Research Design II**

Hours: 4

Theoretical and practical approaches to research methodology, statistical analyses and techniques of reporting research. Prerequisites: PSY 302 or PSY 406 completed with a grade of C or above.

**PSY 310 - Psychology and Sociology of Diverse Populations**

Hours: 3

(Equivalent to PSY 311) This course will examine the variables which affect the educational perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of the microcultures which comprise our population. This course will include, but will not be limited to, school culture as a function of socioeconomic status, religion, gender, language, age, exceptionality, geographical origins and ethnicity.

**PSY 311 - Psy/Soc Div Cultures FB**

Hours: 3

(Equivalent to PSY 310) (Capstone) This field-based course examines the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of diverse cultures and their affect on our population. Culture will be examined as a function of socioeconomic status, religion, gender, language, age, exceptionality, geographical origins and ethnicity. Prerequisites: Senior Standing and Field-Based Program.

**PSY 315 - Physiological Psychology**

Hours: 3

Provides a basis for understanding the way in which biological mechanisms participate in behavior. It emphasizes both peripheral and central mechanisms involved in responding, sensing, motivation, emotion, arousal/sleep, and learning. Prerequisites: PSY 2301 or PSY 131.

**PSY 316 - Abnormal Psychology**

Hours: 3

Emphasis is placed first on a study of the fundamental principles of understanding and appreciating mental disorder. Then a study of the types of disorders including incidence, causes, symptoms, therapy, and prognosis is made.

**PSY 317 - Psychology of Personality**

Hours: 3

The various approaches to the study of personality and a consideration of its determinants, development, and assessment form the framework of the course.

**PSY 319 - Child and Adolescent Development**

Hours: 3

This course provides an understanding of how children grow and develop, the stages in the process, and the factors which influence growth and development.

**PSY 321 - Psychology of Adolescence**

Hours: 3

The course considers the patterns of "teenage" growth and development and the factors which influence them.

**PSY 322 - Lifespan Development**

Hours: 3

The course follows the lifespan development of the individual, emphasizing the theoretical and experimental approaches to the study of cognitive, personality, social, perceptual, and physical components of development from conception to death.

**PSY 325 - Evolutionary Psychology**

Hours: 3

This is a relatively new branch of psychology that has arisen from the confluence of psychology and evolutionary biology. This course will address how human minds and behavior have been shaped by natural and sexual selection originally identified by Charles Darwin.

**PSY 327 - Cognitive Social Psych**

Hours: 3

This class is designed to introduce the student to the basic principles of social psychology with an emphasis on the cognitive aspects of interpersonal influence. Topics that will be covered include: social cognition, heuristics, stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, cognitive dissonance and self-justification, implicit personality theory, attribution, self-serving biases, obedience to authority, and eyewitness testimony.

**PSY 339 - Forensic Psychology**

Hours: 3

This course focuses upon the application and practice of psychology in both the civil and criminal justice systems with the following topics examined in depth: police and investigative psychology, family forensic psychology, psychology of crime and delinquency, victimology and victim services, legal psychology, expert witness testimony, consulting psychology, and correctional psychology.

**PSY 341 - Learning Theories and Processes**

Hours: 3

This course provides an overview of theories of learning and factors that influence learning processes. Course content will cover traditional learning theories, classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and instinctive learning. Although most of the research findings regarding learning principles will come from animal studies, the relevance of these findings to understanding human behavior will be discussed. The course will also address variables that impact learning and subsequent behavior. Such variables include stimulus control of behavior, cognitive control, and memory processes. The later part of the course will focus more on human aspects of learning. Prerequisites: PSY 2301 or PSY 131.

**PSY 350 - Cognitive Psychology**

Hours: 3

Examines human cognitive processes, including perception, attention, memory, language, problem solving, reasoning, and developmental trends; experimental methods and data, and contemporary theories of cognition. Prerequisites: PSY 2301 or PSY 131.

**PSY 389 - Independent Study:**

Hours: 1-4

Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisites Consent of department head. May be repeated when the topic varies.

**PSY 397 - SPECIAL TOPIC**

Hours: 1-4

Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.

**PSY 403 - Development of Modern Psy**

Hours: 3

An introduction to the major schools and systems of psychology as they have evolved and as they exist today.

**PSY 404 - Industrial/ Organizational Psychology**

Hours: 3

This course applies behavioral science knowledge to professional organizations. The goal of this course is to understand how businesses can be designed so that both efficiency and the quality of employee life is improved. Topics will include employee selection, psychological testing, training and development, motivation, work stress and health, organizational design and change, consumer psychology, and engineering psychology.

**PSY 407 - DIFFERENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Hours: 3

**PSY 411 - Research Apprenticeship**

Hours: 1

This course is an opportunity to gain experience conducting psychological research under the guidance of a faculty mentor. The course format follows an apprenticeship model. Students will work with faculty and/or graduate mentor on existing projects, and students will be trained by the advisors. Students will gain knowledge in research design and implementation by assisting in material preparation, testing participants, and coding data. Along with developing research skills, the research internship provides students with a unique opportunity to learn more about a specialized topic of psychology. Registration requires consent of supervising instructor.

**PSY 412 - Research Apprenticeship**

Hours: 2

This course is an opportunity to gain experience conducting psychological research under the guidance of a faculty mentor. The course format follows an apprenticeship model. Students will work with faculty and/or graduate mentor on existing projects, and students will be trained by the advisors. Students will gain knowledge in research design and implementation by assisting in material preparation, testing participants, and coding data. Along with developing research skills, the research internship provides students with a unique opportunity to learn more about a specialized topic of psychology. Registration requires consent of supervising instructor.

**PSY 413 - Research Apprenticeship**

Hours: 3

This course is an opportunity to gain experience conducting psychological research under the guidance of a faculty mentor. The course format follows an apprenticeship model. Students will work with faculty and/or graduate mentor on existing projects, and students will be trained by the advisors. Students will gain knowledge in research design and implementation by assisting in material preparation, testing participants, and coding data. Along with developing research skills, the research internship provides students with a unique opportunity to learn more about a specialized topic of psychology. Registration requires consent of supervising instructor.

**PSY 414 - Intro to Hum-Comp Inter Design**

Hours: 3

Students will learn the fundamental concepts of human-computer interaction and user-centered design thinking, through working in teams on an interaction design project, supported by lectures, reading, and discussions. They will learn to evaluate and design usable and appropriate software based on psychological, social, and technical analysis. They will become familiar with the variety of design and evaluation methods used in interaction design, and will get experience with these methods in their project. Pre-requisite: PSY 2301

**PSY 416 - Introduction to Clinical Psychology**

Hours: 3

This course is intended to provide students an overview of the field of clinical psychology. Students will be exposed to information regarding the history of the science, as well as contemporary clinical psychology. Students will also be introduced to the various assessment and psychotherapeutic strategies used by clinical psychologists in their daily practice. By the end of the course, students will have an in-depth understanding of the range of assessment and psychotherapeutic services that clinical psychologists provide to patients of all ages across multiple settings. Prerequisites: PSY 2301.

**PSY 419 - Child Psychopathology**

Hours: 3

In this course, students in psychology, counseling, and social work will become acquainted in detail with psychological disorders typically emerging in childhood and adolescence. Emphasis will be on diagnostic and treatment considerations unique to the developmental status of these clients. Intervention techniques will include both traditional individual psychotherapy, as well evidence-based play therapy, systemic family therapy, and applied behavioral analysis. Diagnostic and intervention considerations of autism spectrum disorders, specific learning disorders, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and neurocognitive disorders will be touched on briefly. Prerequisites: PSY 319 or instructor permission. Crosslisted with: PSY 513.

**PSY 443 - Psychology of Death & Dying**

Hours: 3

This is the study of the processes of dying and the influence of the threat of death on human behavior.

**PSY 482 - Cognitive Aging**

Hours: 3

We will discuss cognitive processes such as processing speed, attention, different forms of memory, and decision making, and how these processes change with age. Keep in mind that the average life expectancy has increased, but individuals do not merely want to live longer; instead they want to optimally age, which includes physical, mental, and cognitive aspects. Given the emphasis on optimal aging, we will consider factors that are associated with higher cognitive performance in late adulthood. Crosslisted with: PSY 582.

**PSY 489 - Independent Study**

Hours: 1-4

Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. May be repeated when the topic varies. Prerequisite: Consent of department head.

**PSY 490 - Honors Thesis**

Hours: 3-6

Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisite: Consent of head.

**PSY 491 - H Honors Readings**

Hours: 3

Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisite: Consent of head.

**PSY 492 - Health Psychology**

Hours: 3

This class is designed to introduce the basic concepts of health psychology. Students will be introduced to different medical disorders and diseases and the implications for the psychological health and impact on psychological functioning of individuals with these disorders. Students will study physical limitations and adaptations. They will understand basic ADA law and how to make buildings accessible. Psychological treatments for persons with disorders and physical limitations will be introduced. Topics covered will include depression and illness, traumatic injuries, neuromuscular diseases, cancer, and chronic pain. Also covered will be the use of psychological techniques to improve behaviors for wellness. Crosslisted with: PSY 593.

**PSY 497 - Special Topics**

Hours: 3

Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.

**SPED 346 - Survey of Exceptionalities**

Hours: 3

This course will provide a survey of populations identified with exceptionalities. Attention will be given to the causes and effects of these differences upon the individual's development. Emphasis will be given to the historical, legal, and philosophical aspects of Special Education services.

**SPED 381 - Foundations & Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments**

Hours: 3

This course is designed to provide an overview of the characteristics of and services for persons with blindness and visual impairments, including the impact of blindness and visual impairment on infants' and children's growth and development, child and adolescent emotional and social development, and family interaction patterns. Considers the educational, conceptual, psychosocial, and physical implications of a visual impairment. Prerequisites: SPED 346 or concurrent enrollment. Corequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 382 - Medical and Educational Implications of Visual Impairments**

Hours: 3

This course is designed to provide an introduction to anatomy and physiology of the visual system and the educational implications of visual pathology. Covers anatomy of the human eye, visual development, pathology of the eye, examination procedures for the identification of visual pathology, and the effects of pathology on visual learning and development. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 420 - Current Topics in Special Education**

Hours: 3

SPED 420 addresses special topics in special education, including early childhood special education, culturally responsive teaching, social-emotional learning and trauma-responsive classrooms, universal design for learning, assistive technology, and family collaboration/resources.

**SPED 449 - Assessment of Students with Special Needs**

Hours: 3

This course will develop skills for assessing students with special needs. Students will be presented with a variety of assessment and evaluation procedures. Normative and criterion referenced procedures will be examined. Emphasis will be placed on curriculum-based assessment, progress monitoring, and the use of formative and summative evaluation strategies in educational decision making. Students will also learn how to create and maintain student audit folders as well as evaluate student schedules for compliance with the least restrictive environment. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 452 - Residency for EC6 SPED Majors**

Hours: 3

This course is taught in a seminar format during EC-6 SPED Specialization field-based residency and includes observation, participation and direct teaching at the elementary level for students seeking the EC6 SPED Specialization. Prerequisites: SPED 346, 420, 449, 463 and 478. Must have overall 2.75 GPA and a 2.75 in component areas of program.

**SPED 463 - Effective Classroom Management and Positive Behavioral Interventions**

Hours: 3

This course is designed to explore best practices of effective classroom management and individual behavior intervention strategies. Emphasis will be given to creating proactive learning environments through positive behavioral interventions and support. Discussions of Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans will be included. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 464 - Fostering Transition and Collaboration**

Hours: 3

This course examines programs and services available for students, families, and adults planning for transition. Variables influencing employment, community living and extended care in private and public agencies as well as sources of services, networks, and organizations for individuals with disabilities are examined. Emphasis will be placed on College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), empowering students through fostering self-advocacy, and facilitating student and family involvement in the IEP meeting. Collaboration models for content area instruction and for working with families and related service providers will also be addressed. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 466 - EC-6/SPED Internship**

Hours: 3

This course is taught in a seminar format during the EC-6/SPED field-based internship. Students will be involved in classroom observations and in supervised teaching of children with special needs. Activities include the application of developmental and learning theories in applied settings. Prerequisites: SPED 346, SpEd 478, SPED 449, and SPED 463. Must have overall 2.75 GPA and a 2.75 in component areas of program.

**SPED 468 - Low Incidence Disabilities**

Hours: 3

This course explores characteristics of low incidence disabilities. Best practice and policies related to low incidence disabilities will be examined. Addressing instructional needs, placement and accommodations will be a focus. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 470 - EC-6/SPED Concentration Residency**

Hours: 3

This course is taught in a seminar format during the EC-6/SPED field-based residency. Students will plan, develop, implement and evaluate academic and social/behavioral programs for students with special needs in a field-based environment. Collaboration and transition planning are included. Prerequisites: SPED 346, 449, 463, and 478. Must have overall 2.75 GPA and a 2.75 in component areas of program.

**SPED 472 - SPED Residency**

Hours: 3

This course is taught in a seminar format during SPED field-based residency and includes observation, participation and direct teaching at the secondary levels for students seeking the special education certification. Prerequisites: SPED 346, SPED 420, SPED 449, SPED 463, SPED 464, SPED 468, SPED 475. Must have overall 2.75 GPA and a 2.75 in component areas of program.

**SPED 475 - Instructional Strategies for the Content Areas**

Hours: 3

SPED 475 introduces students to research-based strategies and techniques for teaching elementary and secondary content to students with disabilities, or those who are at-risk academically, in a variety of general and special education settings. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for English language arts and reading, mathematics, science, and fine arts (Kindergarten-Grade 6), and content specific TEKS appropriate for students in Grades 6-12. Designing instruction to meet the needs of a diverse group of students, using high-leverage practices, based on information from various types of formative and summative assessments will be addressed. Attention will also be given to teacher strategies for promoting student engagement. Prerequisites: SPED 346 with a grade of C.

**SPED 480 - Issues for Inclusion**

Hours: 3

This course is taught during EC-6 Generalist or 4-8 Content Internship seminar and is designed to explore academic and social/emotional needs of students with disabilities in field-based inclusive settings. Management strategies, academic accommodations/modifications, and social skill development will be addressed. Note: Limited to EC-6 Generalist or 4-8 Content majors only.

**SPED 481 - Braille Code for Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments**

Hours: 3

This course is designed to provide future teachers of students with visual impairments with a foundation in reading, writing, and producing both Unified English Braille and Nemeth Code. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 482 - Basic Orientation & Mobility for Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments**

Hours: 3

This course is designed to provide future teachers of students with visual impairments with a foundation of the history of orientation and mobility. Topics include cane instruction, dog guides, assistive technology and travel methods, as well as motor and concept skill development. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 485 - Assessment & Instruction for Academic Students with Visual Impairments**

Hours: 3

This course is designed to offer methods of assessment and instruction for students with visual impairments. Students will learn to complete functional vision evaluations, learning media assessments and expanded core curriculum assessments for this population of students. Reading and literacy, assistive technology, and the expanded core curriculum will be covered. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 487 - Assessment & Instruction for Students with Multiple Disabilities & Visual Impairments**

Hours: 3

This course is designed to offer methods of assessment and instruction for students with multiple disabilities and visual impairments. Students will learn to complete functional vision evaluations, learning media assessments and expanded core curriculum assessments. Assistive technology, adaptations, and the expanded core curriculum will be covered. Prerequisites: SPED 346.

**SPED 488 - Ind Prob in SP ED**

Hours: 3

**SPED 489 - Independent Study**

Hours: 1-6

Independent studies are arranged as needed with individual faculty members.

**SPED 490 - Honors Thesis**

Hours: 3

Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisites: Consent of department head.

**SPED 491 - Independent Honors Readings**

Hours: 3

Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisites: Consent of department head.

**SPED 497 - SPECIAL TOPICS**

Hours: 1-4

Special Topics. Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.