

**The Department of Psychology  
Social Sciences Element**

**General Education Program  
Pacific Lutheran University**

**Framing Language and Program Goals**

Psychology is a scientific discipline that seeks to understand human and nonhuman behavior. Psychology is also a profession that seeks to change behavior for the betterment of humankind. Through its curriculum, research activities, and use of community resources, the Department of Psychology provides students with a balanced exposure to psychology as a scientific discipline and profession.

**General Education Element Description**

**Investigating Human Behavior, Culture, and Institutions**

The social sciences investigate individual and collective human behavior, and the history, development and variation of human culture and institutions. To assure wide exposure to a wide variety of social science concepts, theories, and methods, students must select at least two courses chosen from different disciplines.

*Psychology: studies mental processes, brain, and behavior and the relationship among them.*

**General Education Element Learning Outcomes**

The student will:

1. learn about the science of Psychology, understanding its basic research methodology and values in order to understand how both individual and collective human behavior is influenced by mental processes; and,
2. use critical thinking to apply concepts and psychological principles to understand human behavior.

**Particular Course Outcomes for Psychology 101**

- The student will acquire a knowledge base in the discipline of Psychology and therefore be able to:
  - Characterize the nature of psychology as a discipline.
  - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding representing appropriate breadth and depth in selected content areas of psychology.
  - Use the concepts, language and major theories of the discipline to account for psychological phenomena.
  - Explain major perspectives of psychology.
- The student will understand the basic research methods in Psychology and therefore be able to:
  - Describe the basic characteristics of the science of psychology.
  - Explain different research methods used by psychologists.
- The student will be able to use critical thinking effectively.
- The student will learn about the application of Psychology and therefore be able to:
  - Describe major applied areas of psychology.
  - Articulate how psychological principles can be used to explain social issues and inform public policy.
  - Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings as these relate to everyday life.
- The student will learn about the values in Psychology and demonstrate an ability to:
  - Recognize the necessity for ethical behavior in all aspects of the science and practice of psychology.

- Demonstrate reasonable skepticism and intellectual curiosity by asking questions about causes of behavior.
- Tolerate ambiguity and realize that psychological explanations are often complex and tentative.
- Recognize and respect human diversity and understand that psychological explanations may vary across populations and contexts.

#### Alignment to the ILOs

In addition to the knowledge base connecting Psychology to basic liberal arts and sciences, students completing Psychology 101 will develop the abilities of:

#### **Critical Reflection**

- Select sources of information using appropriate research methods, including those employing technology, and make use of that information carefully and critically.
- Consider issues from multiple perspectives.
- Evaluate assumptions and consequences of different perspectives in assessing possible solutions to problems.
- Understand and explain divergent viewpoints on complex issues, critically assess the support available for each, and defend one's own judgments.

#### **Valuing**

- Articulate and critically assess one's own values, with an awareness of the communities and traditions that have helped to shape them.
- Recognize how others have arrived at values different from one's own, and consider their views charitably and with an appreciation of the context in which they emerged.