This packet is intended to aid you in finding your way around the department and the University. The official statement of requirements and regulations can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin. Please refer to your bulletin year.
WELCOME TO PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology is the scientific study of behavior—understanding how people and other organisms develop, learn, think, feel, act, and relate to one another. When you graduate with your bachelor's degree in psychology, you will not be a psychologist. Rather, you will have a greater understanding of human behavior. Knowledge about human behavior can be useful both in understanding your everyday experiences and in making decisions about your career. Our students are prepared for entry-level jobs—in psychology/mental health, social services, law, business, and education—and for advanced degrees in psychology and other professions, such as law and business. The University of Southern Mississippi Department of Psychology provides high quality undergraduate education and is designated a Center of Excellence by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) Board of Trustees.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The psychology major at The University of Southern Mississippi is based on the assumption that all psychology majors are expected to learn general areas of knowledge and skills. Operating within a liberal arts tradition, the Psychology BS/BA program introduces students to the content and methods of psychological science while providing strong training in writing, speaking, and critical thinking. Student learning outcomes follow the recommendations of the American Psychological Association for undergraduate programs (APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major, 2007) and include:

1. **Knowledge Base of Psychology**: Students demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, and empirical findings in psychology.

2. **Research Methods**: Students understand and apply basic research methods, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation.

3. **Critical Thinking Skills**: Students use critical thinking and, when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems.

4. **Application of Psychology**: Students apply psychological principles to a variety of issues.

5. **Values in Psychology**: Students weigh evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinnings of psychology as a discipline.

6. **Technological/Information Literacy**: Students demonstrate information competence and the ability to use computers in their psychology major.

7. **Communication Skills**: Students communicate effectively in a variety of formats.

8. **Sociocultural/International Awareness**: Students understand and respect diversity.

9. **Personal Development**: Students develop insight into behavior and mental processes and apply self-improvement strategies.

10. **Career Planning and Development**: Students emerge from the major with well-developed plans for career or postgraduate education after graduation.
124 hours are needed to graduate with a BA or BS in Psychology. At least 50% of the hours applied to a degree at the University of Southern Mississippi must be earned in a senior college and 45 of these hours must be in courses numbered 300 or above. The last 25% of course work must be earned from Southern Miss. The student must earn at least 12 hours in the major area of study from Southern Miss.
RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Faculty Mentors

All Hattiesburg psychology majors are assigned a faculty mentor by the Undergraduate Secretary (OMH 231). Gulf Coast psychology majors are assigned mentors in 323 Hardy Hall. Mentors can be very helpful. They answer questions about requirements and procedures for registration and completion of the major. In addition, most advisors discuss many other issues with advisees, such as choice of courses, sources of help for various kinds of difficulties in the college community, long-term career and educational plans, and opportunities for relevant research.

All psychology majors are required to be advised by their faculty mentor or by the Academic Advisement Center for the Hattiesburg campus. Students on the Gulf Coast campus should schedule an appointment with their assigned faculty mentor for advising. Enrollment advising for the next semester occurs around mid-semester each fall and spring. You should review your progress toward degree plans (DPR) before advising. When you come to your advising appointment, you should bring the DPR and a list of courses that you are interested in taking.

We encourage you to use the time with your faculty mentor to seek mentorship about how to gain the most benefit from your psychology coursework and related experiences. You should consult with your faculty mentor about career planning and/or graduate training interests. If you have specific interests, you should let your faculty mentor know so that he or she can guide you in how to pursue opportunities that promote those interests. Certainly, if you are struggling with coursework or with the transition to the University, you should bring this to the attention of your faculty mentor so that a proactive approach can be implemented.

The CoEP Student Advisement and Support Center

The Center is located in OMH 131 and provides academic support, schedule planning and resources to psychology majors and minors. Faculty and staff will refer undergraduate advisees with course scheduling questions and issues to the Center. The Advisement Center can assist you with questions about the advisement process, help select classes, offer suggestions on scheduling, and address other general issues about the psychology major. In addition, the Advisement Center coordinates peer advising—undergraduate students who can further supplement faculty and graduate student advisement. Services provided by the Advisement Center permit faculty to spend time with their advisees focusing on career planning and other academic mentoring activities rather than the logistical details of course scheduling. http://www.usm.edu/psychology/coep-student-advisement-and-support-center
**Statistics Tutoring Center (Hattiesburg Campus)**

The purpose of the Statistics Learning Center is to provide a valuable resource for students enrolled in the PSY 360 - Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences. It is a free, walk-in, peer tutoring center organized by the Psychology Department. All of our undergraduate tutors have successfully completed PSY 360 and are trained to use their own experience to assist students in improving their class performance. [http://www.usm.edu/psychology/statistics-tutoring-center](http://www.usm.edu/psychology/statistics-tutoring-center)

Some of the services provided include:

- Offering additional/alternative explanations of concepts
- Test preparation
- Homework checks / walkthroughs of similar problems
- Practice problems
- Statistic study skills
- Assessments

**Tools for Advisement**

**DEGREE PROGRESS REPORT/ DPR**

The Degree Progress Report (also known as DPR) is part of a computerized system which compares all of a student's courses, both completed and in progress, with the course requirements for the degree and curriculum year. You will be asked to produce your DPR for a variety of situations including academic advisement, substitution of courses, and graduation preparation.

**Steps to Print your Degree Progress Report:**

1. Log into your SOAR account
2. Click on “Student Center” link under “Self Service”
3. Click on “Other Academic” drop down tab and click advisement/Degree Progress Report option
4. Click the arrow button
5. Click “View Report as PDF”
6. Print and check off the 2-sided printing option to save paper.

**SELECT A DEGREE TRACK: BS vs. BA**

Two degree programs are offered in the Department of Psychology—the Bachelor of Science degree and the Bachelor of Arts degree. These programs are distinguished by the inclusion or absence of a foreign language. For the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, students must take 9 hours of one foreign language. For the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree, the student is not required to take a foreign language and, instead, completes additional general electives for those 9 hours. Except for this distinction, the same basic requirements must be met for both degree programs (124 credit hours and the minimum GPA requirement of 2.0).
To earn an undergraduate degree in psychology, students must fulfill requirements of the University of Southern Mississippi and the Department of Psychology.

1. **Undergraduate Minimum Hours requirement** - A minimum of 124 hours is required for graduation. Remedial, audit and repeated/retaken courses do not count toward hours for graduation.

2. **Senior Institution Hour Requirement** - Of the minimum hours required for graduation, 62 hours must be from a senior college.

3. **Undergraduate 45-hour requirement** - Of the minimum hours required for graduation, 45 hours must be at the junior (300) or senior (400) level.

4. **Undergraduate Residency Requirement** - Earn at least 25 percent of the credit hours needed for the degree from The University of Southern Mississippi.* There are no exceptions to this requirement.
   *Earn at least 21 of the last 30 hours of course work from The University of Southern Mississippi. This policy applies to all students, including transfer students from other colleges and universities. The transfer student must meet the quality point requirements for work undertaken at The University of Southern Mississippi that apply to all the regular students; *Earn at least 12 hours at the 300-400 course level, including the capstone course required in the student's degree plan, in the major area of study from Southern Miss.

**PSYCHOLOGY MINOR**

Students, who have an interest in psychology, though they major in another area, may minor in psychology. If pursuing a minor in psychology, you must complete 21 hours including PSY 110. Minor hours can be chosen from any 200, 300 and 400 level courses, with the exception of PSY 462, 463, 491, 493, and 498. A grade of “C” or better is required in each of the courses which count toward the minor. At least nine hours of minor must be in the Department of Psychology at The University of Southern Mississippi.

**DECLARING PSYCHOLOGY AS A MAJOR or MINOR**

To declare psychology as a major or a minor, students must have an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher. Once this requirement is met, students contact the ACA coordinator in OMH 121D to complete the necessary paperwork.

**SECOND DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS**

Students who have earned a baccalaureate degree, in a field other than psychology, may be granted a second baccalaureate degree in Psychology based upon requirements of an applicable bulletin. The program for the second degree includes at least 25% of the credit hours required for a first degree in the major. For Psychology, a minimum of 32 semester hours is required. These hours must be new courses separate from the first degree. Also, the 32 new hours must all come from USM.

**DOUBLE MAJORS and DOUBLE DEGREES**

Students may wish to pursue a double major (one degree with two majors) or a double degree (two different degrees for two majors). Courses for the individual degrees need to be carefully
planned and should be taken in consultation with your faculty mentor in each of your majors. While courses may overlap (i.e., General Education Curriculum), the additional courses for each program must be completed according to the individual degree requirements listed in the Bulletin.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT FROM COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Credit will be given for psychology courses similar in content and title to those offered at USM at the 200 level or below. Credit will be given for appropriate courses in which a passing grade was obtained.

The initial substitution of courses is done by the Office of Admissions. An official transcript evaluation will be completed only after all the required official documents necessary for the applicant's admission to the university have been received by the Office of Admissions and the student has registered for orientation.

Any additional substitution of courses for USM equivalent courses is done by the undergraduate secretary located in OMH 231. To do this, you should provide the current transcript, a catalog description of the class, and, upon request, a syllabus of the class. A standard substitution form will be filled out and forwarded to the chair, dean, and provost for consideration.

ACADEMIC PROBATION/SUSPENSION
An undergraduate student will be allowed to continue in the university as long as the cumulative grade point average (GPA) indicated in the following scale is maintained. A higher minimum allowable GPA is sometimes specified by specific colleges within the university. In such cases, the more stringent requirements supersede those that follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Hours Attempted (Including transfer credit)</th>
<th>Minimum Cumulative GPA Required (Southern Miss work only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 14</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 29</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 and above</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total hours attempted will include credit taken at the university and approved transfer credits. Courses in which a student received grades of I, E or P will not earn quality points that contribute to the Southern Miss GPA.

Academic Probation
If a student does not attain the minimum cumulative GPA as indicated above, he or she is placed on academic probation at the end of the semester. Academic probation will be removed when the student attains an acceptable cumulative GPA. If the cumulative GPA at the end of the semester the student was on academic probation is lower than the minimums specified above or the semester GPA was at least a 2.00, the student will be placed on academic
probation continued. A student may remain on academic probation continued for as long as he or she earns a semester GPA of at least a 2.00. A student placed on academic probation continued may not enroll in a subsequent semester without the prior written approval of the chair or director of the student's current department or school and the dean of his or her college. A student placed on academic probation continued who fulfills the conditions of his or her contract may not enroll in a subsequent semester without the prior written approval of the chair or director of the student's current department or school. Southern Miss Gulf Coast students should contact the Department of Student Services.

**Academic Suspension**

A student will be suspended from the university the first semester he or she does not earn at least a 2.00 semester GPA while on academic probation continued. Also, regardless of hours attempted or probation status, any student earning a semester GPA of 0.00 (excluding Audit and P grades) will be suspended from the university, unless the cumulative GPA at the end of that semester meets the minimums listed above.

**COURSE LOAD/OVERLOAD**

**Full-Time Status:** The undergraduate student load is 12 to 19 semester hours (fall/spring); 9 to 14 semester hours is considered a full load during the summer session.

**Overload Status:** A course load of 20 hours or higher (fall/spring) and 15 hours or higher (summer) is considered a course overload and requires approval of the advisor, department chair, and dean.

**ADDING OR DROPPING A CLASS**

Students have access in SOAR to adjust their class schedules until the published deadlines. To adjust their schedule after the deadlines, students must have permission from the instructor (or Teaching Assistant in some cases) and the department chair for the course (or the departmental chair designee.) The permission form has been a carbon form requiring signatures and being submitted to the Registrar’s Office for final processing.

In consultation with various academic committees, students may now initiate a “Late Add/Late Drop” through a special permission request link via their SOAR account. The special permission request is intended to assist students and faculty with an efficient and auditable process for reviewing enrollment requests outside of the standard registration periods.

Each request is sent electronically to the instructor (and teaching assistants or proxies if applicable) immediately upon submission by the student. Assuming the instructor approves the request, the special permission is electronically forwarded to the Chair (or Chair Designee(s) if appropriate). Assuming the request is approved, the special permission is electronically forwarded to the Registrar’s Office on the appropriate campus for final processing.
Once a request has been made on a specific class section, a second request for the same ACTION (add/drop) on the same section will not be processed. Students will receive an error stating a ‘Request has already been submitted for this section.’ Therefore if a request needs to be reversed after it has been processed, please contact the Registrar’s Office for processing instructions.

The special permission request link only appears within SOAR for the student AFTER the deadline to add or drop a class for the CURRENT semester. Additionally, the link will not appear for the student once the last day to process enrollment changes for the session for that term has passed. Therefore, after the last day to process enrollment changes, grade changes will be required.

**DROPPING ALL COURSES**

Before the first day of class, you may drop all of you courses for the next semester by submitting a request for UNIVERSITY CANCELLATION via their SOAR student center account under ‘Drop ALL Classes.’

After classes have begun (i.e., the official semester has started), you may drop all of your courses by requesting a UNIVERSITY WITHDRAWAL via their SOAR student center account under ‘Drop ALL Classes.’ If so, you will be contacted by various USM faculty and/or staff members to discuss issues surrounding the withdrawal and any other alternative.

**Preparing for Graduation**

**LATIN DEPARTMENTAL HONORS**

Qualified students may graduate with the Latin designations that have traditionally marked highest excellence—cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa cum laude.

Graduation with Latin honors will be granted through the department to students who meet the following achievements: (a) the satisfactory completion of a comprehensive examination in psychology, which is designed and administered by the department; (b) the satisfactory completion of a senior project resulting in a written report on that project meeting guidelines based on the American Psychological Association; and (c) a superior grade point average: 3.25 to 3.49 for cum laude; 3.50 to 3.79 for magna cum laude; 3.80 and above for summa cum laude.

The notice of intent to meet these requirements must be filed with the department chair at least one calendar year prior to graduation. A checklist of requirements and due dates for the Latin Departmental Honors can be found in the FORMS section.

Some students choose to meet the Latin designation requirement through Senior Honors in the Honors College, which requires an honor’s thesis. For more information, see the Senior Honors link on the Honors College website: [http://www.usm.edu/honors](http://www.usm.edu/honors)
APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION
You are expected to file an application for a degree one semester before degree requirements are completed, and an application will be accepted no later than the published deadline. See Calendar: http://www.usm.edu/registrar

Procedures for the application process will be posted prior to the deadline at several locations in OMH. Competed applications are processed by the coordinator, in OMH 121D (Hattiesburg campus) or 323 Hardy Hall, Student Service Coordinator (Gulf Coast campus). An overview of the graduation process is also posted on the Registrar’s website: http://www.usm.edu/registrar
Under “How to Apply,” click on “College of Education and Psychology” to get full details of the process.

Getting Involved in the Department of Psychology

OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESEARCH AND SPECIAL TOPICS
PSY 491 (Research in Psychology) enables students to get credit for assisting a professor in conducting research. If you are interested in getting involved in PSY 491, you should check with a professor who is conducting research in an area that interests you to determine if they are taking undergraduate assistants in their lab. A Listing of all faculty is available on the department website: www.usm.edu/psy. Grading for PSY 491 is pass/fail. A maximum of 6 hours of 491 may count toward the degree. PSY 491 may not count toward your Psychology electives.

PSY 492 (Special Problems in Psychology) is a course that may serve a variety of learning opportunities including current topic classes, independent study, and honors thesis projects. PSY 492 is graded A-F. PSY 492 may count toward your Psychology electives.

THE PSYCHOLOGY CLUB
The Psychology Club is open to all students who are interested in psychology. Club members meet regularly on topics of interest (i.e., graduate school, GRE), perform philanthropic tasks, and participate in fund-raising. Students are encouraged to visit the website www.usm.edu/psychology for more information. If you are interested in joining or taking a leadership role in the Club, you should attend meetings or contact the department at psy@usm.edu

Psi Chi HONOR SOCIETY
Psi Chi is the national honor society for psychology students. Membership is by invitation. In order to be eligible, you must have completed at least three semesters of courses (including nine credit hours of psychology) and must be in the top 35% of your class. For more information please contact the department at psy@usm.edu

Important Policies

ACADEMIC HONESTY
The department enforces the USM Academic Honesty Policy. All forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating on tests, plagiarism, the submission of work other than one’s
own and the submission of “recycled” work as original, are considered with great seriousness. Violations of this policy can lead to serious consequences for the student.

When academic dishonesty is discovered, the faculty member may give the student an F on the work involved or in the course. If further disciplinary action is deemed appropriate, the student should be reported to the dean of students.

In addition to being a violation of academic honesty, cheating violates the Code of Student Conduct and may be grounds for probation, suspension, or expulsion. Students on disciplinary suspension may not enroll in any courses offered by The University of Southern Mississippi.

A complete explanation of academic policies and students rights and responsibilities can be found in the University Student Handbook found on the website for the Office of the Provost. 
http://www.usm.edu/provost

Use of Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Student use of laptop computers is permitted in class insofar as they are used for note-taking and in compliance with course syllabi and instructor guidelines. The use of laptops for other purposes (e.g., instant messaging, video chat, playing games, Internet browsing), except as explicitly authorized by the course instructor, constitutes unprofessional behavior. The use of other electronic devices during class is prohibited. Students misusing laptops or using other electronic devices during class (e.g., texting on cell phones) may be dismissed from class and may receive other disciplinary consequences at the discretion of the instructor and/or the director of training. Professional behavior constitutes an important domain in faculty evaluation of student performance.

Appeal of Grades

Grade appeals are governed by University policy. A description of the formal process may be found at www.usm.edu/pubs/studenthandbook. If a student wishes to formally appeal a grade that has resulted in program/department termination, the department may opt to wait until the University grade appeal process is concluded before conducting appeals for departmental or program dismissal.

University Grievance Policy

The University Grievance Policy is available in the USM Student Handbook at www.usm.edu/pubs/studenthandbook for a description of the process.

Sexual Harassment & Discrimination Policies

Sexual Harassment policies can be found in the USM Student Handbook at www.usm.edu/pubs/studenthandbook/ A student who believes she or he has been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, color, race, religion, national origin, disability, or Vietnam-Era veteran status by a university employee may file a complaint with the Office of Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity. Specific procedures are outlined at http://www.usm.edu/aa-eeo/aaeeo-complaint-procedure
Evaluation of Courses

Students engage in the evaluation of courses at the conclusion of each semester and are strongly encouraged to complete an evaluation of each psychology course. This is an anonymous process which includes both numerical ratings of various aspects of the course using the standard university evaluation tool and an opportunity to provide comments about the course. Positive comments and constructive feedback is encouraged. Please note that comments provided on this standard evaluation tool are only visible to the faculty member and not always included in performance evaluations. Students may encounter difficulties throughout the semester and are encouraged to discuss these concerns first with the instructor of record for the course. If the course is taught by a graduate student, the student’s supervisor may be included in the meeting and/or correspondence about the concern. If the problem is not resolved at that level, students are encouraged to bring the concern to the Chair of the Department. The Chair may suggest a meeting with the student to discuss the concern; this meeting may include the instructor of the course. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution at this stage, the student has the right to file a formal grievance and or may appeal the course grade following the process specified by the University. Students are discouraged from taking complaints outside of the department before resolution at the course or department level has been attempted.