

## **Department of Psychology**

### **Suggestions for First-Year Course Selections**

*Welcome to the Department of Psychology at Winthrop. Whether your goal is to attend graduate or professional school, seek a job at the BA level in human services, or obtain a strong liberal arts background in psychology useful for pursuing options in business, education, or related fields, we look forward to working with you over the next few years.*

*Here are a few suggestions for selecting your first courses as a Winthrop student and psychology major.*

#### ***General Considerations***

- For the great majority of students, the first two years in college are devoted mostly to general education, with limited courses in the major. Many students change their majors during this time, so it's useful to think in terms of courses that will enhance your general knowledge and skills and provide useful opportunities and experiences.
- Most students take 15-16 credit hours per semester, which is what is needed in order to have the credit hours needed to graduate in four years. Some students may feel that they need to concentrate on fewer courses in order to do well and may choose to take 12-13 hours their first semester (they may still graduate in four years by taking summer courses or extra courses later on). Other students who are accustomed to more academic rigor may consider taking 18-19 hours. It is generally more important that you do well than attempt a lot of credit hours, especially during your freshmen year.
- Because ACAD 101 is a one credit hour course, combining it with a 4-credit lab science, 4-credit language course, and/or one credit Physical Education (PHED) courses is a way to yield 15-16 hours without taking five academically rigorous courses.
- Try to balance your schedule with courses you might find challenging and ones that you expect will come easier for you.

#### ***Specific Course Selections***

- First time freshmen should take ACAD 101 and WRIT 101 during their first semester (unless they have received credit for WRIT 101, in which case they may consider taking HMXP 102). Most freshmen take HMXP 102 during their second semester.
- It is important for PSYC majors to fulfill the quantitative skills requirement (CTQR 150, MATH 105, 201, or a math course with MATH 201 as a prerequisite) during their freshman year so they can take PSYC 301 their sophomore year.
- All Arts and Sciences majors must demonstrate language proficiency at the 102 level; it may be advantageous from the perspective of practice for students who took a foreign language during their senior year in high school to take a language early in college (it's probably less advantageous if they intend to study a different language).

- Some students take a lab science during their freshman year, but many wait until their second semester. BIOL 150/151 is a popular choice among psychology majors. All students must eventually take one course from two different science designators (Life; Earth; Physical), with at least one course having a lab.
- All Winthrop students must fulfill a Constitution requirement. When choosing a course in the Social Sciences or Historical Perspectives area, consider whether it will also fulfill the Constitution requirement. Choices for this often taken during the freshman or sophomore year include ECON 103, HIST 211, or PLSC 201.
- Courses usually can't count toward more than one general education area. Exceptions include courses that fulfill one area of general education, along with the Oral Communication, Technology, Constitution, or Intensive Writing requirement. Courses taken to fulfill general education requirements *may* be used toward a minor.

### ***Getting Registered***

- Arts and Sciences advising staff will be available to assist you with the process and can also help you make alternative choices if classes you desire are closed.
- When you go to register, start with classes that have fewer sections and/or that you need/want the most and build your schedule from there.
- During this first time registering, expect to encounter many closed courses and sections. You will be able to register earlier and get more of the classes you want the longer you are at Winthrop. To take advantage of this, be sure to make an appointment with your advisor early and register during your assigned time each semester.
- If you do not get into a class you want or need, register for an alternative class and then check through Wingspan later for the course you want. A good time to do this is the day after the fee payment deadline, or between that date and the start of the fall semester. Another option for getting into closed classes is to contact the instructor or chair of the department to request an "over-ride." These are more often given to upper class students who need courses for their major.
- In order to "protect" your schedule, *be sure to pay tuition and fees by the deadline* or your schedule may get dropped. This will mean starting over again with very limited choices.

### ***Before Fall Classes Begin***

- Read the Winthrop "common book."
- Review the "Mission, Commitment, and Values" statement and the Student Learning Goals on the Department of Psychology website ([www.winthrop.edu/psychology](http://www.winthrop.edu/psychology))
- Be sure to attend the Department of Psychology Open House the Monday morning of Welcome Week. You will likely get to meet your faculty advisor at that session.

***Have a great summer. We look forward to seeing you in August!***