WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY?

An understanding of human behavior is relevant to any occupation or profession that involves interaction with others. Because the curriculum at the College of Charleston is broad and diverse, and our faculty is devoted to teaching and working with students, our psychology majors find many more opportunities here than they would at many other universities. They can tailor their academic program to prepare for a career in human services and psychology-related fields, for graduate programs in psychology and other professions, or adapt the major for a career in any field in which a liberal arts and sciences education is useful.

Graduate and professional programs that recent graduates are currently enrolled in include:

- Behavioral Neuroscience, University of California at Santa Barbara
- MA, school psychology, The Citadel, Charleston
- PhD, clinical psychology, University of Hartford
- MS, Applied Behavior Analysis program, Auburn University
- MA, general psychology, University of North Carolina, Wilmington
- MA, health administration, Medical University of South Carolina
- MA, family counseling, Eastern Carolina University
- MA, dance movement therapy, Drexel University
- Medical School, Medical University of South Carolina
- Charleston School of Law
- The Medical College of Georgia
- BSN/MSC, Medical University of South Carolina
- PhD, clinical psychology, University of Georgia, Athens
- MA, experimental psychology, Wake Forest University, N.C.
- MSW, University of South Carolina

Career choices of recent graduates include:

- Clinical psychology
- School psychology
- Health administration
- Family counseling
- Nursing
- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Dance movement therapy
- Behavioral neuroscience
- Art therapy
- Public health
- Social Work
"I was fortunate enough to begin conducting psychological research with one of my professors as a freshman, examining searching behaviors of preschool-aged children. Having the opportunity to build a solid foundation in research experience early on in my academic career enabled me to become a competitive candidate as I applied to graduate schools. The faculty instilled in me a desire to teach at the university level, not only to pursue further research, but also to share my enthusiasm for the science of psychology with future generations of students."

Morgan Pleasant '06

Active Learning Opportunities

The greater Charleston area offers rich resources for active learning and service with community agencies, hospitals, and other organizations. 

Independent studies You’ll have the chance to explore areas of special interest in greater depth by working individually with a faculty member whose professional expertise matches those areas. In a recent year, more than 60 psychology students completed independent studies, a bachelor’s essay or tutorials. Some examples of recent independent study topics include:

- Behavioral therapy in the treatment of autism
- Memory for words and pseudohomophones
- Advanced aging and memory
- Satisfaction with preventative health care programs
- Children with Sickle Cell Disease

Research You’ll have many opportunities to collaborate with faculty on research projects in the department and at community sites such as the Medical University of South Carolina, the Veteran’s Administration Hospital, and local nonprofit agencies. Last year, eight psychology students were awarded College grants in support of collaborative research with faculty members.

Recent examples of research papers co-authored by faculty and students that were accepted for publication include:

- The psychometric equivalence of two alternate forms of the Controlled Oral Word Association Test (The Clinical Neuropsychologist)
- IRT item parameters and the reliability and validity of pretest, post test and gain scores (International Journal of Testing)
- Gender, alcohol consumption, and parental monitoring (Journal of Psychology)
- Direct or indirect, that is the question: A re-evaluation of extraversion’s influence on self-esteem (Personality and Individual Differences)
- Aging, source memory, and emotion (Psychology and Aging)

Internships You can build your experiential résumé through participation in an internship experience. An internship will allow you to apply what you’re learning in your psychology courses to a work setting. For example, interns have had opportunities to work with individuals diagnosed with autism, with sexual assault victims, and with elderly people afflicted by cognitive disorders.

Other Special Opportunities

Psi Chi (national psychology honor society). Actively attempts to nourish and stimulate professional growth through programs designed to augment and enhance the regular curriculum.

Psychology Club Open to all with an interest in psychology, this student group regularly hosts guest speakers, organizes trips to major regional and collegiate conferences and sponsors other activities, such as a mental health professional panel, Operation Clean Sweep at the Crisis Ministries and preparing for the GRE.

Learning Resources

The department has excellent facilities for the study of both human and animal behavior. 

- The observation lab consists of a suite of rooms with one-way mirrors for unobtrusive observation and recording, as well as computer equipment for editing both analog and digital video signals.
- Animal labs allow for the investigation of operant conditioning and the physiological bases of behavior.
- Neuroscience lab facilities permit analytical observation and recording of physiological data and neuroanatomical verification. Students explore the relationship between the brain and behavior using state-of-the-art techniques.
- Human labs include computer equipment for cognitive and neuropsychological testing.

Students in lab courses and those in statistics, research methods, and research design and interpretation courses, use standard statistics packages such as SPSS. We have a special computer classroom for statistics, and all of our classrooms provide Internet connections and large screen displays for PowerPoint® presentations.