

Curriculum for the Business Psychology Bachelor of Science Program

The courses for the Bachelor's degree in Business Psychology are listed below. They are all required to be taken in sequence. The curriculum is highly structured, with courses designed to complement one another; each class leads to an organized set of desired learning outcomes.

Students in the 2-year fast track Business Psychology program will learn not only from professors, but also from other students in the class. As students get to know one another well, they will learn about different backgrounds: cultural, ethnic, socioeconomic, political, religious, etc., to a depth that would be impossible were they studying in a larger and more traditional program, where their colleagues change from class to class. This cohort model also allows the instructors to assign students to work in groups and assign collaborative projects, where the compositions of the groups can be modified to enhance learning about diversity, group dynamics, dealing with conflict, etc.

Course Delivery

Courses will be taught by full or part-time professors from Palo Alto University. Faculty will have obtained the terminal degrees in their fields and have significant experience both as lecturers and in professional domains, such as research, consulting, clinical work, and business.

The courses for the Business Psychology program have been designed to flow together in a prescribed sequence and designed to complement one another. All courses are required for the degree.

Course Description

Psychology of Learning

This course provides students with an understanding of the scientific investigation of learning. Both experimental and related theoretical developments are considered, as well as application of the basic principles of learning and memory. Current theories of classical and operant conditioning, social learning theory, memory, cognitive and neural organization of learning and memory, systems of incentive and disincentive, and related concepts will be explored.

Social Psychology

In this course students learn the scientific investigations of social behavior, including the theory and empirical research in social psychology: conformity, obedience, helping, aggression; attitudes, persuasion and influence, identity and roles; person perception, attribution, social judgment; interpersonal inter-group relationships and conflict, prejudice, and stereotyping. Students will explore the implications of these concepts for explaining current social phenomena and their application to organizations and business environments.

Statistics and Research Methods

This course provides students with an introduction to statistics for the social sciences and introduces the investigative designs and methods used in psychological research. Issues involved in the design of non-experimental and experimental methods of research, including collection, analysis and interpretation of data, particularly in work environments, will be explored. Students will be taught to read and understand research reports. They will conduct a research project and produce a written report.

Organization Development

This course explores the issues facing organizations in today's world. Topics include research and theories on what constitutes a healthy organization; how employees can grow and learn in the organization; and organization systems. Students will gain insight, assessment tools, and techniques to enable them to analyze an organization's development and intervene in addressing organizational issues.

Team Development

This course introduces students to the four stages of team development and the elements of effective team work. Students will examine obstacles to the formation of teams and the negative side of teams. The class work will include learning how to use assessment tools to measure effective teamwork and to analyze results. Students will also practice effective teamwork in the classroom by working on team projects and presenting the results to the class.

Multicultural Studies

This course explores the social construction of race, ethnicity, and gender through international and historical perspective. Each of these three kinds of hierarchical differences joins together a set of ideas about natural and cultural essences that serve to define and justify social boundaries. This course will survey the evolving theories of race, ethnicity, and gender among anthropologists, historians, and other scholars over the past three decades. It will also examine the role that these social constructs play in society and the work place.

Theories of Personality and Assessment

This course will introduce students to the major theoretical perspectives for understanding personality. They will be exposed to a variety of competing paradigms in personality (e.g., trait theories, psychoanalytical theories, humanistic and cultural theories, learning theories, and cognitive theories). Students will be shown how to use these theories to understand human behavior in their personal and professional lives. Students will also be introduced to the methods of personality assessment, particularly those used to assist individuals in making career decisions and those used in employee selection.

Fundamentals of Management

This course will provide an introduction to the history of management, and explore theories of management and leadership. It will also explore effective management characteristics and practices in successful organizations. Students will have a case study that involves learning about a current company and its best management practices. Students will also learn about the issues, challenges and requirements faced by the leaders of today and in the future.

Developmental Psychology

This course explores psychological development from birth to adulthood. Infancy and the early and middle childhood years are explored, followed by examining adolescence, early, middle and late adulthood. Topics include: the principles and theories of development; physical, intellectual, and social development; identity; sexuality; changing in work and social contexts and life transitions. Theories of career and professional development will be explored in relation to today's rapidly changing global economy and the changing work environment.

Philosophy of Ethics

This course provides an introduction to moral philosophy and ethics. Students will examine problems that arise when individuals and organizations make moral decisions. Students will also consider several historically important and still prominent theoretical approaches to ethics that attempt to provide systematic procedures for answering questions about right and wrong. Students will learn from case studies of organization ethics and gain insights from real organizational practices when facing ethical issues.

Employee Relations and Interpersonal Skills

This course explores how human beings relate to one another. It provides students with the skills that are needed to promote healthy and constructive relationships in the work place. Students will learn and practice communication skills, including listening skills, and effective skills in relating to others and conflict management assessment tools. They will explore ways to maintain and foster constructive relationships at work and in social situations.

Human Resources Management

This is a course in applied organization psychology. It examines the principles of human resource management in today's dynamic work place. It will explore the areas of organizational learning; recruitment; job design; performance appraisal; labor relations, including regulations that pertain to labor issues; training; and the development of different levels of employees.

Writing and Communication Skills

This course will help students develop their writing, reading, presentation, critical thinking skills, and creative thinking skills. They will learn literature search skills and how to use information technology. Students will be taught how to write papers using APA style, to create power point presentations, and to use these when giving oral reports. They will also develop their resumes and interviewing skills, and the professor will provide personal feedback to each student.

Motivation and Work Satisfaction

This course explores Maslow and other theories of motivation and their application to the work environment. Students will learn techniques in motivating employees, designing reward systems, and creating a work place environment that fosters work satisfaction. This course will introduce assessment tools to measure job satisfaction and research findings applicable to increasing job satisfaction.

Health and Wellness

This course is designed to provide students with the knowledge and research findings on impact of health and wellness on employees. It will cover the business aspects of Corporate Health Improvement Programs and its return on investment for companies, as well as their effect on employee productivity and effectiveness. The class will also discuss impacts of burn-out in the workplace and provide practical techniques on how to manage stress in the workplace and in everyday life. Students will explore the impact of health and wellness programs on employers by way of case studies.

Normal and Abnormal Behavior

This course examines the classification system for understanding abnormal behavior and will examine the major categories of psychological disorders, including their symptoms and treatments. Major theories about the development of psychological disorders will be explored: psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive, humanistic, and biological.

Financial and Business Planning

This course introduces financial planning and management that relates to creating a business plan. Students will learn the fundamentals of finance and its relationship to the values and decision making process in an organization. They will also learn how financial planning impacts the way an organization's hiring and compensation practices are handled and their influence on employee behavior. Students will create a business plan and analyze salary data, compensation surveys, and design compensation procedures that allow an organization to achieve higher human and organizational performance and business growth.

Career Planning

This course will cover the process of analyzing and creating a career path as well as include facets of Career Counseling for those students who wish to pursue this area as a career. This course will also cover the process of preparing oneself for the job search by identifying one's skills and qualifications. Furthermore, it will help students prepare a "career story", research the job market, work with professional associations, rally and expand one's network, learn effective interviewing techniques, and learn how to handle the "highs" and "lows" that come with the job seeking process. Students will learn to examine their own career choices and will be provided with techniques on longer term career management and development strategies. Students will learn to make intelligent and well-

informed decisions in choosing a career path and how to prepare for a career that fits with their goals, interests and values.

Final Business Psychology Project (Part 1)

Students select a subject which the program has covered and they will develop a case study or research paper with a profit or non-profit organization with the advisor's and professor's approval. Students will observe, investigate or take part in one of the business psychology issues that this organization is dealing with [e.g., how organizations implement a human resource policy or change, what is the process, leadership's role and behavior that is observed, what are some of the best practices or obstacles and apply the theories learned to explore solutions of the issue(s)]. Readings and lectures will provide materials to assist students in developing their project.

Change Management

This course is designed to examine how different personalities cope with change and the theories about change management. It will introduce students to the major theoretical perspectives and fundamental principles of human behaviors in regards to organizations and change. It will also discuss cases in the business environment and the implications of these cases for organizations wishing to manage change effectively.

International Political Economy

Students will explore political and economic issues facing today's dynamic global environment. Globalization refers to a variety of political, economic, cultural, and social changes that are currently transforming the world. Countries and economies are increasingly becoming more interconnected by flow of information, trade, money, immigrants, technology, and culture. Students will learn what globalization is and how it is affecting the skills, attitudes and behaviors that are needed in the workplace.

Final Business Psychology Project Paper and Presentation

Students will work on and present the findings from the research project with a profit or non-profit organization. They will use APA style when writing their Final Business Psychology Project. The students' papers shall demonstrate their understanding of the human resources and behavioral issues in an organization. They will reflect the extent of their understanding and integration of theories and best practices, and their capacity to make realistic and relevant recommendations to the organization and for future research. The students will share their projects with each other by organizing a professional presentation of their projects. Their professors, the program director and business leaders will be invited to participate and to evaluate the students' presentation.