

What is Psychology Comps?

The Psychology Comprehensive Exam serves as the culminating assessment for all psychology majors, providing students the opportunity to integrate and demonstrate their knowledge of core areas in the field while preparing for professional or academic next steps. It is typically taken during the Winter Term of senior year.

The course includes three key components:

Content Exam: Students complete a comprehensive, computer-based exam covering the discipline's foundational areas. All students are tested on Research Methods and Statistics, and may select four additional areas:

- Animal Cognition
- Biopsychology
- Developmental Psychology
- Drugs and Behavior
- Health Psychology
- Human Cognition
- Perspectives in Mental Health
- Personality Psychology
- Social Psychology
- Sensation and Perception

The computer-based exam will be conducted on-campus via Qualtrics at the end of the course. Students should prepare by reviewing class notes, textbooks, and study guides. Past students have also found study groups helpful.

Oral Presentation: Each student delivers a 10-minute oral presentation on an approved psychology topic, demonstrating both depth of understanding and communication skills. Presentations are delivered in class to peers, allowing students to review and discuss a range of topics across the discipline while strengthening their public speaking and integrative learning skills.

Professional Development Portfolio: Students compile a professional portfolio that includes a resume or CV, a tailored cover letter or letter of intent, a reflective career development essay, and a professional enhancement activity (such as a LinkedIn update, networking outreach, or workshop attendance). The portfolio emphasizes career readiness and the application of psychological knowledge beyond the classroom.

Assessment: Students must earn a C– or better on each component to pass the course.