Cognitive Sciences

The School of Social Sciences

Degree Offered: BA

Researchers in this interdisciplinary field seek to understand such mental phenomena as perception, thought, memory, the acquisition and use of language, learning, concept formation, and consciousness. Some investigators focus on relations between brain structures and behavior, some work with computer simulation, and others work at more abstract theoretical levels.

Degree Requirements for BA in Cognitive Sciences

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements (pages 14–15). Students majoring in cognitive sciences must complete 5 core courses and 7 additional courses (see below). Among the 7 additional courses, at least 3 and no more than 4 must be in a single area of concentration—linguistics, philosophy, psychology, or neuroscience.

Introductory Courses

Because the major is interdisciplinary, no single course introduces the full range of the subject. However, students who are interested in majoring in cognitive sciences should take 1 or more of the following courses during their 1st and 2nd years: LING200, PHIL103, PSYC101, or PSYC203.

Honors Program

Students with a 3.5 GPA in cognitive sciences and 3.3 overall GPA may apply for the cognitive sciences honors program. Students in the honors program are expected to conduct an independent research project of either 1 or 2 semesters under the guidance of a member of the cognitive sciences faculty. Students who wish to enter this program should consult with prospective advisors during their junior year and submit a proposal by the end of the semester proceeding the initiation of the project. Typically, this means submitting a proposal by the end of the junior year and beginning the project during the fall of the senior year. Proposal will be reviewed by both the supervisor
and the program director. Students who undertake a 2-semester project will be allowed to continue into the 2nd semester only if their advisor judges that sufficient progress has been made during the 1st semester. At the end of a project, honors students are expected to submit a final paper to both their advisor and the program director and make an oral presentation. For more details, contact the program director.

**Independent Research**

Majors may undertake supervised independent research by enrolling in CSCI390 or the honors program and may apply up to 9 credits of independent research toward the major. Students who wish to take CSCI390 must complete a CSCI390 contract and have it approved by their supervisor and the program director prior to the end of the 1st week of classes. All students taking CSCI390 also must write a substantive research paper, which is to be submitted to both their advisor and the program director at the end of the semester. (Copies of the contract form and instructions are available on the “forms” section of the cognitive sciences website.)

**Core Courses**

The core courses are divided into 5 groups. Majors just take one course from each group.

**Computer Science**

Though all of these courses may be used to satisfy the computer science core requirements, no more than 1 may be taken for credit within the major.

- CAAM 210 Introduction to Engineering Computation
- COMP 200 Elements of Computer Science
- COMP 201 Principles of Object-Oriented Programming
- COMP 210 Introduction to Principles of Scientific Computation

**Philosophy**

- PHIL 103 Philosophical Aspects of Cognitive Science
- PHIL 305 Mathematical Logic
- PHIL 312 Philosophy of Mind

**Advanced Psychology**

- PSYC 308 Memory
- PSYC 309 Psychology of Language
- PSYC 351 Psychology of Perception
- PSYC 360 Thinking
- PSYC 362 Biopsychology
- PSYC 430 Computational Modeling of Cognitive Processes
- PSYC 432 Brain and Behavior

**Linguistics**

- LING 200 Introduction to the Scientific Study of Language
- LING 306 Language and the Mind
- LING 315 Semantics
- LING 306 Language and the Mind
- LING 305 Semantics

**Additional Courses**

At least 3 and no more than 4 courses must be in 1 of the following areas of concentration: linguistics, philosophy, psychology, or neuroscience. Note: you may not use the same courses to fulfill both a core course requirement and an additional course requirement; in other words, no double counting.

**Computer Science**

- COMP 212 Intermediate Programming
- COMP 440 Artificial Intelligence
- COMP 450 Algorithmic Robotics

**Linguistics**

- LING 200 Introduction to the Scientific Study of Language
- LING 300 Linguistic Analysis
- LING 301 Phonetics
- LING 304 Introduction to Syntax
- LING 306 Language and the Mind

**Psychology**

- PSYC 203 Introduction to Cognitive Psychology
- PSYC 308 Memory
- PSYC 309 Psychology of Language
- PSYC 351 Psychology of Perception
- PSYC 360 Thinking
- PSYC 362 Biopsychology
- PSYC 430 Computational Modeling of Cognitive Processes
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LING 315 Semantics
LING 317 Language and Computers
LING 402 Syntax and Semantics
LING 403 Foundations of Modern Linguistics
LING 404 Research Methodologies and Linguistic Theories
LING 405 Discourse Analysis
LING 411 Neurolinguistics
LING 412 Language and Intelligence

Neuroscience
Many of the neuroscience courses are taught by Baylor College of Medicine faculty.
For more information, see http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~neurosci/neurocoursesmain.html.
BIOS 421 Neurobiology
CAAM 415 Theoretical Neuroscience
ELEC 481 Fundamentals of Systems Physiology and Biophysics
LING 411 Neurolinguistics
PSYC 362 Biopsychology
PSYC 432 Brain and Behavior (formally cross-listed as CSCI 420)
NEUR 500 Functional Neuroanatomy and Systems Neuroscience
NEUR 501 Cognitive Neuroscience I
NEUR 502 Cognitive Neuroscience II
NEUR 503 Molecular Neuroscience I and II
NEUR 504 Cellular Neurophysiology I and II
NEUR 505 Optical Imaging in Neuroscience
NEUR 506 Learning and Memory
NEUR 511 Integrative Neuroscience Core Course (1st semester)
NEUR 512 Integrative Neuroscience Core Course (2nd semester)
NEUR 515 Neural Development

Philosophy
PHIL 103 Philosophical Aspects of Cognitive Science
PHIL 303 Theory of Knowledge
PHIL 305 Mathematical Logic
PHIL 312 Philosophy of Mind
PHIL 353 Philosophy of Language
PHIL 357 Incompleteness, Undecidability, and Computability

Psychology
PSYC 308 Memory
PSYC 309 Psychology of Language
PSYC 340 Research Methods
PSYC 351 Psychology of Perception
PSYC 352 Formal Foundations of Cognitive Science
PSYC 360 Thinking
PSYC 362 Biopsychology
PSYC 370 Introduction to Human Factors
PSYC 409 Methods in Human-Computer Interaction
PSYC 411 History of Psychology
PSYC 430 Computational Modeling of Cognitive Processes
PSYC 432 Brain and Behavior (formally cross-listed as CSCI 420)
PSYC 441 Human-Computer Interaction
PSYC 465 Olfactory Perception

Other
ANTH 406 Cognitive Studies in Anthropology and Linguistics
ELEC 201 An Introduction to Engineering Design
ELEC 498 Introduction to Robotics
STAT 300 Model Building