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, some use experimental methodology, and others work at more abstract theoretical levels.

Degree Requirements for BA in Cognitive Sciences

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements (Undergraduate Students section, pages 2–5). Students majoring in cognitive sciences must complete five core courses and seven additional courses (see below). Among the seven additional courses, at least three and no more than four 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 one or more of the following courses during their first and second years: LING 200, PHIL 103, PSYC 101, or PSYC 203.

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 one or two 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 preceding 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 two-semester project will be allowed to continue into the second 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 to faculty and students. For more details, contact the program director.

**INDEPENDENT RESEARCH**

Majors may undertake supervised independent research by enrolling in CSCI 390 or the honors program. Students who wish to take CSCI 390 must complete a CSCI 390 contract and have it approved by their supervisor and the program director prior to the end of the first week of classes. All students taking CSCI 390 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 five 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 one may be taken for credit within the major.

- CAAM 210 *Introduction to Engineering Computation*
- COMP 140 *Computational Problem Solving*
- COMP 200 *Elements of Computer Science*
- COMP 201 *Principles of Object-Oriented Programming*

**Psychology**

- PSYC 203 *Introduction to Cognitive Psychology*

**Linguistics**

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

**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*

**Additional Courses**

At least three and no more than four courses must be in one 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.

**Cognitive Sciences**

- CSCI 390 *Supervised Research in Cognitive Sciences*
- CSCI 481 *Honors Project*

**Computer Science**

- COMP 211 *Principles of Program Design*
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
LING 311 Phonology
LING 314 Second Language Acquisition
LING 315 Semantics
LING 317 Language and Computers
LING 320 The Origins and Evolution of Human Language
LING/PSYC 325 Language Acquisition
LING 403 Foundations of Modern Linguistics
LING 404 Research Methodologies and Linguistic Theories
LING 405 Discourse Analysis
LING 411 Neurolinguistics
LING 419 Bilingualism
LING 420 Cognition and L2 Acquisition

**Neuroscience**
Many of the neuroscience courses are taught by Baylor College of Medicine faculty.
For more information, see www.ruf.rice.edu/~neurosci/neurocoursesmain.html.
BIOC 385 Fundamentals of Neuroscience
CAAM 415 Theoretical Neuroscience
ELEC 481 Computational Neuroscience
LING 411 Neurolinguistics
PSYC 362 Biopsychology
PSYC 432 Brain and Behavior
NEUR 485 Neuroscience Independent Study
NEUR 500 Functional Neuroanatomy and Systems Neuroscience
NEUR 525 Neuroscience and Law

**Psychology**
PSYC 308 Memory
PSYC 309 Psychology of Language
PSYC 321 Developmental Psychology
PSYC/LING 325 Language Acquisition
PSYC 340 Research Methods
PSYC 351 Psychology of Perception
PSYC 360 Thinking
PSYC 362 Biopsychology
PSYC 370 Introduction to Human Factors
PSYC 375 Neuropsychology of Language and Memory
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
PSYC 471 Introduction to fMRI

**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

**Note:** Rice-Baylor neuroscience offerings change frequently. Baylor courses not on the above list may be counted at the discretion of the steering committee. The most up-to-date listing of courses counting as additional courses is found at cogsci.rice.edu.