

Huron Psychology Student Handbook



Welcome to the Huron Psychology Student Handbook, your comprehensive guide to navigating your Psychology journey at Huron University.

From the moment you accept your offer until you graduate and beyond, this handbook will serve as your essential resource and counsel.

This edition builds upon Dr. John Mitchell's original handbook (version 2.0, 2009), which was created to support former Brescia Psychology students. With his written permission, the Huron Psychology Association (HPA) has revised and adapted the content to fit the Huron academic experience.

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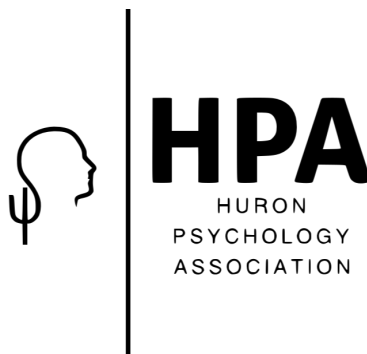


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How Degrees are Earned at Huron and Western

Degrees are earned by completing a first year program, plus one or more modules.

First Year Program

Students must complete 5.0 courses numbered 1000-1999. Students are encouraged, but not required, to take an essay course in the first year. The program must include at least 1.0 course from each of two of the faculties of Arts, Science, and one other faculty. Students must complete this first year program before registering in any full program of senior courses (i.e., a module). The courses selected within the first year program should satisfy any prerequisites needed for senior courses that the student wants to take. Part-time students may take senior courses after taking at least 1.0 first year course but must complete all 5.0 first year courses within their first 10 courses attempted.

Types of Degrees

Honours Bachelor Degree (20.0 courses)

Four-Year Degree (20.0 courses)

Three-Year Degree (15.0 courses)

Modules and Programs in Psychology at Huron

The Honours Bachelor Degree involving Psychology (20.0 courses)

This degree requires 15.0 courses after completion of a first year program. You can complete the Honours degree in two ways:

- 1) Complete an Honours Specialization module in Psychology
- 2) Complete two Major modules, one of which must be in Psychology. Note that the double major route to an honours degree may not be considered sufficient background in Psychology for admission to a graduate program in Psychology.

Progression in the Honours Specialization in Psychology requires a cumulative average of at least 75% on all courses specified by the module with no grade less than 60% on any course specified by the module, and at least 50% on all elective courses. There will be no exceptions to these requirements. When two Majors are used to complete an Honours degree, progression requires at least a 70% average on the courses that comprise each module with no grade less than 60% on any course specified by either module, and at least 50% in all electives. No concession on the dual 70% average requirement will be permitted in progression towards a double Major Honours degree.

Graduation requires completion of a first year program and all the requirements of either an Honours Specialization or of a pair of Majors. Students must have an overall cumulative 75% average on all courses specified by the Honours Specialization module or 70% on all the courses specified by each major module when a double Major is used in

pursuit of an Honours degree. Also, students may not have any grade less than 60% on any course specified by a module nor any grade less than 50% on any elective course used towards the degree.

Regardless of whether this degree is fulfilled by means of an Honours Specialization or a double Major, students must have at least a 65% average on all 20 courses to complete this degree. Students must complete at least 13.0 senior courses (meaning that they can take no more than 7.0 courses numbered 1000-1999 within the 20 courses needed to fulfill the degree). At least 10.0 of the 20.0 courses used to complete the degree and a majority of the courses taken to fulfill any module must be from the University of Western Ontario or one of its affiliates. At least 1.0 course must be from each of the faculties of Arts, Science, and one other faculty to earn a four-year degree. No more than 5.0 credits may be taken on Letter of Permission at another institution.

The Bachelor's Degree (Four Year) in Psychology (20.0 courses)

This degree requires 15.0 courses after the first year, including at least a Major in Psychology. Progression in the Major Module used to satisfy this degree requires that students meet the minimum progression requirements to continue at the university. This is a minimum cumulative average of 55% on all courses when less than 8.0 have been completed, and a minimum cumulative average of 60% on all courses when 8.0 or more have been completed.

Graduation with a Bachelor's Degree (four year) requires completion of a first year program and all the requirements of at least one Major. Students must have an overall cumulative average of 60% on all courses specified by the Major module. They must also have a minimum cumulative average of 60% on the courses specified by any other module taken alongside the Major used to satisfy this degree. Students must have at least a 60% average on all 20 courses used to complete this degree. Students must complete at least 13.0 senior courses (meaning they may take no more than 7.0 courses numbered 0001-4999 within the 20 courses needed to fulfill the degree).

At least two of the courses used to fulfill whether this degree is fulfilled by means of an Honours Specialization or a double Major, students must have at least a 65% average on all 20 courses used to complete this degree. Students must complete at least 13.0 senior courses (meaning they may take no more than 7.0 courses numbered 1000-1999 within the 20 courses needed to fulfill the degree). At least two of the courses must be essay courses. At least 10.0 of the 20.0 courses used to complete the degree and a majority of the courses taken to fulfill any module must be from the University of Western Ontario or one of its affiliates. At least 1.0 course must be from each of the faculties of Arts, Science, and one other faculty to earn a four-year degree. No more than 5.0 credits may be taken on Letter of Permission at another institution.

The Bachelor's Degree (Three Year) in Psychology (15.0 courses)

This degree requires 10.0 courses after first year including a Major in Psychology or two Minor modules, one of which is in Psychology,

Progression in the Major or the Minor modules used to satisfy this degree requires that students meet the minimum progression requirements to continue at the university. This is a minimum cumulative average of 55% on all courses when less than 8.0 have been completed, and a minimum cumulative average of 60% on all courses when 8.0 or more have been completed.

Graduation with a Bachelor's Degree (three year) requires completion of a first year program and all the requirements of one Major or two Minors. Students must have an overall cumulative 60% average on all courses specified by the Major module or both of the Minor modules used to satisfy this degree. They must also have a minimum cumulative average of 60% on the courses specified by any other module taken alongside the Major or the two Minors used to satisfy the degree. Students must have at least a 60% average on all 15 courses used to complete this degree. Students must complete at least 8.0 senior courses, meaning they may take no more than 7.0 courses numbered 1000-1999 within the 15 courses needed to fulfill the degree). At least two of the courses must be essay courses. At least 10.0 of the 20.0 courses used to complete the degree and a majority of the courses taken to fulfill any module must be from the University of Western Ontario or one of its affiliates. At least 1.0 course must be from each of the faculties of Arts, Science, and one other faculty to earn a four-year degree. No more than 5.0 credits may be taken on Letter of Permission at another institution.

Which Module is Right for Me?

Psychology Minor? Major? Honours Specialization? Which module is most appropriate for you will depend on your career plans and what options you want to have available when you finish your undergraduate degree.

The **Major** is most appropriate for students who want a strong background in Psychology but who do not intend to pursue Psychology as a career. The Psychology Major is appropriate for students who plan on careers in Education, Business, Law, Medicine, the Health Sciences or Social Work. The Psychology Major also provides sufficient background to meet application requirements for programs in Counselling Psychology (but not Clinical Psychology).

If you plan to teach at the secondary school level, you may end up taking a Psychology Minor rather than a Major because of the need to have two teachable subjects. It is simply difficult to construct a degree with primary and secondary teachables and add a Psychology Major. Do not count on Psychology as a teachable subject even though there are a few large urban secondary schools that offer a Psychology course. The Minor is also of interest to students who want to take a group of Psychology courses out of curiosity, but whose main interests lie within other academic disciplines.

The **Honours Specialization** is most appropriate for students who plan to pursue Psychology as a career. The Honours Specialization includes more Psychology courses than the Major and also includes an Honours Thesis in fourth year (see section about the Honours Thesis). If you plan to apply to a Psychology graduate program in Canada or the U.S., you often need to do an Honours Thesis. You would be eligible to apply to some Psychology graduate programs with a Major in Psychology, but without the research and writing experience of an Honours Thesis you will be at a disadvantage. If you plan to pursue Psychology in graduate school, do the Honours Specialization.

According to University Senate regulations concerning graduation requirements for an Honours degree, students who are enrolled in the Honours Specialization in a Psychology module must maintain a minimum modular average of at least 75% with no mark below 60% to progress in the module.

The Modules

Please note that this information is **not** revised and updated often. Before making any decisions regarding your program plan and course planning, please refer to the official Western Academic Calendar. In cases of disagreement, the Western Academic Calendar will prevail.

Honours Specialization in Psychology (Bachelor of Arts)

Enrolment in this module is limited. Meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee that students wishing to transfer into this module will be offered enrolment. Recommended for students planning to seek admission to a graduate program in Psychology.

Admission Requirements

Completion of first year requirements with no failures. Students must have an average of at least 75%, with no mark less than 60%, in 3.0 principal courses, including: (1) Psychology 1100E; (2) Calculus 1000A/B, 1100A/B, 1201A/B, 1301A/B, 1501A/B, Linear Algebra 1600A/B, Mathematics 0110A/B, 1225A/B, 1228A/B, 1229A/B, Statistical Sciences 1024A/B If Mathematics 0110A/B is selected then either Statistical Sciences 1024A/B or Mathematics 1228A/B must be taken. Mathematics 1228A/B and 1229A/B or Mathematics 1228A/B and Statistical Sciences 1024A/B are the recommended combinations. Admission is competitive and meeting the minimum requirements may not be sufficient.

Students who wish to enter the Psychology Honours Specialization Module after Years 2 and 3 must, in addition, have a minimum cumulative average of 75% in all senior Psychology courses taken to date with no mark below 60%.

Module Requirements - 9.0 courses from:

- 1.0 courses: Psychology 2830A/B and 3830F/G
 - students are strongly advised to take Psychology 2830A/B in second year

- 3.0 courses to be selected from: Psychology 2180E, 2130E, 2280E, 2480E, 2780E or 2750E (taken in 2021 or 2022, 2024, 2025)
- 1.0 course: Psychology 4880E
- 2.0 additional courses in Psychology at the 2100 level or above
- 2.0 additional courses in Psychology at the 3000 level or above

Major in Psychology

— Not recommended for students planning for graduate studies in Psychology

Admission Requirements

Completion of first year requirements including Psychology 1100E with a mark of at least 60%

Module Requirements - 6.0 courses from:

- 1.0 courses: Psychology 2830A/B and 3830F/G
— students are strongly advised to take Psychology 2830A/B in second year
- 2.0 courses to be selected from: Psychology 2180E, 2130E, 2280E, 2480E, 2780E or 2750E (taken in 2021 or 2022, 2024, 2025)
- 2.0 additional courses in Psychology at the 2100 level or above
- 1.0 additional courses in Psychology at the 3000 level or above

Minor in Psychology

Admission Requirements

Completion of first year requirements, including Psychology 1100E with a mark of at least 60%.

Module Requirements - 4.0 courses from:

- 0.5 course: Psychology 2830A
— students are strongly advised to take Psychology 2830A/B in second year
- 1.0 course from: Psychology 2180E, 2130E, 2280E, 2480E, 2780E or 2750E (taken in 2021 or 2022, 2024, 2025)
- 2.5 additional courses in Psychology at the 2100 level or above.

Psychology/Ivey Combined Honours Degree Program (Bachelor of Arts & Honours Business Administration degree)

This unusual 5-year program leads to two separate degrees: A four year Honours (BA) degree in Psychology and an Honours Business Administration (HBA) degree from Richard Ivey School of Business.

Admission Requirements

To be considered for admission to the combined program, in the first two years, students must complete a minimum of 10.0 courses including Business Administration 2257. In the first year, students must complete the admission requirements as specified in the current Academic Calendar for entry into the Honours Specialization module offered by the Department of Psychology at Huron University College.

In Year 2, students must enroll in the Honours Specialization in the Department of Psychology and satisfy the minimum requirements for progression for the second year of that Honours Specialization.

In the first two years, students must attain a minimum weighted average of 78%, a minimum mark of 70% in Business Administration 2257, and no mark less than 60%. Students must also gain admission to the HBA program through the regular application process. In addition, students must normally attain a minimum weighted average of 78% in the first year of the HBA.

Students apply for the combined degree program during the first year of HBA (typically their third year of university). Applications to the combined degree program must be made in writing to the Undergraduate Program Advisor at Huron University College and to the HBA Program Office by the deadlines published by the Richard Ivey School of Business. Entrance to the program may be limited.

Module Requirements (Psychology) - 9.0 courses from:

- Year 2:** **3.0 Psychology courses from:**
 0.5 from Psychology 2830A
 1.0 from Psychology 2180E, 2130E (or 2750E taken in 2021 or 2022),
 2280E, 2480E, and 2780E
 1.5 from Psychology 2100-2999
 1.0 electives
- Years 4 and 5:** **6.0 Psychology courses from:**
 2.0 from Psychology 2180E, 2280E, 2480E, and 2780E
 0.5 from Psychology 3830F
 1.0 from Psychology 4880E
 2.0 courses numbered 3000-4999

Module Requirements (Ivey) - 14.25 courses from:

- Year 2:** **1.0 Business courses from:**
 1.0 from Business 2257
- Year 3:** **8.25 courses from:**
 Business 3300K, 3301K, 3302K, 3303K, 3307K, 3311K, 3316K, 3321K,
 3322K, 3323K

Years 4 and 5: 5.0 courses from:

0.5 from Business 4505A/B

0.5 course from Business 4521A/B, 4522A/B, 4523A/B or other approved electives

1.0 course from Ivey Consulting Project 4430 or Ivey New Venture Project 4410

3.0 elective Business credits

Psychology Courses

Course Groups

The Psychology degree modules specify courses from three different ranges: x100 – x299 (i.e., 100's and 200's), x300 – x799 (i.e., 300's through 700's), and x800 – x889 (the 800's).

Courses from the x100 to x299 range (100's and 200's) are courses in Psychology as a natural science. These include courses such as Method and Theory in Cognitive Psychology (Psych 2180E), Biological Basis of Behaviour (Psych 2221A/B), Stress and Psychophysiology (Psych 3210F/G), or Neuropsychology (Psych 3227A/B).

Courses from the x300 to x799 range (300 through 700) are courses in Psychology as a social science. This range includes courses such as Health Psychology (Psych 2330A/B), Developmental Psychology (Psych 2480E), Personality Psychology (Psych 2550A/B), Educational Psychology (Psych 2620A/B), or Social Psychology (Psych 2780E). Within this range, each of the specialty areas of Psychology as a social science has its own number.

Courses numbered in the 300's are Clinical Psychology courses, the 400's are Developmental Psychology, the 500's are Personality, the 600's Educational Psychology and the 700's Social Psychology.

The 800 courses are research and statistics courses. The Huron courses in this range are Research Methods (Psych 2830A/B and Psych 3830A/B), and the Honours Thesis in Psychology (Psych 4880E).

Thus, in specifying courses from these different ranges, the module requirements are really that you have a certain number of courses in Psychology as a natural science, a certain number of courses in Psychology as a social science, and courses in research methods and statistics.

How to Read a Course Number

All course numbers are four digits, followed in some cases by a letter suffix. If you see a three digit course number, that is the old numbering system. All courses at the University of Western Ontario were changed from three digits to four digits for the 2008 academic year.

The first (left-most) digit is course level. A 1000 level course is a first year course. A 2000 is considered a second year course and usually has a 1000 level course as a prerequisite, although some courses in the low 2000's do not have any prerequisites. Although 2000 level courses are considered second year courses, students can also take 2000 level courses in their third and fourth years, depending on module requirements and other courses taken. The 3000 and 4000 courses are upper level, third and fourth year courses. Courses at the 3000 and 4000 level either have a second year (2000) course as a prerequisite or require registration in the third or fourth year of a degree module.

The second digit is the course's area within Psychology, as discussed under Course Groups above. The third and fourth digits are course specific and differentiate that course from related courses.

The course suffix describes the course as an essay course (E, F, G) or a non-essay course (A, B) and as a full (1.0 credits) or half (0.5 credits) course. Half courses are identified by A/B (half course, not essay) or by F/G (half course, essay). A full year essay course has an "E" suffix. If there is no letter after the course number, it is a full year, non-essay course.

For example, for the course Psych 3209F/G the numbers mean:

3: third year, upper level course; expect that it has a 2000-level prerequisite

2: Psychology as a natural science

09: course specific number that differentiates this course from other third year Psychology as a natural science courses

F/G: half course (0.5 credits), designated essay course

Course Selection

Once you have taken Psych 1100E and decided to do a module in Psychology you will have a wide range of courses from which to choose. Courses such as Statistics and Research Methods are required, but you will have a lot of choice for your other courses.

With a few exceptions, there is a 2000-level course corresponding to each chapter in your Intro Psych textbook. For example, in the Intro Psych textbook Chapter 3 is *The Biological Bases of Behaviour* and the 2000-level course follow-up is Psych 2210A/B, Introduction to the Biological Basis of Behaviour; for Chapter 11, *Human Development across the LifeSpan*, there is Psych 2480E, Developmental Psychology, and for Chapter 15, *Psychological Disorders*, there is Psych 2301A/B, Clinical Psychology. Which parts of Intro Psych did you find the most interesting? Use your experience in Intro Psych to help with your course selection.

Core Area Courses (Psych 2180E, 2130E, 2480E, 2780E and 2750E)

These are considered foundational courses for the Psychology program at Huron and each module stipulates a specific number from this set that are required to be completed. Although these courses are considered 2000-level courses, this does not mean they should all be taken in the second year.

Students pursuing HSP module are required to take 3 out of this set, students in the Major module are required to take 2 out of this set, and students in the Minor are required to take one of these courses. Psych 2830A is required as either a co-requisite or prerequisite course for these courses. This means that students in second year (i.e., students who have just been admitted to a Psychology module after having successfully completed first year requirements and Psych 1100E) must have Psych 2830A on their course registration timetable first in order to be able to add one of these core area courses to their timetable.

For students in the Major module, we recommend that ONE of these courses should be completed in the second year and one additional course be completed in the third year. For students in the Honours Specialization module, we recommend that one OR two of these courses should be completed in second year with the remaining course(s) completed in the third and fourth year.

It is NOT recommended for any student to take all three courses in the same academic year as this sets up a situation where the expected workload is extremely high and difficult to complete successfully.

Statistics in Psychology (Psych 2830A and 3830F/G)

These courses are also required for both the Major and HSP modules. All modules require Psych 2830A. The Major and HSP modules additionally require Psych 3830F/G, which has the prerequisite of Psych 2830A (i.e., 2830A must be completed first). For most students, Psych 2830A will be taken in 2nd year concurrently (i.e. at the same time) with at least one of the core area courses (i.e., 2180E, 2130E, 2480E, 2780E, 2750E). Psych 3830F/G may be taken any time after completion of 2830A.

It is possible to take Psych 2830A and Psych 3830F/G in one academic year (i.e., Psych 2830A in Term 1 and Psych 3830G in Term 2). You do not need to take them both in one academic year (most students do not), but you can certainly do so if you choose. For students in the Honours Specialization module, we recommend completing Psych 3830F/G before the fourth year.

Not all Psychology courses are offered every year. In order to offer a wide range of courses and with the number of Psychology professors at Huron, it is necessary to offer some courses only alternate years. For example, if you want to take the Psychology of Persuasion (Psych 3722F/G) and it is not listed in the timetable, you may have to wait until next year. This also means that if you are in your third year and a course you want to take is being offered, you may need to take it that year – it may not be available the following

year. If you have any questions about whether a course will be offered, it is best to contact the Psychology Department Chair. Information on what courses will be offered in any academic year is developed within the department and is not available to students until the formal academic timetable is released in the spring (or winter for summer courses). Departments typically have at least tentative lists of course offerings for the next three to five years. Core courses such as Research Methods, Statistics, and the Honours Thesis are always offered every year.

Essay courses and minimal writing requirements. You should know that there are specific university regulations on minimal required writing in an essay course. For example, any half year essay course (an F or G course) numbered 2000 or higher requires a minimum of 2500 words in the essay component. According to Western Academic Senate regulations, students must meet the writing requirement of an essay course to pass the course. You should also note that many non-essay courses have a writing component. If it is a non-essay course that means a minimum amount of writing is not required by university regulations but can be part of the course evaluation scheme at the discretion of the instructor.

Plan ahead with your course selection. When considering courses for your second and third years, you should look into the courses you want to take during your fourth year. What prerequisites do those courses have? It is very discouraging to arrive in fourth year and discover that you do not have the necessary prerequisite for a course that you really want to take. Make sure that prerequisites are in place.

As your interests develop and you gain experience in Psychology, upper-level courses of interest will become apparent. For example, if you develop an interest in Developmental Psychology and enjoy the course Developmental Psychology (Psych 2480E), that will lead to appropriate upper-level courses such as Development during Infancy (Psych 3450F/G) and Cognition and Aging (Psych 3137F/G). It is worth talking to your Psychology professors about courses. If you are interested in their course, ask if there are any related courses or any courses that would expand on the one you found interesting.

Should You Take Math?

If you want to do the Honours Specialization in Psychology you need 1.0 university-level math credits. The Huron Psychology Major does not require a university-level math course, but the Psychology Major on main campus does so if you are doing a Psychology Major and transfer to main campus you will need 1.0 math credits.

The Honours Specialization in Psychology module has an intimidating list of acceptable math courses, but which math to take is actually quite simple: It must be a math course numbered 1000 or higher, with the single exception that Math 0110A/B is acceptable if it is combined with either Stats 1024A/B or Math 1228A/B. Which math course you take will be determined by which high school math courses you have. Take the

math course numbered 1000 or higher that is appropriate for your high school math. If you have high school math courses that allow you a choice of university math courses, take the math that you expect to do the best in and that fits the best in your timetable. Mathematics 1228A/B and Mathematics 1229A/B, or Mathematics 1228A/B and Statistical Sciences 1024A/B are the recommended combinations.

Psychology is the science of human behaviour and as a science, quantitative skills play a central role. The math requirement in the Honours Specialization is one of the components that help to provide important training in the ability to think quantitatively and analytically, training that is important in the pursuit of science.

The Honours Thesis

What is the Honours Thesis Course?

The Honours Thesis course (Psych 4880E at Huron) is a required course for all HSP students and should be taken in the final year of your studies at Huron. This course is unlike most other courses that you take during your undergraduate career. In the Honours Thesis course, you will design, conduct, analyze, and report on an original research project under the supervision of a faculty research advisor. You will produce an Honours Thesis, which is a written monograph that describes and explains the research you conducted. It is an archival work in that the Huron Library has a physical collection of Honours Theses from Psychology going back to 1984 and since 2014 Honours Psychology thesis have been published in Western and Huron's research online repository, Scholarship@Western.

Students find doing an Honours Thesis both challenging and very rewarding. You will develop your research question because it is a topic that interests you. You then spend an entire academic year investigating that question using the existing literature, and through your own original research study. It is intellectually very rewarding to have the opportunity to go into that depth with an issue of personal interest.

In developing your research question and then conducting your research you will work closely with your thesis advisor. The thesis advisor is usually a Psychology professor at Huron.

In the thesis course, there are periodic meetings of all of the thesis students to discuss matters relevant to all, such as the procedures for ethics review. All of the thesis students meet together with the thesis course coordinator approximately once a month. You will also meet individually with your thesis advisor. Most students meet with their advisor, on average, once a week.

During some parts of the year, such as when you are developing your research hypothesis or analyzing your data, you may meet with your advisor several times a week. During other parts of the year, such as when you are testing participants and collecting your data, you and your advisor may meet only a few times a month. This is left up to the

individual advisor and student. Most of the time you will be working independently as you read, conduct your research, and write. An illustrative schedule for the thesis course is shown below.

How to Find an Advisor

During the winter of your third year you should meet with different Psychology faculty to discuss your Honours thesis. Annually in March, the Psychology program invites students who will be entering the course in the coming academic year to learn more about the course and also speak with thesis students who are currently engaged in the final phases of their thesis research about their experiences. This meeting will also provide some tips about how to find a thesis advisor. Basically, you want to find a thesis advisor that satisfies two criteria: (1) it is someone you feel comfortable working with, and (2) it is someone with the appropriate expertise.

You will be working with your thesis advisor throughout your fourth year. This usually looks like regular (weekly or highly frequent) meetings to discuss the design and details of the project, data collection and data analysis, reviewing and commenting on multiple drafts of writing (e.g. REB proposal, final written thesis), and so on. Because you will be working so closely with the faculty advisor, ask yourself if this is this someone you feel that you can work with? If so, do they have sufficient expertise in your area of interest? To truly function as an advisor requires considerable expertise. Most professors are very reluctant to take on an advisory role in an area too far outside of their specialty because they simply will not be able to provide the type of direction that is needed. From the student's perspective, an advisor with appropriate expertise is much more useful. An advisor with appropriate expertise will be familiar with the methodologies, measurement tools and statistical procedures used in that area of research, they will know the current issues and can help direct your reading. It can, for example, take many hours in the library to find a good measurement tool, such as an appropriate, validated questionnaire. If you and your advisor share interests and they have appropriate expertise, they can save you those hours of searching and frustration because they will know where to find that questionnaire; they may even have a copy in their filing cabinet.

The best way to find the right advisor for you is to meet with individual faculty members to discuss your interests. Faculty members will not expect you to start with a specific research project in mind. The more specifically you can discuss your areas of interest the better, but no one expects a student to come to an initial meeting with a research proposal.

You need to be able to discuss your interests in sufficient detail to allow you and the potential advisor to judge the suitability of your collaboration. You should talk to most if not all of the Psychology professors about your thesis to find the best fit.

When to Look for an Advisor

You should arrange to meet potential thesis advisors sometime in the middle of the second academic term of your third year (so Feb/March). Faculty members are unlikely to make specific commitments prior to reading week in February. If, however, you wait until the end of term the prof you most want to work with will very likely say, “Sorry, I already have committed to as many students as I can take next year”.

How to Register in the Thesis Course

You register for the Honours Thesis course yourself on the Student Center portal as you would with any other course. You should contact your thesis advisor during the summer before your fourth year to confirm that you will be doing your thesis.

Illustrative Schedule

Specific dates vary each year, and for each project, but the progression through the Honours Thesis can look like:

- September: develop your idea, moving from a general idea to a research hypothesis.
- Late September to mid-October: develop your methods.
- October – November: Thesis Proposal Presentation
- October – December: Ethics Application submitted to Huron REB
- December exam period: Introduction due.
- January – February: Data collection.
- Early to mid March: data analysis, writing (expect multiple drafts).
- Early April: Final written thesis due.
- April Exam Period: Oral Thesis Defence

In Summary

- (1) Choose a degree
- (2) Select the module(s) that you intend to use to fulfill the degree
- (3) Plan a schedule of courses you should take to fulfill the module.

Course Selection Advice

- (1) Take Psychology 2830A in 2nd year
- (2) Take Psychology 3830F in 3rd year
- (3) Do not take more than two of 2180E, 2130E, 2280E, 2480E, 2750E or 2780E in one year

- (4) For the Honours Specialization the norm is 3.0 Psychology courses/year
- (5) For the Major or Minor, the norm is 2.0 Psychology courses per year
- (6) Avoid Psychology courses listed 2000-2099. Note that courses in the 2000-2099 range do NOT fulfil modular requirements and might even be anti-requisite courses to 2100+ courses in the module
- (7) Consider the prerequisites for 3000-level courses in choosing 2100-level courses

What Can I Do with a Degree in Psychology?

An undergraduate degree in Psychology is an appropriate and popular background for entering Education, Medicine, Law, Social Work or Business programs.

The following list is a sample of some of the careers pursued by students who have graduated from Huron with a degree in Psychology. Note that some careers require additional training (e.g., graduate training).

Job Analyst	Rehabilitation Advisor	Music/Art Therapist	Public Information Officer
*Government	Program Manager	Employee Counselor	Probation Officer
Educational Consultant	Teacher	Child Care Worker	Health Policy Planner
Case Worker	School Psychologist	Industrial Psychologist	Group Home Coordinator
Occupational Therapist	Psychometrist	Clinical Psychologist	Speech Therapist
Counselling Psychologist	Employment Recruiter	Human Resources Specialist	Test Development Manager
Market Research Analyst	Crisis Intervention	Labour Relations Specialist	Behavioural Analyst

*Government: Includes municipal, provincial and federal government positions requiring program directors, research analysts, policy consultants, managers. Some of the federal government departments that have psychology graduates include: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, Correctional Services Canada, Health Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, Ministry of Community and Social Services, CSIS. Other community based, government sponsored organizations have hired psychology graduates as program directors, consultants and researchers.

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Continuing a Career in Psychology

There are two broad divisions in graduate work in Psychology: Experimental Psychology and Clinical Psychology. When most people think of Psychology they think of Clinical Psychology, but most psychologists are not Clinical Psychologists. You should pursue that area of Psychology that you find the most interesting. If you are interested in seeing what people with graduate degrees in Psychology do, the best sources of information are organizations such as CPA (cpa.ca) and APA (apa.org) and graduate programs in Psychology. Many Psychology graduate programs maintain a web-accessible listing of the first post-Ph.D. position of past graduates.

Clinical Psychology

Clinical Psychology graduate programs are appropriate for those who want to work as a Clinical Psychologist, therapist, or in Clinical Neuropsychology or Forensic Psychology. To be licensed as a Clinical Psychologist requires a Ph.D. from an accredited Clinical Psychology graduate program. Most Forensic Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology programs are specializations within Clinical Psychology programs.

Admission to a Clinical Psychology graduate Program is very competitive. For example, the incoming class of Clinical Psychology graduate students on main campus typically has an overall undergraduate average of 90%. If you are interested in Clinical Psychology, you may also want to think about Counselling Psychology. Students who hope to pursue Clinical Psychology often do not consider, or even know about, Counselling Psychology. To be competitive for admission into Clinical Psychology you need a 90% average; an average in the 80's can be competitive for Counselling Psychology.

Currently, the most difficult graduate or professional program to gain admission to in Canada is Clinical Psychology with a specialization in Forensic Psychology. Yes, CSI has made its way to graduate school. There are only a few clinically accredited Forensic Psychology programs in Canada (e.g., UBC, Simon Fraser University). If you want to be competitive when applying to Clinical Psychology: Forensic Psychology, you will need an average in the low 90's. It is easier to get into medical school than into a Clinical Psychology: Forensic Psychology graduate program.

Experimental Psychology

Experimental Psychology includes other areas of Psychology, such as **Behavioural Neuroscience, Cognitive, Developmental, Educational, Industrial Organization, Physiological, Sensation & Perception, or Social**. Graduate programs in School Psychology and Educational Psychology are also offered by the Faculty of Education at some universities (see under Counselling Psychology).

Counselling Psychology

If you are interested in Clinical Psychology, you should also investigate programs in **Counselling Psychology**. Counselling Psychology is closer to some student's interests

than is Clinical, it is just that they have heard less about Counselling Psychology or think that Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology are two names for the same thing. Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology are different. Counselling Psychologists focus on emotional, social, vocational/educational, health-related, and developmental concerns as they relate to personal and interpersonal functioning.

Clinical Psychologists usually work with clients with serious disturbances in mental health, such as serious anxiety disorders, anorexia nervosa, or depression. Counselling Psychologists usually work with clients with less severe complaints, such as those with self-concept and self-esteem problems, problems related to job or academic performance, and marriage and family difficulties. Some Counselling Psychologists are in private practice, some work for agencies such as the Children's Aid Society (CAS), and some work in a hospital or clinic, often as part of a team that also includes a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist or medical doctor, and social worker. If you are interested in working with people with bipolar disorder or with brain damage you want to be a clinical psychologist. If, on the other hand, you want to work as a marriage counselor or to work with clients suffering from problems related to low self esteem, you want to be a Counselling Psychologist.

Counselling Psychology is a recognized division with the American Psychological Association (Division 17) and useful information about counselling psychology can be found at their website (<http://www.div17.org/>). The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) also has a counselling psychology division, although they have less information online. You may be interested in checking out the Canadian Counselling Association website at <http://www.ccacc.ca>.

In Canada, Counselling Psychology programs are typically found within a Faculty of Education. Their home in Faculties of Education reflects the historical development of these programs, not any necessary link of Counselling Psychologists to school settings. Clinical Psychology developed within Psychology Departments and these departments were not interested in housing a second, potentially competing program. Counselling Psychology gravitated to education because early in its development, Counselling Psychology emphasized vocational guidance and advice. Although some Counselling Psychologists may still specialize in vocational and educational guidance, this is now a minor area of counselling psychology. Once established within Faculties of Education, Counselling Psychology programs tended to stay there, even though their emphasis changed. Counselling psychologists focus on personal and interpersonal functioning.

Many Faculties of Education have three separate streams: training teachers (B.Ed. programs); training education specialists (M.Ed. and Ph.D. programs in Educational School Psychology), and Counselling Psychology programs (M.A. or M.Ed. and Ph.D.). Applications to each of the three streams are separate. There are Counselling Psychology programs at Althouse at UWO, at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at U of T, and at a number of other universities. If the university has a Faculty of Education check their website, they may offer Counselling Psychology. There are also many counselling psychology programs in the U.S.

Other Graduate Programs

Apart from going into graduate studies in a Department of Psychology, we have had Psychology students enter graduate and professional programs such as Educational Psychology at the Faculty of Education, UWO, Counselling Psychology at OISE/U of T, the Occupational Therapy Masters programs at UWO and at UBC, and the Masters in Speech-Language Pathology at the School of Communication Sciences & Disorders, Elborn College, UWO. The appropriateness of a psychology undergraduate degree for these programs is clear from the admission requirements for the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology programs at UWO. According to the CSD website, admission requirements include a full course in statistics “preferably taken in a Department of Psychology” and a half course in Developmental Psychology.

To be competitive with your application to programs such as Occupational Therapy or Speech- Language Pathology you should consider completing an Honours degree. If you successfully complete the Honours Specialization in Psychology, you will receive an Honours B.A. You can also receive an Honours degree if you do a Double Major with a minimum cumulative average of 70% in each of your majors, no mark less than 60% in the courses of the modules, a passing grade in all optional courses, and a minimum overall average of 65%. See the Academic Calendar or talk to an Academic Advisor for details on module and graduation requirements.

Additional information about programs such as Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology can be found at Students Services, and online from universities that offer these programs. The UWO link for Occupational Therapy is www.uwo.ca/fhs/ot/ and for Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology it is <https://www.uwo.ca/fhs/csd/programs/slp/index.html>.

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Graduate School in Psychology

Finding a Graduate School

Graduate School (a.k.a. grad school) is a common pathway for many Psychology undergraduate students to pursue. If you’re interested in a certain area of Psychology, then grad school is definitely the place for a specialized education. Most professors and clinicians got their official title by finishing grad school, so it is a big deal in the professional realm! Grad schools typically entail working with an advisor (who works in your field of interest) within the boundaries set by a small advisory committee. Why is this important? Well, if you’re looking for grad schools, you definitely want to know who *could* be your advisor. It’s a smart decision to look at the faculty members in different programs to see their experience, reputation, and whether your interests are compatible. For example, if your goal is to focus on animal cognition, you’d want to search for programs whose advisors have loads of expertise in this research area. Picking a suitable program with good advisors will make grad school more tailored to *your* passions, and they could open doors for you after you’re done. Unfortunately, if your field of study is not matched by an advisor at a university, then it’s likely you won’t be accepted because

no one can help you. So be sure to go on your preferred program's faculty list and do your research!

If you feel like you've found amazing faculty matches, don't be shy! You can reach out for more information about their experience in the program, their research, and questions about your area of study. It is definitely preferable to contact them at least a couple of months (ish) before you plan on applying to be considerate of their time. They can tell you "behind the scenes" info that isn't necessarily shown on the university's page. If they're the only advisor in your area, they could tell you how much space is left, tips on applying, etc. There's a high chance you'll be remembered and stand out when they review your application in a few months time! If you don't get a response, don't be discouraged. Many faculty members try to practice equitable and inclusive practices to selecting graduate students and this may mean they don't want to contact prospective students before they view the final application. This makes it important to tailor your application to each specific program to which you intend to apply.

An excellent source of information about graduate programs is The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA; www.cpa.ca). CPA maintains a *Graduate Guide: Description of Graduate Psychology Programmes in Canadian Universities* (www.cpa.ca/graduate/grad1.html). The American Psychological Association (www.apa.org) has similar information about graduate programs in the U.S. You should be investigating potential graduate school programs beginning in the winter of your third year.

Application Deadlines

For admission in September, most applications are due in November and December or rarely, January prior. These deadlines are *firm*, so be sure to manage your application in advance. Organization and time management are key for this process, especially for successful applications. For each program, check their respective deadlines, requirements, and late submission policies/exceptions. Please keep in mind that international Graduate Schools do not have the same deadlines as Canadian universities, so check their respective websites! Making an excel sheet to create an overview of different programs you are interested in can be useful.

Funding

Grad school has the infamous reputation of being expensive. Honestly, sometimes it can be. But, that doesn't mean it *has* to be. Universities and government entities want to attract students to grad programs by making them more affordable (yay!) through external funding. Additionally, there is often internal funding through the university's program itself.

External funding is generally provided through government scholarships. In Canada, there is one large federal granting organization (known as the Tri-Agency) that is split into 3 main agencies: National Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR). Note that you can only apply to one of these scholarship opportunities in

any given year, not all three. Research topics in Psychology tend to fall into all three of these agencies purview— if you are unsure which of the three agencies your research area would fall into, talk to your research advisor or to the Department Chair. The province of Ontario offers the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS). The deadlines to apply are separate from graduate school applications and typically take place during early fall (October/November) of the year before you plan on attending grad school. Surprisingly, a lot of programs may require you to apply for any scholarships you're eligible for; however, if you're an international student, you cannot apply for . They consider your grades to be a large deciding factor on whether you are awarded funding. You can always talk to the Psychology Department Chair or a faculty member in Psychology about these opportunities to learn more about them and get additional support.

If you don't get external funding, do not give up! Not everyone does and that's okay. You could still get internal funding in 3 ways: Teaching assistantships (TA-ships), research assistantships (RA-ships), and institutional scholarships. TA-ships mean you get to aid the professor in teaching undergraduate courses. Presenting tutorials, grading, and helping students are a large part of your responsibilities. Even though that sounds “mid”, it teaches you invaluable soft and hard skills to progress your career after graduation. Same goes for RA-ships, except your responsibilities are working with a professor on a research project. In addition to working with an advisor, you can work with different faculty members to widen your scope and gain additional experiences. Lastly, there are institutional scholarships from the university. Some can be automatic, and others may require applications.

International students, unfortunately, do not have the same funding opportunities as domestic students. They cannot apply for SSHRC or NSERC funding, which means that their funding options are limited. However, Ontario governmental scholarships are still an option, which can be super helpful with tuition costs!

Important notes: the amount of financial support from institutional scholarships varies from university to university.

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Graduate School Applications

Application Components

To apply to a graduate program in psychology you will need:

1. Honours Degree in Psychology (Honours Thesis)
3. Reference Letters (2-3)
4. Undergraduate Transcript
5. A Statement of Interest/Intent
6. Graduate Record Exam (GRE) Scores (this may be optional depending on program)

Honours Thesis

An Honours Degree at Huron implies a thesis in your 4th year. A thesis course shows graduate programs that you're capable of doing statistics and independent research. If you didn't enjoy doing that, we have some bad news. A large portion of grad school *is* research! This is exactly why picking a specialty that you're interested in with an appropriate advisor is important. An Honours degree also shows grad schools that you've done more than an average undergraduate degree.

Graduate Record Exam (GRE) Scores

Disclaimer: The GRE is no longer a mandatory standardized test for most graduate programs in Canada. Some Canadian universities still consider the GRE if you submit it, but in most cases, they do not. Understanding the GRE is still important if your program takes it into consideration or if you would want to study in America.

The GRE is a common standardized test that many U.S. and few Canadian graduate programs consider. As for psychology graduate programs, you may need to take 2 GREs (depending on the university):

- The GRE-Psychology: This is one of the GRE-Subject tests that focuses on your breadth and general knowledge in Psychology and some statistics.
- The GRE-General: The three test sections are Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, and Quantitative Reasoning.

To dive deeper into the GRE and their different tests, visit [ets](https://ets.org). Since this is a requirement for some universities, it is definitely smart to prep a couple months ahead to reach a high percentile! That being said, the specifications for the GRE can vary highly between programs. Some may not require it, some may value specific sections more, and some may use it to verify that your undergraduate transcript is a good representation of your abilities as a student. If the graduate program to which you intend to apply requires the GRE, you should take the test in the spring/summer of the year you intend to apply (i.e., if you are applying to graduate school for the upcoming September, you should have taken the GRE the previous May/June).

GRE Scores

As previously mentioned, your GRE score can be converted to a percentile. Now, obviously, the higher the percentile the better. But! If standardized testing isn't your thing, don't worry! Universities publish their minimum threshold for GRE scores and undergraduate transcripts. If you pass that threshold, there is a *much* higher chance they'll look at the rest of your transcript. So, if you're like, "*ew I hate standardized tests I fail them all the time!*" Then all you have to do is get above that threshold. However, we would be doing you a disservice if we did not encourage you to get the highest score that you're capable of because, in the end, this test can be weighted heavily for some programs.

When to Write the GREs

If you're only taking one GRE test, you should write it about a year before you plan on starting your graduate studies. In other words, the late summer or fall before you apply. If you're taking both the General and the Subject test, it is *highly* recommended you space them out. Take one exam during the early summer, and leave a couple months gap to give yourself time to study for the second exam in the fall. This way, you'll give yourself a fair shot to do your best in both. It is imperative that you sign up for the GRE months in advance, usually around 3. We have an ets testing center in London, but spots fill up very quickly due to the high demand. So plan ahead, and get your spot!

How to Prepare for the GREs

Again, prepare in *advance*. Don't leave it to the last second. A lot of the time, people struggle with the difficult timing aspect of the GRE; a.k.a., they spend too much time on one question and don't leave enough for the rest. It's very normal, but it shouldn't be the reason you can't score higher! This is what test prep is for. ETS's GRE prep kit introduces you to the types of questions that are asked, and you can even time yourself once you're familiar. They also offer flashcards and mentor courses, both of which are useful depending on what type of learner you are. So, *pretty please*, start preparing in advance, schedule your test in advance, and make yourself proud.

Reference Letters

There is a very common misconception when it comes to recommendation letters. Some people may opt to ask a professor for a recommendation letter if they have a high grade in their class. This seems reasonable, right? Well, yes that's not a bad idea, but it might not be the most *effective* letter if they don't know you well. Graduate schools take reference letters at face value. They know only what is written. Any reference letter can include statements such as, "they manage to earn very high grades due to their advanced understanding," or, "they are always on time to class and submit assignments when due." What you need to stand out is a personal reference letter from a prof who knows you beyond your grades. This is one of Huron's biggest advantages. Our small class size already provides a basis for our professors to know students by name and personality. It's up to you to strengthen the knowledge your prof has of you. Ask if they need help in a lab, go up to them and have a conversation, be engaged in class, etc. Also, if you want a higher chance of them agreeing to write your letter, ask at least 4 to 6 weeks in advance. Otherwise, they might say no simply because they don't have enough time.

When asking for a letter of reference, you should include ALL the pertinent information needed for the letter should be included in the initial request. This would include the total number of programs to which you are applying and require a letter, the deadline dates, your transcript, resume/CV, what specific information YOU require from the professor (such as their contact information), and any other relevant information that would be needed by the prof to write you a strong letter. Professors often have many letters to write for many students within a very short span of time, so be organized when you make your request! Also note that asking for more than 5 or 6 letters from one professor is a huge ask

– if you plan to apply to more than 5 or 6 schools in one year, you should consider distributing the reference letters across more than a few professors.

Undergraduate Transcript

Most graduate programs look at your marks from the last 2 years of your undergraduate degree (3rd and 4th year or your last 20 half courses/10 full courses). If you are applying in your 4th year of study, this would mean that your transcript at the time of application (end of December/early January) would only include at best your first term marks from Year 4 so to make up the 20 half courses, the average would also include the Term 2 grades from your 2nd year. Moreover, they pay more attention to the grades you achieve in your core psychology classes. One “iffy” grade can be overlooked, but they’re just trying to gauge your consistency and performance as a student. It is also valued if you take challenging courses because (1) it allows you to explore what you do/don’t want to pursue in graduate school and (2) shows you’re ready for the complexity of graduate studies. It is also an advantage if you have breadth in your courses, whether that’s shown by (1) different fields of psychology or (2) a variety of electives. Overall, they are going to care mostly about your psychology and statistics courses because they represent a level of understanding that is expected of students upon admission. Many universities have a minimum threshold of an 80% average, but just because you meet the threshold doesn’t mean your application is competitive.

Personal Statement

Many programs will require a personal statement, or a “mini essay”. This is your opportunity to show them who you are and why they should choose you. They’ve already seen your grades, your GRE scores, and your reference letters, so really focus on setting yourself apart from that. They don’t need to read that you have an A-average, they already see that. Tell them about what’s not there. Do not simply say, “I want to help people,” or divulge extremely personal stories. These are common mistakes that admissions officers see every single year. If you want to know everything not to write, you can look up a study done by Appleby & Appleby (2006), where admissions officers recognize KODs, or “Kisses of Death”, that automatically make a personal statement fail. Again, set yourself apart and show them how you surpass all of the other applicants. You should show them professional experience, in-depth understanding of your area in Psychology, extracurriculars, and the skills you’ve developed throughout your undergraduate years. This should be a narrative of your academic and non-academic/extracurricular experiences as they fit with the program of study to which you are applying. If you have aberrations in your transcript (e.g. gaps or atypically low or high grades), use the personal statement to explain or provide context.

What About Experience?

There are two types of experience that you could have: Research and Relevant experience. Research experience shows the admissions committee that you know the basics surrounding research and, because of your interest in it, continued to apply to graduate studies. This removes their doubt that you can’t handle the academic environment and won’t be able to adapt to their expectations. If you’re in Honours

Specialization in Psychology, then you already have research experience built-in to your fourth year; however, at the time of your application, you'll only have 4 months of your thesis underway. If you really want to show the committee about your commitment to research, find opportunities outside of your program. Being a volunteer research assistant (RA) to one of your profs is an incredible opportunity. You will get to work in a lab, establish a strong relationship with your professor for reference letters, and understand if research is what you want to do! So don't be afraid and just approach a professor who you'd like to work with. More often than not, they could use the help. Relevant experience, on the other hand, is moreso for clinical applicants. Clinical students are trained as both practitioners and researchers, so the soft skills you'd learn from volunteering are valuable. These are mostly [volunteer opportunities](#) where you work with a clinical population such as the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), St Joseph's Health Care, ANOVA, or Wellspring.

Competition

Yes, graduate programs are competitive. The acceptance rate for Canadian Experimental Psychology programs is around 12-15% while Clinical Psychology programs are around 5-8%. But are they impossible to get into? No! Which is why we're here to help you. Meeting the minimum criteria for each program is critical to apply, but it doesn't necessarily mean you're a competitive applicant. Some universities distinguish their minimum criteria versus what they find competitive, so look out for that. But keep in mind, you should still apply to a program you're interested in even if your grades/scores are "not competitive". Some programs might accept you based on your reference letters and statement of interest. As for the application process, the committee deems if you are (1) accepted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, (2) accepted into the Psychology Department, and (3) accepted to their indicated specialty. When the committee answers (1), they will be deciding based on your undergraduate program, transcript, and GRE. After that, they answer (2) using the previous information as well as your statement of interest and reference letters. Lastly, (3) is mainly based on your passion in your statement of interest, your abilities listed in the reference letters, and the professors who would be most likely to advise you. Please don't hesitate to ask around if you have any questions about Graduate Studies. We wish you the best of luck in your application process! You've got this.

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Closing Comments

Enjoy your psychology courses and follow your interests – they will lead somewhere interesting and personally fulfilling. If you decide to pursue Psychology or a closely allied area, you will be entering a fascinating, still developing field. If your professional life takes you in a different direction, you will surely remember your study of psychology with fondness and this background will serve you well in your future endeavours. We hope that it will also foster a lasting interest in the science of human behaviour.

Dr. Mitchell chose to close this handbook off with two quotations that, he thought, summarize psychology and its importance. The first is from Gordon Allport, a pioneering psychologist of the mid-twentieth century who laid much of the groundwork for modern personality theory. The other, by the poet T. S. Eliot, summarizes our exploration of ourselves in psychology.

“Much of our lives is spent in trying to understand others and in wishing others understood us better than they do.”

Gordon Allport

*We shall not cease from
exploration And the end of
all our exploring Will be to
arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

T.S. Eliot,
Little Gidding

And a final word by scientist and author Carl Sagan:

“Perhaps the most fascinating and mysterious universe of all is the one within us.”