

# Choosing Between the General and Intensive Psychology Majors

*Sent to Psychology undergraduates on Monday, November 9, 2020*

*\*\*\*Sent on behalf of Psychology Department Vice Chair Dahl\*\*\**

Dear Students:

As we approach Advising Week and Winter Enrollment, many of you are deciding between the General and Intensive Psychology Majors. Some of you worry about finding Field Study placements (Psych 193) or research assistant positions (Psych 194), which are required for the Intensive Major. COVID-19 and remote instruction have, inevitably, reduced the number of field study placements and research assistant positions this year. I am writing to offer some advice as you decide which psychology major to pursue.

- **The classes you take matter a lot; the psychology major you choose does not.** Whether you pursue a career in clinical work, research, or industry, the psychology classes you take matter far more than the type of psychology major you choose. As someone who reviews applications for graduate school, I can assure you that I have never considered whether an applicant had a General or Intensive Psychology Major. The requirements of the Intensive Major guide students toward courses that are especially relevant to students pursuing a graduate degree in clinical work or research. But students in the General Psychology Major can also take those courses if they want, without the pressure of having to take additional classes. If I were in your situation, and faced the uncertainties of remote instruction and COVID-19, I might have picked the General Psychology major and then added other classes relevant to my career goals (e.g., Psych 181, Psych 194...).
- **If you have one quarter of Psych 193/194/195/199, but can't find a spot for a second quarter, you can petition for the Intensive Major.** If you go with the Intensive Major, but you are only able to find one quarter of Psych 193/194/195/199, you can submit a petition. In your petition, you should explain why you were unable to find a spot in Psych 193/194/195/199 for a second quarter (e.g., because the Field Study site could no longer host students). Please submit your petition to [psyadv@ucsc.edu](mailto:psyadv@ucsc.edu).
- **If you are an Intensive Major, but haven't met all the course requirements, you can switch to General Psychology Major.** The requirements for the Intensive Psychology Major overlap with the requirements for the General Psychology Major. If you're a declared Intensive Psychology Major, and you haven't been able to take Psych 193/194/195/199 or Psych 181 or 182, you can easily switch to General Psychology by sending an email to [psyadv@ucsc.edu](mailto:psyadv@ucsc.edu).

I hope that this email offers you some comfort and guidance. With or without Psych 193/194/195/199, you can graduate from UCSC with a degree in Psychology. The classes you choose, the skills you learn, and the people you encounter will open the doors of your future. We in the Psychology Department are excited to support you on that journey.

Best wishes,

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