

USU Online Psychology Bachelor's Degree Ranks #21 in the Nation

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The Department of Psychology, housed within the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services, has been a trailblazer when it comes to producing a top-notch online bachelor's degree program. In February, U.S. News & World Report announced its annual rankings for top online degrees in 2024, and USU's online Psychology Bachelor's Degree was ranked 21st in the nation.

"Our online psychology bachelor's degree is deeply embedded; it's not a sidekick," says Scott Bates, department head and professor in the Department of Psychology. "It's in the core of our curriculum and everything we do. Our faculty are willing and eager to work with students in an online setting. They are committed to students having an authentic undergrad research experience."

Bates explains that faculty members opt to teach online courses, just like they select to instruct in-person courses. "Several of our tenured professors have found they want to teach online at least once a year," he says. "They care about these online courses and enjoy teaching in that dynamic environment. Many of these courses have become so popular with our traditional students that they also want to take these courses online due to the experienced faculty and subject matter."

In 2024, the online program served:

- 200 full-time online psychology majors.

- 793 psychology majors enrolled in multiple instructional modes, including online psychology courses (online plus at least one other mode).
- A total enrollment of 3,041 students in online psychology courses.

Faculty in the Department of Psychology agree that an online undergraduate program should provide superior coursework. Currently, there are two co-directors for the program: Jennifer Grewe, associate professor of psychology, and Crissa Draper, associate professor of psychology. Both have championed the program and grown it into one of the most highly sought after online bachelor's degrees at USU.

"We put a lot of emphasis on the online program," shared Draper. "If we can't offer a course online and do it well, then we are not going to offer it. There are two of us overseeing the undergrad online program and inside every question we ask is another question: How does this work online? The online curriculum is not an afterthought; we want to ensure that every student is receiving a quality education and experience."

Draper has run a fully online research lab since 2018. She explains that most of her students in the lab are women who have chosen to be stay-at-home moms. "These lab experiences allow for a different demographic dynamic, which provides these students with the opportunity to do research. In a traditional setting, this would not be able to happen. These students are thriving."

Kaelyn Rossi, a current student in the online psychology program, describes her experience. "I'm now finishing my degree in my mid-30s as a working mother of two," she says. "Completing my degree online opened a door that otherwise wouldn't have existed, especially since I live nearly 45 minutes from the nearest satellite campus. This flexibility has allowed me to achieve my goal while maintaining balance in a life I love. I've been so impressed by my professors' dedication to my success and their understanding that life exists beyond the classroom. Overall, it has been a great experience."

Valedictorian of the Psychology Department in 2024, Kylen Aycock completed his bachelor's degree through the online program. "As a nontraditional student, I had to contend with a full-time work schedule as well as taking care of my family while also completing classes," he says. "There were many things that I enjoyed about my time in this program. Despite not meeting my classmates face-to-face, there were still many opportunities to interact with them. Most classes utilized frequent discussions

in which we were able to talk about our thoughts on the material and discuss differing opinions on various subjects.”

U.S. News & World Report recognizes USU as one of Utah's top-ranking online universities and one of the top universities in the western United States. Entering its 30th year, USU Online continues to fulfill USU's land-grant mission by offering online education outside of its traditional campus setting.

These rankings were released by U.S News & World Report after a competitive screening process of more than 300 universities. Highly ranked programs have strong traditional academic foundations based on student-instructor access, graduation rates, and instructor credentials. They also excel at educating distance learners while offering robust career and financial support.

For more information on the online psychology bachelor's degree at USU, please visit the [website](#).