

USU Psychology to Launch New Behavioral Neuroscience Major

09/30/2026



Associate Professor Christopher Warren and doctoral students Sandys Ayuumah and Chloe

Taylor demonstrate how to use an electroencephalography cap during a lab experiment.

The Psychology Department within the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences at Utah State University will launch a new behavioral neuroscience program for undergraduate students in October. Students can begin coursework in January.

Behavioral neuroscience examines the relationship between the brain and behavior and includes training in chemistry, biology, and psychology. Behavioral neuroscience gives students specialized knowledge and practical skills that prepare them for a variety of educational paths and careers in research, health, technology, and other rapidly developing areas.

Scott Bates, Ph.D. and head of the Psychology Department at USU, explained that student interest was the primary motivator in the creation of the new major. Currently, psychology is one of the most popular majors at USU, with an average of 200 students graduating with a bachelor's degree each spring. Many of those have expressed a desire to dive deeper into connections between the brain and behavior during their time as undergraduates at USU.

"Our behavioral neuroscience degree came directly out of conversations with our students," said Bates. "We were hearing from students who were deeply interested in the connections between the brain and behavior and wanted

a degree that would let them pursue those interests in a focused way.

Students in the program will build a strong foundation in neuroscience, brain and behavior, biology, chemistry, research methods, and quantitative reasoning. They will also have opportunities to explore areas such as cognition, learning, genetics, neurodevelopment, mental health and psychological disorders, and behavior analysis.

"One of the things that distinguishes our program is its strength in behavior analysis," said Christopher Warren, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology and director of the behavioral neuroscience program. "USU has nationally recognized expertise in the experimental analysis of behavior, giving students an opportunity to study behavior using rigorous experimental and quantitative approaches."

Students who earn their bachelor's degree in behavioral neuroscience from USU can step directly into the workforce and pursue careers in research, public health, laboratory sciences, and other related fields. Students can also choose to continue their education through graduate school or professional training. The USU behavioral neuroscience program is designed to align well with many common medical-school prerequisites.

"One of the great strengths of our program is that it prepares students for a wide range of options after graduation," Warren explained. "Utah's growing technology industry is one example of where this training can be especially valuable, because tech employers increasingly need people who understand human behavior and have experience with experimental design and data analysis."

Undergraduate students can apply to the USU behavioral neuroscience program next month by reaching out to their academic advisor or emailing psyadvising@usu.edu. The Psychology Department will also host an open house from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Oct. 22 in the International Lounge at the Taggart Student Center. Students may meet with faculty, ask questions about the program, and apply to the program if they are interested.

For more information, visit the USU [behavioral neuroscience program](#) website or email psychology@usu.edu. To learn more about the Psychology Department, visit cehhs.usu.edu/psychology.