

FAQ relating to the BioPsychology Specialization (BIPS-S-3) offered jointly by the Departments of Biology & Psychology

What is the difference between a double major in Biology and Psychology and the BioPsychology specialization?

A **double major in Biology and Psychology** requires students to complete the core requirements for both departments, but does not provide an integrated focus on the biological basis of behaviour.

The **BioPsychology specialization** is an interdisciplinary program that draws on both biological and psychological perspectives to examine behaviour, brain function, and mental processes. Rather than requiring fully integrated courses, the program allows students to build this interdisciplinary foundation through coordinated coursework in Biology and Psychology. A key distinction is that students in the BioPsychology specialization **are eligible to complete a Biology thesis**, provided they meet the academic requirements and secure a willing supervisor in Biology.

Can I do a thesis in the BioPsychology specialization?

Yes. Students in the BioPsychology specialization may complete a **Biology thesis**, subject to meeting the required GPA and program criteria and obtaining a supervisor in the Department of Biology. Note that they may have a co-supervisor from the Department of Psychology where appropriate, but the primary supervisor must be from Biology.

Can I do a thesis through the Department of Psychology?

No. The Department of Psychology does not offer theses to students of the BioPsychology program. BioPsychology students may **only complete a thesis where the primary supervisor is appointed to the Department of Biology**. However, similar to a thesis, BioPSYC students who obtain a research supervisor in Psychology have the opportunity to complete up to 9.0 units in directed research in Psychology through PSYC-directed lab courses (PSYC299/570/575).

Is BioPsychology considered a Biology or Psychology program?

BioPsychology is an **interdisciplinary program** that includes **roughly equal coursework in Biology and Psychology**. Students graduate with a **Bachelor of Science (BSch)** degree.

Will I be prepared for graduate school in Psychology?

Yes. Many BioPsychology graduates pursue graduate studies in **Psychology, Neuroscience, Cognitive Science, or related fields**. Graduate programs have specific prerequisite requirements, so students are encouraged to review these early and plan their course selection accordingly. To get appropriate research experience, such students are strongly encouraged to seek out opportunities to become involved with psychology research here at Queen's through one of the many research labs run by Department of Psychology faculty.

Can I apply to medical school from BioPsychology?

Yes. BioPsychology can be a strong pathway to medical school, provided students complete the required medical school prerequisite courses. Careful elective planning is recommended.

Do I need research experience to succeed in BioPsychology?

Research experience is **strongly encouraged** -particularly for students considering graduate or professional school. Opportunities include volunteering and/or participating in directed lab courses in the labs of Department of Psychology faculty, summer research positions (SWEP/USRA/USSRF), research mentorships, and/or a Biology thesis.

What kinds of careers do BioPsychology graduates pursue?

Graduates of BioPsychology pursue a wide range of career paths including:

- ✚ Graduate or professional school (e.g., psychology, neuroscience, medicine, education)
- ✚ Research and laboratory-based careers
- ✚ Healthcare and allied health professions (e.g., occupational therapy, speech-language pathology)
- ✚ Education, policy, and science communication
- ✚ Biotechnology, pharmaceutical, and data-related fields

Are there any recommended courses for BioPsychology students?

Yes. In addition to completing all required courses for the **BioPsyc specialization**, BioPsychology students are **strongly encouraged** to take **PSYC 271** and **PSYC 370** as a part of the **Psychology Option courses**, as these courses provide important background in neuroscience and brain-behaviour relationships that are highly relevant to the program.

Who should I contact if I have questions about the BioPsychology program?

Students with questions about BioPsychology should contact the **Department of Biology Undergraduate Administrative Coordinator** or the **Department of Psychology Undergraduate Assistant** for the most accurate and up-to-date information.

The BioPsychology Program Student Council can be contacted for information about **student-led events, academic and professional development initiatives, peer support, and opportunities to get involved** in the BioPsychology community. The council also serves as a point of contact for student feedback and advocacy related to the program experience.

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