



# 1.1 Why Study Psychology

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## Objectives:

1. Describe the range of topics that are covered in an introductory psychology class.
2. Cite the goals and scientific basis of psychology.



# I. Basic Human Functions

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- A. Physiological Needs: basic physical needs needed for human survival. These include sleep, thirst, and hunger.
  
- B. Cognitive: simply stated, this deals with thinking and understanding.



## II. Gaining Insight Into Behavior

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- A. Psychology can provide valuable insight into a person's behavior.
  
- B. Awareness about one's behaviors can cause people to make deliberate attempts to change or adapt to these behaviors.  
(i.e. Social skills and interactions)



## III. Overview of Psychology

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- A. Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. This can involve both human and animal behavior.
  
- B. Psychology covers all things that people think, feel, and do.



## IV. Four Goals of Psychology

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- A. Describe behavior. Gather information about a given behavior and tell what is known.
  
- B. Explain behavior. Psychologists try to explain why people and animals act as they do. A possible explanation of behavior is called a hypothesis. More researched and tested explanations are called theories.



## IV. Four Goals of Psychology

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C. Predict behavior. Psychologists, based on accumulated knowledge, will try to predict how animals and humans will react in a certain situation.



## IV. Four Goals of Psychology

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- D. Influence behavior. Psychologists try to influence behavior in helpful ways. This is done in two ways:

Basic Science: conducting long-term studies to gain simple knowledge (research).

Applied Science: discovering ways to use scientific findings to accomplish practical goals.



## IV. Four Goals of Psychology

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Word of Caution: Some discoveries of basic science cannot easily be applied to real situations.

Example: basic science has found that children who lack stimulation are slow to develop. This helps psychologists who are working with neglected children, but it does not tell what kind of stimulation is most helpful.



# IV. The Scientific Basis of Psychology

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Psychologists use the scientific method.

