The Program in Teaching offers a coordinated cluster of courses, advising and field work that give students the opportunity to study the ideas, questions, and practices involved in good teaching at all levels. The Program seeks to promote and facilitate an exchange of ideas about teachers, learners, and schools, within and beyond the Williams campus. The Program offers a range of opportunities including courses on education, intensive supervised student teaching, workshops, advising, lecture series, and ongoing peer groups for those who teach.

Students may participate in a variety of ways, ranging from taking one course to a sustained in-depth study of teaching and learning geared to those who want to become teachers or educational psychologists. We seek to connect students with one another, to bring in expert teachers to provide mentoring, and to create links across the curriculum so that students can see the vital connections between what they study (French, Algebra or Biology, for example) and the process of teaching those topics to elementary and high school students. The Program is open to any student interested in education and offers opportunities for all levels of interest, including those who want to find out about certification and graduate study.

No specific major is required to participate—although some lend themselves easily to certification, such as Mathematics, English, Biology, American History, or French, almost all of our majors can provide the basis of teacher certification. Alternately, students can major in Psychology, take a concentration of courses in a different field, and then pursue that content area more intensively in graduate work. More information can be found at program-in-teaching.williams.edu.

TEAC Related Courses

AMST 379 (F) American Pragmatism
Cross-listings: AMST 379 PHIL 379

Secondary Cross-listing
Along with jazz, pragmatism stands as the greatest uniquely American contribution to world culture. As the music wails in the background, we will study the classic pragmatists: William James, C. S. Peirce, and John Dewey. We will continue with the contemporary inheritors of the tradition: Cornel West, Richard Rorty, and Hilary Putnam. Although it has influenced both analytic and continental philosophy, pragmatism is a powerful third philosophical movement. Always asking what practical difference would it make, our authors investigate the central questions and disputes of philosophy, from epistemology and metaphysics to ethics and religion. Rather than seeing philosophy as an esoteric discipline, the pragmatic philosophers (with the possible exception of Peirce) see philosophy as integral to our culture and see themselves as public intellectuals.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: final paper, several short assignments
Prerequisites: at least two PHIL courses
Enrollment Limit: 25
Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy and American Studies majors, then seniors and juniors of any major
Expected Class Size: 12-15
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
AMST 379 (D2) PHIL 379 (D2)
Attributes: AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives PHIL History Courses TEAC Related Courses

Not offered current academic year

PSYC 341 (S) Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination
Cross-listings: WGSS 339 PSYC 341

Primary Cross-listing
This course will examine social psychological theories and research that are relevant to the understanding of stereotypes, prejudice, and
discrimination. We will take a variety of social psychological perspectives, emphasizing sociocultural, cognitive, personality, or motivational explanations. We will examine the impact that stereotypes and prejudice have on people’s perceptions of and behaviors toward particular groups or group members and will explore a variety of factors that tend to exacerbate or weaken this impact. We also will consider some of the sources of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination and some of the processes through which they are maintained, strengthened, or revised. In addition, we will examine some of the effects that stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination can have on members of stereotyped groups, as well as some implications of the social psychological research findings for issues such as education and business and government policies. A major component of this course will be the examination of classic and ongoing empirical research.

Class Format: empirical lab course
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly brief papers, oral reports, two longer papers
Prerequisites: PSYC 201 and 242
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: senior, then junior Psychology majors
Expected Class Size: 16
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
WGSS 339 (D2) PSYC 341 (D2)
Attributes: AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora ASAM Related Courses PSYC Area 4 - Social Psychology PSYC Empirical Lab Course TEAC Related Courses

Spring 2020
LAB Section: 02  M 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm  Steven Fein
LEC Section: 01  R 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm  Steven Fein
LAB Section: 02  M 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm  Steven Fein
LEC Section: 01  R 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm  Steven Fein

TEAC Teaching Sequence Courses

PSYC 101  (F)(S) Introductory Psychology
An introduction to the major subfields of psychology: behavioral neuroscience, cognitive, developmental, social, and psychological disorders and treatment. The course aims to acquaint students with the major methods, theoretical points of view, and findings of each subfield. Important concepts are exemplified by a study of selected topics and issues within each of these areas.
Requirements/Evaluation: two lab reports, unit quizzes, and a final exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: none
Expected Class Size: 160
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: NSCI Required Courses TEAC Teaching Sequence Courses

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01  MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am  Nate Kornell, Clarence J. Gillig

Spring 2020
LEC Section: 01  MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am  Noah J. Sandstrom, Clarence J. Gillig

PSYC 232  (F)(S) Developmental Psychology
An introduction to the study of human growth and development from conception through emerging adulthood. Topics for discussion include prenatal and infant development, perceptual and motor development, language acquisition, cognitive development, and social and emotional development. These topics form the basis for a discussion of the major theories of human development, including those about early experience, neural plasticity, dynamic systems, information processing, social learning, attachment, and family systems.

Class Format: discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: attendance and active class participation, 3 exams (2 midterms and final), and regular writing assignments

Prerequisites: PSYC 101

Enrollment Limit: 50

Enrollment Preferences: sophomores and junior Psychology majors

Expected Class Size: 50

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: PSYC 200-level Courses  TEAC Teaching Sequence Courses

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01  MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm  Eliza L Congdon

Spring 2020
LEC Section: 01  Cancelled

PSYC 242  (F)(S) Social Psychology

A survey of theory and research in social psychology. Topics include the self, social perception, conformity, attitudes and attitude change, prejudice, aggression, altruism, attraction and love, intergroup conflict, and cultural psychology. Applications in the areas of advertising, law, business, and health will also be discussed.

Requirements/Evaluation: two in-class exams, one paper and a final exam

Enrollment Limit: 50

Expected Class Size: 50

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: PSYC 200-level Courses  TEAC Teaching Sequence Courses

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01  TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm  Steven Fein

Spring 2020
LEC Section: 01  MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm  Jeremy D. Cone

PSYC 272  (S) Psychology of Education

This course introduces students to a broad range of theories and research on education. What can developmental research tell us about how children learn? What models of teaching work best, and for what purposes? How do we measure the success of various education practices? What is the best way to describe the psychological processes by which children gain information and expertise? What accounts for individual differences in learning, and how do teachers (and schools) address these individual needs? How do social and economic factors shape teaching practices and the educational experiences of individual students? The course will draw from a wide range of literature (research, theory, and first hand accounts) to consider key questions in the psychology of education. Upon completion of the course, students should be familiar with central issues in pre-college education and know how educational research and the practice of teaching affect one another.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: two exams and a final project
Prerequisites: PSYC 101
Enrollment Limit: 50
Enrollment Preferences: Psychology majors and those who plan to become teachers
Expected Class Size: 50
Grading: no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: PSYC 200-level Courses, TEAC Teaching Sequence Courses

Spring 2020
LEC Section: 01    TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm     Susan L. Engel

PSYC 327  (F)  Cognition and Education
This class will focus on basic research into the cognitive processes underlying learning. How does the mind encode, store, and retrieve knowledge? How do learners (and teachers) manage their own learning? How do educational practices depart from what research recommends? The readings will be scientific articles. Students will do original research.

Class Format: empirical lab
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, daily quizzes, research papers
Prerequisites: PSYC 201 and PSYC 221 or 222, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: Psychology majors
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: COGS Interdepartmental Electives, PSYC Area 2 - Cognitive Psychology, PSYC Empirical Lab Course, TEAC Teaching Sequence Courses
Not offered current academic year

PSYC 332  (S)  Children's Mathematical Thinking and Learning
Are babies statistical experts? Will I ever be good at calculus? What are we born with and what do we learn? Before children are ever taught formal mathematics in a classroom, they are confronted with situations where they must use their informal understanding of geometry, space, and number to successfully navigate their environments. In this course we read and discuss both foundational and cutting-edge articles from neuroscience, cognitive science, education, and psychology to understand how humans bridge this gap between the informal and formal mathematical worlds. We will also tackle questions such as: How do culture and language affect numerical understanding? What are the sources of children¿s mathematical misconceptions? What are the effects of early environmental input or input deprivation on mathematical development? What do we know about gender differences in math achievement? How do stereotypes, prejudice, and math anxiety affect math performance? For your laboratory component, you will work with a small group of other students to develop an original research project that tests a specific hypothesis about children¿s mathematical thinking and learning. Data will be collected in community schools, with the permission of parents, teachers, and children. Your results will be written-up in for your final paper, which will be in the style of an empirical journal article.

Class Format: seminar/laboratory; community-based data collection in local schools
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, discussion leader, weekly open-notes reading quizzes, 12- to 15-page final paper, project and lab report
Prerequisites: PSYC 232 or permission of the instructor
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: Psychology majors, upperclassmen, students with a demonstrated interest in the course material
Expected Class Size: 16
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
PSYC 338  (S) Inquiry, Invention and Ideas
Children tinker, explore and create, but some more than others, and under some conditions more than others. What leads children to investigate, invent and build their own ideas? We will examine the development of curiosity, invention, and the ability to have or construct an idea. We will also look at what accounts for individual differences between children, including the role of intelligence, creativity, social cues, and opportunity. We will look at how these processes unfold at home and in school, and discuss the educational implications of the research we read, and the research we conduct.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: three 3-5 page essays, two child observations and a 7-10 page final paper
Prerequisites: PSYC 101, and PSYC 232 or PSYC 272, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: preference given to Psychology majors
Expected Class Size: 16
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: PSYC Area 3 - Developmental Psychology  TEAC Teaching Sequence Courses

Spring 2020
SEM Section: 01  W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm  Susan L. Engel

PSYC 372  (F) Advanced Seminar in Teaching and Learning
This advanced seminar will give students an opportunity to connect theory to practice. Each student will have a teaching placement in a local school, and participate in both peer and individual supervision. In addition, we will read a range of texts that examine different approaches to teaching, as well as theory and research on the process of education. What is the best way to teach? How do various theories of child development and teaching translate into everyday practices with students? Students will be encouraged to reflect on and modify their own teaching practices as a result of what we read as well as their supervision. Questions we will discuss include: What is the relationship between educational goals and curriculum development? What is the relation between substance (knowledge, skills, content) and the interpersonal dynamic inherent in a classroom setting? How do we assess teaching practices and the students' learning? What does it take to be an educated person?

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: this course involves a field placement, weekly readings, as well as seminar discussion, supervision, and a graded journal
Prerequisites: PSYC 232 or PSYC 272 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: Psychology majors and those who plan to become teachers
Expected Class Size: 16
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses  PSYC Area 7 - Educational Psychology  TEAC Teaching Sequence Courses

Not offered current academic year