

Nomination to the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List:
CIP 42.0101 General Psychology

I am writing on behalf of the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences ([FABBS](#)), a coalition of 27 scientific societies and nearly 60 academic departments whose members share a commitment to advancing knowledge in the sciences of the mind, brain, and behavior.

I write to nominate CIP 42.0101 General Psychology to the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List. The National Center for Education Statistics [defines](#) 42.0101 as “A general program that focuses on the scientific study of individual and collective behavior, the physical and environmental bases of behavior, and the analysis and treatment of behavior problems and disorders. Includes instruction in the principles of the various subfields of psychology, research methods, and psychological assessment and testing methods.”

PhD programs at R1 and R2 Research Universities are frequently classified under one CIP code, and historically many are classified under General Psychology (42.0101), which is currently not on the DHS list of STEM CIP codes. PhD programs at R1 and R2 Research Universities generally require that students enter the program having taken coursework in the natural sciences (biology, zoology), advanced mathematics (e.g., calculus), and statistics. An increasing number of tracks within PhD Psychology programs require students enter the program having taking coursework in programming (i.e., computer science).

Upon matriculation, the core curriculum in PhD programs at R1 and R2 Research Universities requires coursework in scientific methods, advanced statistics including statistical modeling, and depending on the specific area of research, focused coursework in the natural sciences (neuroscience, neuroanatomy, physiology, immunology, genetics). As part of their statistical training, PhD Psychology students are increasingly learning programming in R, Python, or programming related to specific statistical packages (Stata, SAS, etc.). Many students incorporate programming in their research for data collection and processing (e.g., MATLAB, Python, other open source platforms and languages for neuroimaging applications). Finally, students in PhD Psychology are increasingly competing with other STEM graduates for data scientist positions in industry, non-profit settings, and the government, in addition to traditional academic research and academic medical center settings.

General Psychology is recognized as a STEM discipline across federal science agencies. The National Science Foundation [Scholarships in STEM program](#) supports domestic students in this discipline and the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics includes psychology in its report on [Higher Education in Science and Engineering](#). Including General Psychology on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List would be consistent with the inclusion of other psychological science subdisciplines and would accurately reflect the scientific rigor of academic curricula in these programs.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input. Please do not hesitate to contact FABBS with any questions.