

Neuroscience - FAQs

1. I am interested in neuroscience. Which course should I take between Psych 1 vs. Psych 6?

Psych 6 (or Bio 34) is required for the NS major, so if you know that you are interested in neuroscience, then Psych 6 may be your best choice. However, if you are unsure, then selecting Psych 1 is a good option, because you will cover the field of psychology in more breadth and it will include some neuroscience.

2. What is the difference between PBS and the Neuroscience major?

Psychology is the study of behavior – from the level of brain mechanisms of behavior to social interactions. It encompasses a large breath of topics including: applied, social, developmental, clinical cognitive, and physiological psychology. Majoring in psychology will expose you to many of these disciplines. In contrast, neuroscience is the study of brain mechanisms and encompasses material from the molecular and cellular level of how neurons work, to cognitive and behavioral levels where questions of how neural processes lead to behavior and cognitive thought is studied. In between these two levels, neuroscience also involves anatomical and system level analyses of brain function.

3. What is the difference between Psych 6 and Bio 34?

Both courses are similar, although not identical, and recently have used the same textbook. Both courses study how individual neurons function as well as address some system level issues of brain functions. Because the two courses contain significant overlap, students can receive major (or minor) credit for only one of these two courses, but not both. Further, a student can not use the other course as an elective credit for the major.

4. Psych 6 has no prerequisites, but Bio 34 has two prerequisites (Bio 11 and Bio 12). Why would I want to take Bio 34 instead of Psych 6?

Related question: Why would I want to take the two course Bio 11/Bio 12 sequence to satisfy the cellular/molecular neuroscience requirement instead of the one course – Psych 46?

If you are interested in cellular and molecular neuroscience and are thinking of taking upper level Biology courses then taking Bio 11 and 12 would be a good choice, since these two courses are prerequisites for many upper level Biology classes. In addition, if you are pre-med, Medical Schools currently recommend having at least two courses in Biology that contain laboratories. Taking the Bio 12 and 13 sequence (in lieu of Psych 46 for the cellular/molecular neuroscience requirement) would fulfill the premed recommendations, since both these Bio courses have laboratories (Psych 46 does not contain a laboratory). However, Psych 46 has more content directly related to neuroscience than the Bio 12/13 sequence.

5. Can I get neuroscience elective credit for taking Psych 46 even if I've taken Bio 12 and 13?

Yes. The content of Psych 46 is sufficiently different from Bio 12 and 13; thus, we allow elective credit for it.

6. Can I take multiple courses that are labeled Psych 50?

Yes, as long as the two courses have different titles and contain significantly different material. Psych 50 courses are offered multiple times, with each one usually containing different content. You can take more than one for credit as long as it is not the same course.

7. I have AP Credit for some of the prerequisites (e.g., Math 3). Does this mean I have credit for one prerequisite?

Yes. If you have AP credit and were given a Dartmouth college credit for the course, then this course can count as one of your prerequisites.

8. Can I count an elective course for the neuroscience major or minor that is used to count as an elective course in another major – for example, in PBS?

No. For example, if a student is majoring in PBS and is counting Psych 50 as one of their elective courses for the PBS major, then he/she can not use this course as an elective for either the neuroscience major or minor.

9. Can I NRO (non-recording option) neuroscience courses?

Yes, you may NRO any of the prerequisites except (Psych 6, Bio 34, Psych 10, Bio 29). You may not NRO any required, elective, or culminating experience courses.