APA Summit on Introductory Psychology
Student Learning Outcomes for the Introductory Psychology Course

The American Psychological Association (APA) convened a Summit on Introductory Psychology in Washington, DC, on July 18-21, 2019. Appointed by the APA Board of Educational Affairs (BEA), the members of the APA Introductory Psychology Initiative (IPI) Steering Committee and four working groups met to address the challenges most introductory psychology teachers have in managing broad-ranging and evolving content.

The IPI has released a list of expected student learning outcomes to articulate what introductory psychology students should know and be able to do by completing the course. The outcomes emphasize essential concepts and themes, skills that promote scientific thinking about behavior and mental processes, and ethical reasoning in psychology.

Recommended Introductory Psychology Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

In an introductory psychology course, students are expected to:

- Identify basic concepts and research findings, and give examples of psychology's integrative themes.

  ~ Psychological science relies on empirical evidence and adapts as new data develop.
  ~ Psychology explains general principles that govern behavior, while recognizing individual differences.
  ~ Psychological, biological, social, and cultural factors influence mental processes and behavior.
  ~ Our perceptions filter our experiences of the world through an imperfect personal lens.
  ~ Applying psychological principles can change our lives in positive ways.

- Apply psychological principles to everyday life.
- Draw appropriate, logical, and objective conclusions about behavior and mental processes from empirical evidence.
- Evaluate misconceptions or erroneous behavioral claims based on evidence from psychological science.
- Design, conduct, or evaluate basic psychological research.
- Describe ethical principles that guide psychologists in research and therapy.

The expected student learning outcomes for introductory psychology were developed by the APA Introductory Psychology Initiative (IPI) Steering Committee and four working groups who participated in the July 18-21, 2019 APA Summit on Introductory Psychology. They are not yet official APA policy.