

# *“The Information Issue”*

Welcome Back?! I want to welcome you back (in spirit). As of this writing, our on-campus return has been pushed back to October 18th. Some of us will be resuming our education, but still have no plans to return to campus this semester. Nevertheless, we all still need a plan. As a matter of fact, **“Information for planning”** is the theme of this newsletter. The focus will be on providing information and perspectives that help us to anticipate and plan ahead. Enjoy.

D. Dupree



## “What’s Your Plan?” The “unexpected changes to the school year” checklist

Just in case you have not already done so, I have created a checklist for you to consider as you work your way through the new school year. Some checklist items will apply to you. Some items won’t. Take what you need and ignore the rest.

□ Double-check Psychology’s recommended course sequence to remind yourself what courses you need to take and what prerequisite courses you must take first.

□ If you have enrolled in in-person classes, double-check the days and times that they meet. Also, since the in-person meetings have been pushed back to October 18th, make sure you are clear about your instructors’ expectations for whether or how students should engage differently with the course once you begin meeting in person the week of October 18th.

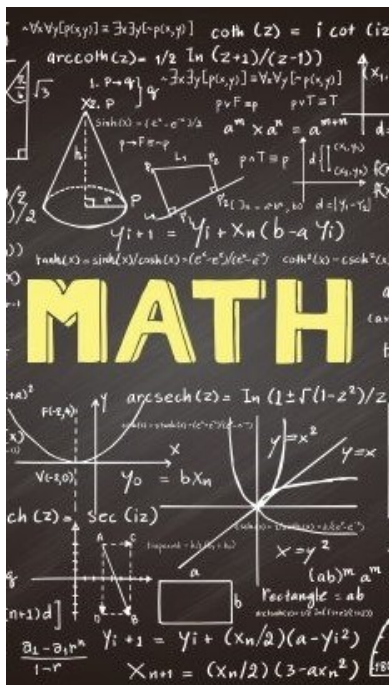
□ If you have enrolled in online courses, make sure you are clear about due dates for writing assignments and make sure you are clear about what is expected well before the writing assignments are due. The goal is to give yourself enough time to write a draft, let the draft sit, and then come back to review and perfect a final draft.

□ Look ahead to see when quizzes and exams are due and plan specific days and times to study for and, if online, complete them.

□ If you are planning to graduate this semester, make note of the deadline to apply for graduation.

□ Plan for and actively engage in self-care (e.g., log off social media, take a nap).

□ Do something nice for someone else.



## Psychology Curriculum Update Alert: MATH 150

Our Psychology curriculum has been updated so that our math requirement is now **MATH 150 Introductory Data Analysis** or higher. MATH 150 is now also the prerequisite for PSYC 167 Foundations of Statistical Methods. This update was made to help students complete our curriculum more quickly as well as to identify a math course whose content is more closely aligned with the content of PSYC 167.

Depending on when you enrolled in CCP as a Psychology major, the Psychology math requirement may or

may not show up as MATH 150. If your math requirement still shows up as MATH 151 or higher, please feel free to submit a “course substitution for graduation” request.

Likewise, depending on when you enrolled in CCP as a Psychology major, the prerequisite for PSYC 167 may not show up as MATH 150. For instance, if you completed MATH 118 as the prerequisite for PSYC 167, just email me @ [ddupree@ccp.edu](mailto:ddupree@ccp.edu) and I will recommend a waiver so that you can enroll in PSYC 167 and stay on track.

*“Plan for and actively engage in self-care.”*



### Did You Know That CCP Has A Computer Loaner Program for Students?

If you need a computer this semester, please click the link below for further details: <https://www.myccp.online/information-technology-services/student-device-loaner-program>

### What Is Childhood Trauma and What Can We Do With Information About It? A Response by Bashirrah Abdul-Malik

**Childhood trauma** refers to events that happen in a person’s life during childhood that had a negative effect on their psyche. Events such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, and/or alcoholic parents. These events cause the lack of safety and stability within a child’s life, which causes them to have emotional and even physical hardships throughout their lives. They can cause an increased risk of depression, self-harm, risky behavior, and drug use. But, even more surprisingly, it can also cause an increased risk of heart disease and cancer which shortens the life span.

**The Adverse Childhood Experience Study** or ACE was a study, conducted by Dr. Felitti and Dr. Anda, which asked 17,500 adults about their history of exposure to adverse childhood experiences. This study revealed that a whopping 67% of the population had at least one experience of ACE in their lifetime. This research has shown that roughly 26% of children in the U.S. have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event before the age of four. This study also revealed the relation between ACE scores and likelihood for depression, suicide, substance abuse, and heart disease.



### **What Is Childhood Trauma and What Can We Do With Information About It? A Response by Bashirrah Abdul-Malik, continued**

Childhood trauma also heavily affects stress levels and flight or flight reactions. *Research has shown that heavy exposure to traumatic events in childhood can change our brain activity.* Individuals who have experienced high levels of trauma in childhood have been shown to have key differences in the amygdala, which is the area of the brain that controls fear. People who have not experienced trauma in childhood have appropriately arousing responses to danger. However, individuals who have experienced danger daily may become desensitized. Their brains may change to fit the danger that they experience every day.

It is not exactly news-worthy or surprising to find that children who have experienced trauma have a higher risk of negative behaviors in adulthood. We know that the brain is changed when a person experiences forms of trauma throughout their lives. *The brain is an organ, and like all organs, it has ways of protecting its host.* The same way the flu is a form of protection for the body, the brain may process experiences in ways that lead us to cope by substance abuse and other risky behaviors, even if maladaptive.

### ***Psychology-related events you might be interested in***

**Technology, Mind & Society: A Virtual Conference**, November 3-5, 2021

Learn more about this conference at the following weblink: [https://tms.apa.org/?\\_ga=2.51324202.284218056.1632413074-238804705.1630762865](https://tms.apa.org/?_ga=2.51324202.284218056.1632413074-238804705.1630762865)

**Improving the Assessment of ADHD in Youth**, November 19, 2021

Register for this free event using the following weblink: <https://www.apa.org/news/events/2021/improving-youth-assessment>

## What Is Childhood Trauma and What Can We Do With Information About It? A Response by Bashirrah Abdul-Malik, continued

If a child does not feel safe with the very people who are supposed to protect them, they have a skewed sense of trust and may begin to disrespect authority as a result, such as acting out in school and committing crimes as a means to undermine authority.

*Another side effect of childhood trauma is the fact that it can literally change hormonal systems which change the way DNA is read and transcribed.* This causes an inadequate release of hormones in certain situations. It can also cause withdrawal and day-dreaming that is *atypical* for the developmental period of a child. Withdrawal and day-dreaming aid in helping the individual forget their troubles for moments at a time.

Erik Erikson was a psychologist who studied human development with a focus on children. He concluded that because infants and toddlers are just developing a sense of trust with adults, *its important for caregivers to create positive and nurturing environments that help these children feel safe.* The opposite of this environment would be an unstable and cold environment that provides no safety for the child.

Teachers are caregivers who experience a wide range of children all coming from different backgrounds who have experienced different things in their lives. It isn't uncommon for a teacher to come across a child or two that have experienced severe forms of trauma. *These traumatic experiences affect how a child operates in the classroom and in the world.* Teachers need to be equipped on how to handle these children who are acting differently as a result of their trauma.

One suggestion to help children who have experienced trauma better adapt to the classroom is by being nurturing and affectionate while still being aware of a child's triggers. Some children may be triggered by physical touch, so it may not be appropriate to hug them when they're experiencing levels of stress. Some children may be triggered by the lowering of voices in moments of stress, so whispering may not be the best form of communication in those times. However, *asking a child what they want you to do when they are feeling stress is the best thing to do as a teacher because you can comfort the child without crossing their boundaries.* Another suggestion is to prepare them for transitions and give them extra support during those transitions. Children who have experienced trauma can have a difficult time going through transitions throughout the school day therefore it would be best for teachers to create strategies that help them properly navigate through those transitions.





## “Am I Gonna Graduate On Time?” How to Submit a “Course Substitution for Graduation” or Excused Withdrawal” Requests

**Ensuring you have sufficient credits for graduation.** If you are planning for graduation and need to get credit towards your Psychology degree for classes you’ve already taken, you may need to submit a “course substitution for graduation form.”



**Making sure you don’t have F’s on your transcript when unexpected life circumstances interfere with your schooling.** On the other hand, if you had some unanticipated challenges outside of the classroom that interfered with your ability to effectively complete a class in a prior semester and ended up failing a class, you may be eligible for an “excused withdrawal”

**Recommended action steps.** In either instance, login to MYCCP. Click on the *Student* Tab. In the *Electronic Forms* box, select “Records and Registration Forms” and then select the form you need.

## Are You Considering Graduate School in Psychology? Here Are Some Things to Consider Doing Before You Apply

### **Identifying graduate programs that you might apply to.**

Websites for graduate psychology programs typically include a faculty page that lists the faculty and includes links to blurbs on the faculty (educational background, specializations, research interests, selected publications, etc.). You should begin to identify specific psychologists who are doing the type of work you are interested in doing (i.e., applying therapeutic approaches that have been demonstrated to be effective and you

would like to use, already working with the populations you are interested in serving, conducting research you find interesting, etc.). This will allow you to identify programs to which you might want to apply. Part of what is considered when you apply to programs is whether your

interests align with any of the faculty who could potentially be advisors for you. This fit between your interests and the interests of standing faculty can be very important. If a faculty member sees a fit, he or she might advocate for your admission. Likewise, once admitted

you want there to be people with whom you feel you can connect and who can support you.



### **Gaining research experience.**

As for the research experience, there are a couple of things you need to consider. Look to see if any of the faculty at your 4-year institution are hiring research assistants.



## Are You Considering Graduate School in Psychology? Continued

You may not be taking a lead role, but any research experience is better than no research experience. It is not simply that you have research experience, but what you have learned from that research experience and what skills you developed in that research.

**Gaining clinical experience.** If you are more interested in therapy and providing direct psychological support to individuals in need, it may be helpful to get some kind of clinical experience. By clinical experience, I am referring to any experience, paid or unpaid, that gives you the opportunity to observe and/or work with people who are dealing with and receiving direct support to cope with various types of problems.

**Reading journal articles.** You want to become familiar with the research methods currently being used in the field as a way of understanding HOW we know what we know in Psychology. I'd suggest you make a practice of reading psychology journals. If your time is limited, you might commit to go the library or go online to read one article a week. Look for the most recent issue (s) and check out the table of contents of the journal for an article that sounds interesting and read it. Make sure you give significant attention to the Methods section. Critique it for yourself. By critique, I don't necessarily mean look for problems with it. I'm suggesting you think critically about why they may have chosen the methods they use. This approach will also allow you to identify psychologists who do work you find interesting and you may want to apply to the graduate programs of which they are a part.

**Independent study.** I don't know how comfortable you will feel about the following suggestions, but I'm gonna put them out there anyway. If the 4-year institution to which you transfer offers Independent Study courses or honors thesis opportunities, you may consider designing a course of study in which you can read and write about a specific topic in which you would like to learn more. Let's say, for instance, that you read about a research finding or psychological problem that sounds interesting to you. You might propose to explore the topic in much greater depth in an Independent Study course. You could meet with a faculty member and develop a reading list and propose to write a review paper. If the paper is well developed enough, you could, potentially, submit it for publication. you could write it up and submit it for publication. Just something to think about. *D. Dupree*