Should I Pursue a BA or a BS Degree in Psychology at IU Bloomington?

Students can earn either a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Psychology at IUB. Many of requirements for these two degrees are the same, but there are four important differences summarized below. Please keep these differences and your own career goals in mind when you make your choice between a BA and a BS. Both of these degrees are valued by potential employers and graduate school admissions committees, but one may be preferred over the other by some graduate schools or employers. You should choose the degree that will enable you to develop the unique constellation of knowledge and skills you will need to transform yourself into the person you wish to become and to prepare for a career that interests you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychology majors who graduate with either a BA or a BS degree have the same requirements in terms of their</th>
<th>Entry-level sequence, PSY Foundational, and Statistics courses as shown in this table:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry-level sequence</td>
<td>Introduction to Psychology, P155 (Preferred) -or- P106 (Honors) -or- P101 &amp; P102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>P211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career Planning</td>
<td>P199 -or- P299</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY Foundational</td>
<td>P304 and P335 and P346</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>K300 -or- K310</td>
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We recommend that students fulfill the entry-level sequence, foundational courses (P304, P335, P346), and statistics requirements before the end of their 5th semester of studies.

The four most important differences in requirements between the BA and BS in Psychology at IUB

1. **Upper-Level Psychological & Brain Sciences (PSY) Course Requirements:**

   A psychology major who graduates with a BA degree is required to complete the following upper-level courses:
   1. PSY Advanced (most are 400-level),
   2. PSY Elective courses (300-level), and
   3. PSY Capstone/Lab course.¹

   A psychology major who graduates with a BS degree is required to complete the following upper-level courses:
   1. 3 PSY Advanced courses (most are 400-level)
   2. 2 PSY Capstone/Lab courses.

2. **Mathematics:** A psychology major who graduates with a BS degree is required to develop a greater proficiency in mathematics than a psychology major who graduates with a BA degree. M118 (or an equivalent / higher course with an “M” prefix) is required for a BA degree. A second math class is required for the BS degree (M119 is recommended).

3. **Science:** A psychology major who graduates with a BS is required to be more knowledgeable about biology and chemistry than a psychology major who graduates with a BA degree. Most students who graduate with a BA degree will have completed one biology course and one additional science course (biology, chemistry, computer science, physics, bioanthropology, or mathematics). Students who graduate with a BS degree will have completed several additional courses in biology, chemistry, physics, or mathematics.

4. **Foreign Language:** A psychology major who graduates with a BA is required to develop a fundamental proficiency of 10-18 credit hours (a four-semester sequence) of the same foreign language. The BS degree requires a three-semester sequence of the same foreign language plus either one additional semester of the same foreign language or two World Cultures courses or an International Experience.

The exact requirements for the Psychology-BA or Psychology-BS degree depend on when you first enrolled at IU. 
See Degrees in Psychology or Neuroscience at [http://www.indiana.edu/~psyugrad/degrees/degrees.php](http://www.indiana.edu/~psyugrad/degrees/degrees.php)

See also PSY Course Descriptions sorted by Degree Requirements at [http://www.indiana.edu/~psyugrad/courses/courses.php](http://www.indiana.edu/~psyugrad/courses/courses.php)

¹If you are working towards a Psychology-BA degree and planning to go to graduate school, we encourage you to consider taking additional PSY Advanced and PSY Capstone/Lab courses - above and beyond what is required for your degree - to prepare for the challenging courses you’ll encounter in graduate school.

Prepared by Dr. Hoffman, August 2013