

## **Advanced Placement Psychology**

### **Purpose of the Course**

The purpose of the Advanced Placement course in Psychology is to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. They also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice.

**Due to the nature of this course students cannot take Introduction to Psychology which is a semester offering students enrolled in this course must take the Advanced Placement Exam.**

### **1. Enduring Understandings**

- Psychology is empirical.
- Ethics is important in both scientific research and the practice of psychology.
- Psychology is theoretically diverse.
- Psychology evolves in a socio-historical context.
- Behavior is determined by multiple causes
- Heredity and environment jointly influence behavior.
- People's experience of the world is highly subjective.
- Individuals are driven by internal and external forces
- Behavior is shaped by cultural heritage

### **2. Course Specific Goals**

- Explain what the science of psychology means and how it developed.
- Tell how psychologists conduct research and what research tells us about the mind.
- Describe both biological and environmental influences on development.
- Define abnormal behavior, and discuss the classifications of abnormal behavior.
- Compare various methods of psychotherapy and the purpose of institutionalization

### **3. Expected Performances**

- Students will prepare to do acceptable work on the Advanced Placement Examination in Psychology.
- Students will study the major core concepts and theories of psychology. They will be able to define key terms and use these terms in their everyday vocabulary.

- Students will learn the basic principles of psychological research. They will be able to devise simple research projects, interpret and generalize from results, and evaluate the validity of research reports.
- Students will be able to apply psychological concepts to their own lives. They will be able to recognize psychological principles when they are encountered in everyday situations.
- Students will develop critical thinking skills. They will become aware of the danger of blindly accepting or rejecting arguments without careful, objective evaluation.
- Students will build their reading, writing, and discussion skills.
- Students will learn about psychology as a profession and become aware of the educational requirements which must be met to pursue such careers. They will learn about the ethical standards governing the work of psychologists.

#### **4. Scope and Sequence**

- I. History and Approaches
  - A. Logic, Philosophy, and History of Science
  - B. Approaches
    1. Biological
    2. Behavioral
    3. Cognitive
    4. Humanistic
    5. Psychodynamic
    6. Sociocultural
    7. Evolutionary/Sociobiological
- II. Research Methods
  - A. Experimental, Correlational, and Clinical Research
    1. Correlational (e.g., observational, survey, clinical)
    2. Experimental
  - B. Statistics
    1. Descriptive
    2. Inferential
  - C. Ethics in Research
- III. Biological Bases of Behavior
  - A. Physiological Techniques (e.g., imaging, surgical)
  - B. Neuroanatomy
  - C. Functional organization of the Nervous System
  - D. Neural Transmission
  - E. Endocrine System
  - F. Genetics
- IV. Sensation and Perception
  - A. Thresholds
  - B. Sensory Mechanisms
  - C. Sensory Adaptation
  - D. Attention

- E. Perceptual Processes
- V. States of Consciousness
  - A. Sleep and Dreaming
  - B. Hypnosis
  - C. Psychoactive Drug Effects
- VI. Learning
  - A. Classical Conditioning
  - B. Operant conditioning
  - C. Cognitive Processes in Learning
  - D. Biological Factors
  - E. Social Learning
- VII. Cognition
  - A. Memory
  - B. Language
  - C. Thinking
  - D. Problem Solving and Creativity
- VIII. Motivation and Emotion
  - A. Biological Bases
  - B. Theories of Motivation
  - C. Hunger, Thirst, Sex, and Pain
  - D. Social Motives
  - E. Theories of Emotion
  - F. Stress
- IX. Developmental Psychology
  - A. Life-Span Approach
  - B. Research Methods (e.g., longitudinal, cross-sectional)
  - C. Heredity-Environment Issues
  - D. Developmental Theories
  - E. Dimensions of Development
    - 1. Physical
    - 2. Cognitive
    - 3. Social
    - 4. Moral
  - F. Sex Roles, Sex Differences
- X. Personality
  - A. Personality Theories and Approaches
  - B. Assessment Techniques
  - C. Self-concept, Self-esteem
  - D. Growth and Adjustment
- XI. Testing and Individual Differences
  - A. Standardization and Norms
  - B. Reliability and Validity
  - C. Types of Tests
  - D. Ethics and Standards in Testing
  - E. Intelligence
  - F. Heredity/Environment and Intelligence

- G. Human Diversity
- XII. Abnormal Psychology
  - A. Definitions of Abnormality
  - B. Theories of Psychopathology
  - C. Diagnosis of Psychopathology
  - D. Anxiety Disorders
  - E. Somatoform Disorders
  - F. Mood Disorders
  - G. Schizophrenic Disorders
  - H. Organic Disorders
  - I. Personality Disorders
  - J. Dissociative Disorders
- XIII. Treatment of Psychological Disorders
  - A. Treatment Approaches
    - 1. Insight Therapies: Psychodynamic/Humanistic Approaches
    - 2. Behavioral Approaches
    - 3. Cognitive Approaches
    - 4. Biological Approaches (psychopharmacology/psychosurgery)
  - B. Modes of Therapy (e.g., individual, group)
  - C. Community and Preventative Approaches
- XIV. Social Psychology
  - A. Group Dynamics
  - B. Attribution Processes
  - C. Interpersonal Perception
  - D. Conformity, Compliance, Obedience
  - E. Attitudes and Attitude Change
  - F. Organizational Behavior
  - G. Aggression/Antisocial Behavior