Course Outline for Psychology 1

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

Catalog Description:
PSY 1 - General Psychology 3.00 units
Introduces students to the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. Provides an overview of major psychological concepts and theories in such areas as consciousness, learning, memory, motivation, perception, personality, stress, and social behavior.

Strongly Recommended: ENGL 1A

Grading Option: Letter Grade

Discipline:

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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Inside of Class Hours</th>
<th>Outside of Class Hours</th>
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<td>54.00</td>
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Prerequisite Skills:
None

Measurable Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. define the various theoretical perspectives that have shaped the study of psychology;
2. contrast the unifying themes that underlie the field of psychology;
3. distinguish between the goals of scientific psychology and common sense;
4. evaluate the various psychological research methods and use of descriptive and inferential statistics;
5. discuss the importance of ethical principles in research outlined in the APA Code of Ethics;
6. summarize the key functions of different brain components;
7. describe the role of heredity and environment on behavior;
8. describe the processes involved in sensation and perception;
9. distinguish between the various states of human consciousness;
10. identify the differences between various theories of learning;
11. describe the process involved in the encoding, storage and retrieval of memories;
12. discuss the theories of intelligence and the goals of psychological testing;
13. distinguish between the two major categories of human motives;
14. describe the basic components of emotion;
15. explain how biological and environmental factors contribute to developmental differences;
16. define the construct of personality;
17. describe the theoretical approaches to understanding abnormal behavior;
18. describe the various models of psychotherapy;
19. discuss the situational influences on behavior;
20. describe psychological differences and similarities between groups based on gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, social, or cultural grouping;
21. apply concepts and theories to personal development.

Course Content:

1. Historical and Current Perspectives in Psychology:
   A. Contemporary perspectives used by psychologists to understand behavior and mental processes
   B. Major subfields in psychology
   C. Careers in the field of psychology
   D. Underlying themes that unify the study of psychology
2. Research in Psychology:
   A. Research strategies used by psychologists to explore behavior and mental processes
   B. Scientific approach to understanding behavior
   C. Ethical issues in research with human and nonhuman animals
3. Biological Bases of Behavior
   A. Structure and function of the neuron
   B. Organization of the nervous system
   C. Structure and function of the brain
   D. Interplay of heredity and environment on behavior
   E. The role of evolution in brain and behavior
4. Sensation and Perception
   A. Capabilities and limitations of sensory processes
   B. Top-down and bottom-up processing
   C. Nature of attention
5. Variations in Consciousness
   A. Levels of awareness
   B. Biological rhythms and sleep
   C. Theories of dreaming
   D. Hypnosis and meditation
   E. Psychoactive drugs
6. Learning
   A. Classical conditioning
   B. Operant conditioning
   C. Cognitive process in conditioning
   D. Observational learning
7. The Construction of Memory
   A. Encoding, storage, and retrieval processes
   B. Types of memory
   C. Physiology of memory
   D. Methods for improving memory
8. Language and Thought
   A. Structure of language
   B. Approaches to problem solving
   C. Decision-making process
9. Intelligence and Psychological Testing
   A. Types of psychological testing
   B. Meaning of IQ scores
   C. Interaction of heredity and environment on intelligence
   D. Nature of creativity
10. Motivation and Emotion
    A. Theories of motivation
    B. Biological and cultural factors influencing motivation
    C. Elements of emotion
    D. Theories of emotion
11. Lifespan Development
    A. Development as a lifelong process
    B. Theories of development
    C. Issues surrounding the developmental process (nature/nurture, continuity/discontinuity, stability/instability, critical periods)
12. Personality Theory and Assessment
    A. Personality constructs
    B. Theories of personality
    C. Assessment of personality
13. Stress, Coping, and Health
    A. Sources of stress
    B. Physiological and psychological responses to stress
    C. Cognitive and behavioral strategies for dealing with stress and promoting health
14. Psychological Disorders
    A. Characteristics and origins of abnormal behavior
    B. Diagnosing psychological disorders
    C. Major categories of psychological disorders
    D. Impact of psychological disorders
15. Treatment of Psychological Disorders
    A. Prominent methods used to treat individuals with disorders
    B. Types of practitioners who implement treatment
    C. Legal and ethical challenges involved in treatment
16. Social Thought and Behavior
    A. Social judgment and attitudes
    B. Social and cultural categories
    C. Group behaviors of attraction, helping, conformity, obedience and aggression
17. Psychological Diversity
    A. Gender and sexuality
    B. Socio-cultural differences in psychology
18. Applying Psychology
    A. Self-understanding
    B. Understanding the behavior and motivations of others
    C. Areas of application such as school psychology, industrial/organizational psychology, forensic psychology, and health psychology

Methods of Presentation
1. Lecture/Discussion
2. Lectures on major themes and concepts
3. Readings from texts, supplementary materials, primary source materials
4. Discussion and problem solving of significant or controversial issues
5. Written assignments
6. Utilization of video and/or CD-ROM excerpts
7. Student-led presentations
8. Demonstrations and simulations
9. Application of concepts to personal experiences

Assignments and Methods of Evaluating Student Progress
1. Typical Assignments
   A. Reading and Discussion: 1) Read the assigned chapter on Theories of Psychology. Be prepared to identify, compare and contrast key theoretical perspectives, including Biological, Cognitive and Sociocultural. 2) Read the assigned chapter on Research Methods. Be prepared to discuss the advantages of the scientific approach to the study of behavior. 3) Read the chapter on Lifespan Development. Be prepared to compare and contrast the different theories of development explaining
changes in cognition and personality throughout the stages of life.

B. Writing: 1) Research and write a paper pertaining to one of the primary topic areas discussed in this course. Use the library resources to find supporting peer-reviewed research articles. Cite references in APA format. 2) After viewing a selected video, such as Away From Her, be prepared to write a short paper on the portrayal of an individual with progressive Alzheimer’s dementia. In your paper reference relevant facts about brain structures and functions, neural communication, key neurotransmitters, and associated behavioral changes experienced. 3) Based on the readings about memory organization, write an advice “Letter about Memory,” addressed to a high school senior who will be starting college. In your letter include advice about Elaborative Rehearsal, Self-Reference Effect and Distributed Study that enhance memory capacity and recall.

C. Collaborative Learning 1) As a small group, evaluate the key perspectives in psychology including Biological, Cognitive, and Sociocultural perspectives, match each perspective with an example of human behavior or mental process, and explain the complex interaction between the perspectives. 2) As a small group, present a case study of an individual with a psychological disorder, including clinical symptoms, DSM-IV-TR criteria, and treatment options for the disorder. You will prepare a PowerPoint presentation to the class. 3) As a small group, evaluate a series of presented moral scenarios and dilemmas and apply Kohlberg’s theoretical levels of moral reasoning.

2. Methods of Evaluating Student Progress
A. Participation in multiple class discussions or small group projects
B. Several essay or opinion papers
C. Chapter quizzes and/or midterm examinations
D. Final Examination
E. Presentation or project

3. Student Learning Outcomes
Upon the completion of this course, the student should be able to:
A. Demonstrate an understanding of how the scientific method serves as a foundation for understanding the study of behavior and mental processes.
B. Demonstrate an understanding of the biological basis of behavior and mental processes.
C. Identify, compare, and contrast the key theoretical perspectives in psychology including sociocultural, biological, and cognitive-behavioral perspectives.
D. Demonstrate an understanding of how the scientific method serves as a foundation for understanding the study of behavior and mental processes.
E. Demonstrate an understanding of the biological basis of behavior and mental processes.
F. Explain how the scientific method serves as a foundation for understanding the study of behavior and mental processes.
G. Identify, compare, and contrast the key theoretical perspectives in psychology including sociocultural, biological, and cognitive-behavioral perspectives.
H. Identify, compare, and contrast the key theoretical perspectives in psychology including sociocultural, biological, and cognitive-behavioral perspectives.

Textbooks (Typical):

Special Student Materials
1. Computer access

Abbreviated Class Schedule Description:
Introduces students to the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. Provides an overview of major psychological concepts and theories in such areas as consciousness, learning, memory, motivation, perception, personality, stress, and social behavior.

Strongly Recommended: ENGL 1A