

FOLSOM CORDOVA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Advanced Placement Psychology

Date: October 2008

Subject: Social Science

Proposed Grade Level(s): 11-12

Course Length: One year

Grading: A-F

Number of Credits: 5 per semester

Prerequisites: 3.0 GPA and an A in English or B in AP/Honors English; or with approval of instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of Advance Placement 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 and perspectives within psychology. The course is designed to introduce students to a college level psychology course while developing advanced skills in reading, writing, reasoning, evaluating critically, and scientific inquiry.

GENERAL GOALS/PURPOSES:

Students will:

- Prepare to do acceptable work on the AP Psychology Examination;
- Study the major core concepts and theories in psychology;
- Use key terms and concepts from psychology in their everyday vocabulary;
- Learn the basic skills of psychological research and be able to apply psychological concepts to their own lives;
- Develop critical thinking skills.

STUDENT READING COMPONENT:

Students will have regular reading homework from a college level psychology textbook. In addition, supplementary readings will be assigned at least once a unit and students will read a minimum of one supplementary book during the course of the year. All supplementary reading will focus on historical and/or current psychological research studies.

STUDENT WRITING COMPONENT:

Students will be quizzed or tested on a regular basis using the writing format and style of the free response section of the AP Psychology Examination. Students will conduct at least one psychological research study and report their findings in a formal paper. In addition, students will write analyses of assigned supplementary readings and books.

STUDENT ORAL COMPONENT:

Students will speak formally and informally in response to homework, in-class readings, interactive lectures, and demonstrations. Students will also present formally and informally individual and/or group research project findings. In listening to the oral presentations of others, students will respect the viewpoints of others while critically analyzing for logical fallacies.

DETAILED UNITS OF INSTRUCTION:

The course outline below follows the College Board course description for AP Psychology.

- I. History and Approaches
 - a. Logic, Philosophy, and History of Science
 - b. Approaches
 - i. Biological
 - ii. Behavioral
 - iii. Cognitive
 - iv. Humanistic
 - v. Psychodynamic
 - vi. Sociocultural
 - vii. Evolutionary
- II. Research Methods
 - a. Experiments, Correlational, and Clinical Research
 - b. Statistics
 - i. Descriptive
 - ii. Inferential
 - c. Ethics in Research
- III. Biological Bases of Behavior
 - a. Physiological Techniques (e.g., imaging, surgical)
 - b. Neuroanatomy
 - c. Functional Organization of Nervous System
 - d. Neural Transmission
 - e. Endocrine System
 - f. Genetics
 - g. Evolutionary Psychology
- IV. Sensation and Perception
 - a. Thresholds and Signal Detection Theory
 - b. Sensory Mechanisms
 - c. Attention
 - d. 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
 - 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
 - i. Physical
 - ii. Cognitive
 - iii. Social
 - iv. Moral
 - f. Sex Roles and Gender Roles
- X. Personality
- a. Personality Theories and Approaches
 - b. Assessment Techniques
 - c. 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
- XII. Abnormal Psychology
- a. Definitions of Abnormality
 - b. Theories of Psychopathology
 - c. Diagnosis of Psychopathology
 - d. Types of Disorders
 - i. Anxiety
 - ii. Somatoform
 - iii. Mood
 - iv. Schizophrenic
 - v. Organic
 - vi. Personality
 - vii. Dissociative
- XIII. Treatment of Psychological Disorders
- a. Treatment Approaches
 - i. Psychodynamic
 - ii. Humanistic
 - iii. Behavioral
 - iv. Cognitive
 - v. Biological
 - b. Modes of Therapy (i.e., 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
 - h. Cultural Influences

SUBJECT AREA CONTENT STANDARDS TO BE ADDRESSED:

CALIFORNIA ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS:

- **Reading Comprehension 2.0:** Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text
- **Writing Strategies 1.0:** Research and Technology
- **Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.0:** Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions
- **Listening and Speaking Strategies 1.0:** Students deliver polished formal and extemporaneous presentations; student speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HIGH SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY CURRICULA:

- **Content Standard 1A: Introduction and Research Methods:**
After concluding this unit, students understand:
 - 1A-1. Contemporary perspectives used by psychologists to understand behavior and mental processes in context
 - 1A-2. Major subfields and career opportunities that comprise psychology
 - 1A-3. Research strategies used by psychologists to explore behavior and mental processes
 - 1A-4. Purpose and basic concepts of statistics
 - 1A-5. Ethical issues in research with humans and other animals
 - 1A-6. Development of psychology as an empirical science
- **Content Standard 2A: Biological Bases of Behavior**
After concluding this unit, students understand:
 - 2A-1. Structure and function of the neuron
 - 2A-2. Organization of the nervous system
 - 2A-3. Hierarchical organization of the structure and function of the brain
 - 2A-4. Technologies and clinical methods for studying the brain
 - 2A-5. Structure and function of the endocrine system
 - 2A-6. How heredity interacts with the environment to influence behavior
 - 2A-7. How psychological mechanisms are influenced by evolution
- **Content Standard 2B: Sensation and Perception**
After concluding this unit, students understand:

- 2B-1. Basic concepts explaining the capabilities and limitation of sensory processes
- 2B-2. Interaction of the person and the environment in determining perception
- 2B-3. Nature of attention

- **Content Standard 2C: Motivation and Emotion**

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- 2C-1. Motivational concepts
- 2C-2. The role of biology and learning in motivation and emotion
- 2C-3. Major theories of motivation
- 2C-4. Interaction of biological and cultural factors in emotions and motivation
- 2C-5. Role of values and expectancies in determining choice and strength of motivation
- 2C-6. Physiological, affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of emotions and the interactions among these aspects
- 2C-7. Effects of motivation and emotion on perception, cognition and behavior

- **Content Standard 2D: Stress, Coping, and Health**

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- 2D-1. Sources of stress
- 2D-2. Physiological reactions to stress
- 2D-3. Psychological reactions to stress
- 2D-4. Cognitive and behavioral strategies for dealing with stress and promoting health

- **Content Standard 3A: Life Span Development**

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- 3A-1. Development as a lifelong process
- 3A-2. Research techniques used to gather data on the developmental process
- 3A-3. Theories of development
- 3A-4. Issues surrounding the developmental process

- **Content Standard 3B: Personality and Assessment**

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- 3B-1. How to distinguish between personality and personality constructs
- 3B-2. Personality approaches and theories
- 3B-3. Assessment tools used in personality

- **Content Standard 4A: Learning**

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- 4A-1. Characteristics of learning
- 4A-2. Principles of classical conditioning
- 4A-3. Principles of operant conditioning
- 4A-4. Components of cognitive learning
- 4A-5. Roles of biology and culture in determining learning

- **Content Standard 4B: Memory**

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- 4B-1. Encoding, or getting information into memory
- 4B-2. Sensory, working or short-term, and long-term memory systems
- 4B-3. Retrieval, or getting information out of memory
- 4B-4. Biological bases of memory
- 4B-5. Methods for improving memory
- 4B-6. Memory constructions

- **Content Standard 4C: Thinking and Language**
After concluding this unit, students understand:
 - 4C-1. Basic elements comprising thought
 - 4C-2. Strategies and obstacles involved in problem solving and decision-making
 - 4C-3. Structural features of language
 - 4C-4. Theories and developmental stages of language acquisition
 - 4C-5. Links between thinking and language

- **Content Standard 4D: States of Consciousness**
After concluding this unit, students understand:
 - 4D-1. Nature of consciousness
 - 4D-2. Characteristics of sleep and theories that explain why we sleep
 - 4D-3. Theories used to explain and interpret dreams
 - 4D-4. Basic phenomena and uses of hypnosis
 - 4D-5. Categories of psychoactive drugs and their effects on consciousness

- **Content Standard 4E: Individual Differences**
After concluding this unit, students understand:
 - 4E-1. Concepts related to measurement of individual differences
 - 4E-2. Influence and interaction of heredity and environment on individual differences
 - 4E-3. Nature of intelligence
 - 4E-4. Nature of intelligence testing

- **Content Standard 5A: Psychological Disorders**
After concluding this unit, students understand:
 - 5A-1. Characteristics and origins of abnormal behavior
 - 5A-2. Methods used in exploring abnormal behavior
 - 5A-3. Major categories of abnormal behavior
 - 5A-4. Impact of mental disorders

- **Content Standard 5B: Treatment of Psychological Disorders**
After concluding this unit, students understand:
 - 5B-1. Prominent methods used to treat individuals with disorders
 - 5B-2. Types of practitioners who implement treatment
 - 5B-3. Legal and ethical challenges involved in delivery of treatment

- **Content Standard 5C: Social and Cultural Dimensions of Behavior**
After concluding this unit, students understand:
 - 5C-1. Social judgment and attitudes
 - 5C-2. Social and cultural categories
 - 5C-3. Social influence and relationships

THIS COURSE WILL PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE CAHSEE AND/OR CST'S

Writing, Reading, Language Arts

LAB FEE: None

DISTRICT ESLRS TO BE ADDRESSED:

Students will demonstrate behaviors of:

- **Self-directed Learners** who continue to explore, evaluate and analyze human behavior and mental processes through a psychological approach.
- **Effective Communicators** who explain in written and oral communication a clear and logical understanding of the tenets of the discipline of psychology.
- **Quality Producers and Performers** who initiate projects for themselves or with a group, set quality standards and adapt to changing conditions.
- **Constructive thinkers** who analyze and evaluate information in various formats, assess issues in the field of psychology, and apply the knowledge acquired in the study of psychology to themselves and the people and world around them.
- **Collaborative workers** who work in a constructive way with groups made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and cultural or world experiences and who demonstrate an understanding of the nature of biological, psychological, and cultural differences.
- **Responsible citizens** who make reasoned decisions as citizens, neighbors, employees, employers, and members of their national and world communities based on a broader understanding of human behavior and mental processes.