

Psychology

Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. It is a unique science that often necessitates the use of special measurements and research methods. The course has four sections: psychological foundations and research; biological foundations; change in behavior and cognition; and variability of behavior among individual and groups.

Standards with an asterisk(*) are recommend for a one semester course.

Psychology Foundations and Research

***SSPFR1: The student will explain selected historical and contemporary perspectives and practices of psychologists.**

- a. Define the field of psychology.
- b. Identify key figures in the history of the field of psychology and their major contributions; include Wundt, Freud, Skinner, James, Watson and Rogers.
- c. List and describe the major occupations and subfields of psychology.

***SSPFR2: The student will explain the research methods and the types of statistics used in the field of psychology.**

- a. Explain how psychologists conduct research to describe, explain, predict, and control behavior.
- b. Describe the types of research methods used by psychologists; include experiment, survey, case study, and observation.
- c. Identify the basic elements of an experiment; include independent and dependent variables, types of experimental control (blind/double-blind procedures, placebo controls).
- d. Explain the differences between a correlation and an experiment.
- e. Classify the types and uses of statistics in psychological research; include descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.
- f. Interpret graphic data representations.
- g. Explain ethical issues in psychological research.

Biological Foundations

***SSPBF1: The student will explain the development, structure, and function of biological systems and their role in behavior, cognition, and emotion.**

- a. Discuss the major divisions and sub-divisions of the nervous system and their role in behavior; include central (brain and spinal cord) and peripheral [autonomic (sympathetic and parasympathetic) and somatic].
- b. Identify the components and function of a neuron.
- c. Explain the process of neurotransmission; include action potentials and synaptic transmission.
- d. Identify the major structures and functions of the brain.
- e. Describe the methods used to analyze neural form and function; include the MRI, fMRI, PET, CAT, and EEG.
- f. Examine the role of genetics in the development of behaviors.

SSPBF2: The student will compare different states of consciousness.

- a. Describe the sleep cycle and circadian rhythm,
- b. Explain why we sleep and dream.
- c. Investigate the validity of hypnosis as a state of consciousness.
- d. Analyze the physical and psychological issues associated with addiction.
- e. Explain how the major drug classes (stimulants, depressants, and hallucinogens) affect neurotransmission and behaviors.

SSPBF3: The student will discuss the components of stress.

- a. Categorize and explain the different physiological and psychological reactions to stress.
- b. Identify strategies to deal with stress that promote health; include coping strategies and behavioral modification.

SSPBF4: The student will describe how the physical world is translated into a psychological experience.

- a. Describe the basic structures of the eye and ear, the associated neural pathways, and the process of sensory transduction.
- b. Recognize causes which can lead to hearing and vision deficits; include environmental causes, aging, genetics, diet, disease, and trauma.
- c. Describe the major theories associated with visual and auditory sensation and perception; include opponent process theory, trichromatic theory of vision, frequency theory, volley theory, and place theory of hearing.
- d. Analyze different perceptual illusions and describe why illusions are important for our understanding of perception.
- e. Compare top-down and bottom-up processing.

SSPBF5: The student will identify major theories and concepts related to motivation and emotion.

- a. Compare and contrast the biological, cognitive/learning, and humanistic perspectives of motivation.
- b. Compare and contrast theories of emotion; include James-Lange, Cannon-Bard, and Singer-Schacter's Two Factor.

Change in Behavior and Cognition

***SSPBC1: The student will identify the characteristics of and major approaches to learning.**

- a. Identify learning as a relatively permanent change in behavior based on experience.
- b. Explain the behavioral approach to learning.
- c. Compare and contrast the paradigms of classical and operant conditioning.
- d. Describe changes in behavior using the social learning theory.

SSPBC2: The student will analyze key concepts associated with information processing.

- a. Describe the components of the human information processing system; include working memory, long term memory, sensory memory, and attention.
- b. Evaluate strategies that enhance memory; include mnemonics, rehearsal, and elaboration.
- c. Analyze theories of forgetting; include loss of access, interference, displacement, and decay.
- d. Explain the phenomena involved in problem solving and decisionmaking; include heuristics, algorithms, biases, expectancies, and mental set.

***SSPBC3: Describe behavioral, social, and cognitive changes from the prenatal period throughout the life span.**

- a. Chart physical changes of a human being from conception through late adulthood.
- b. Explain the developmental models of Freud, Piaget, Kohlberg, and Erikson.
- c. Compare and contrast the theories of language and language acquisition; include Chomsky, Skinner, and Whorf.
- d. Describe the role of critical periods in development.

Variability of Behavior among Individuals and Groups

SSPVB1: The student will analyze concepts related to the measurement and nature of intelligence.

- a. Differentiate between general and multiple intelligences.
- b. Explain how intelligence may be influenced by heredity and environment.
- c. Evaluate the reliability, validity, and standardization of historical and contemporary intelligence tests.
- d. Evaluate the implications of measurement of intelligence on the individual and culture.

***SSPVB2: The student will evaluate assessment tools and theories in personality.**

- a. Evaluate Psychodynamic Theory and its impact on contemporary psychology.
- b. Evaluate the Humanistic Perspective.
- c. Analyze the purpose and theories of the Trait Perspective of personality.
- d. Analyze the Social-Cognitive Perspective of personality.

***SSPVB3: The student will identify abnormal behavior and treatment.**

- a. Identify criteria that distinguish normal from disordered behavior; include the criteria of distress, deviance, and dysfunction.
- b. Describe methods used to diagnose and assess abnormal behavior; include the current version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, the MMPI, and projective tests.
- c. Compare anxiety disorders, mood disorders, personality disorders, and schizophrenia and describe appropriate treatments for these disorders.
- d. Analyze the challenges associated with labeling psychological disorders and the impact of diagnosis on patients.
- e. Compare the biomedical, psychoanalytical, cognitive, and behavioral approaches to the treatment of psychological disorders.

Social Psychology

***SSPSP1: The student will analyze the impact of the social environment on behaviors and attitudes.**

- a. Explain phenomena that result from the influence of the social environment on the individual and vice versa; include obedience, social facilitation, social loafing, bystander apathy, conformity, groupthink, group polarization, and deindividuation.
- b. Analyze attribution and cognitive dissonance theories pertaining to social judgments and attitudes.
- c. Explain the factors that contribute to affiliation and attraction; include proximity, mere-exposure effect, and similarity.
- d. Analyze and evaluate the ethics of experimentation in social psychology; include Milgram's experiment of obedience and Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment.