

Psychology I Course Syllabus

Course Title: Psychology I

Department: Social Studies Chelmsford High School

Primary Course Materials: Psychology and You McMahon et al. West Publishing. 1995.

Course Description: This semester course for juniors and seniors is designed to introduce students to the biological and theoretical foundations of psychology. The course will encourage students to develop analytical skills, conduct research, investigate the mind-body connection, analyze concepts of consciousness, evaluate theories of personality, develop an understanding of psychological disorders, evaluate the role and effectiveness of treatments and analyze theories of intelligence. Students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of psychology through various projects, discussions and assignments.

Essential Questions:

What is Psychology and what is not?

What are Psychology's historical roots?

What are the Perspectives used in Psychology Today?

How do Psychologists develop new knowledge?

How do we make sense of data?

How are genes and behavior linked?

How does the body communicate internally?

How does the brain produce behavior and mental processes?

How is consciousness related to other mental processes?

What cycles occur in our everyday consciousness?

What other forms can consciousness take?

What forces shape our personalities?

What persistent patterns are found in personality?

What "theories" do people use to understand each other?

How do we measure individual differences?

How is intelligence measured?

What are the components of intelligence?

How do psychologists explain IQ differences among groups?

What is a psychological disorder?

How are psychological disorders classified?

What are the consequences of labeling people?

What is therapy?

How do psychologists treat psychological disorders?

How is the biomedical approach used to treat psychological disorders?

*Essential questions from Zimbardo, Philip G. et al Psychology Ap*Edition. Pearson. Boston. 2007.*

Course Objectives: (what students will know and be able to do)

1. Develop questions that guide inquiry and research in class work

2. Analysis of effective argument and critical thinking from scientific research
3. Express oneself clearly and effectively through writing and speaking
4. Critical analysis of statistics and graphic representations of data

Common Goals:

Thinking and Communicating

- 1) Read information critically to develop understanding of concepts, topics and issues.
- 2) Write clearly, factually, persuasively and creatively in Standard English.
- 3) Speak clearly, factually, persuasively and creatively in Standard English.
- 4) Use computers and other technologies to obtain, organize and communicate information and to solve problems.
- 5) Conduct research to interpret issues or solve complex problems using a variety of data and information sources.

Gain and Apply Knowledge in and across the Disciplines

- 6) Gain and Apply Knowledge in:
 - a) Literature and Language
 - b) Mathematics
 - c) Science and Technology
 - d) Social Studies, History and Geography
 - e) Visual and Performing Arts
 - f) Health and Physical Education

Work and Contribute

- 7) Demonstrate personal responsibility for planning one's future academic and career options.
- 8) Participate in a school or community service activity.
- 9) Develop informed opinions about current economic, environmental, political and social issues affecting Massachusetts, the United States and the world and understand how citizens can participate in the political and legal system to affect improvements in these areas.

Concepts and Skills from the National Standards for Psychology

<http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/topss/national-standards.pdf>

I. Methods Domain

A. Introduction and Research Methods

II. Biopsychological Domain

A. Biological Bases of Behavior

III. Developmental Domain

B. Personality and Assessment

IV. Cognitive Domain

A. States of Consciousness

B. Individual Differences

V. Variations in Individual and Group Behavior Domain

A. Psychological Disorders

B. Treatment of Psychological Disorders

Additional Learning Skills Beyond the Curriculum Framework

Instructional practices support the achievement of 21st C. Learning Expectations by:

(check those that apply to the Course)

- personalizing instruction
- engaging students in cross disciplinary learning
- engaging students as active and self directed learners
- emphasizing inquiry, problem solving and higher order thinking
- applying knowledge and skills in authentic tasks
- engaging students in self assessment and reflection
- integrating technology

Content: National Standards for Psychology

<http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/topss/national-standards.pdf>

Content Standards Unit 1 Historical Roots and Methods of Psychology

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- IA-1. Contemporary perspectives used by psychologists to understand behavior and mental processes in context
- IA-2. Major subfields and career opportunities that comprise psychology
- IA-3. Research strategies used by psychologists to explore behavior and mental processes
- IA-4. Purpose and basic concepts of statistics
- IA-5. Ethical issues in research with human and other animals that are important to psychologists
- IA-6. Development of psychology as an empirical science

Content Standards Unit 2 Biological Basis of Behavior

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- IIA-1. Structure and function of the neuron
- IIA-2. Organization of the nervous system
- IIA-3. Hierarchical organization of the structure and function of the brain
- IIA-4. Technologies and clinical methods for studying the brain
- IIA-5. Structure and function of the endocrine system
- IIA-6. How heredity interacts with the environment to influence behavior
- IIA-7. How psychological mechanisms are influenced by evolution

Content Standards Unit 3 States of Consciousness

After concluding this unit, students understand:

- IVD-1. Nature of consciousness
- IVD-2. Characteristics of sleep and theories that explain why we sleep
- IVD-3. Theories used to explain and interpret dreams
- IVD-4. Basic phenomena and uses of hypnosis
- IVD-5. Categories of psychoactive drugs and their effects

