

TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Larkspur, California

Course of Study

PSYCHOLOGY

I. INTRODUCTION

A. General Purpose

Psychology is a one-semester elective course intended for students enrolled in grades eleven and twelve. This “survey” course provides students with an initial understanding of the basic principles of psychology. The class will have practical application in that it will relate psychological understandings to current student concerns. In addition, students interested in postsecondary study or careers in the fields of health and human services will find this course of interest.

B. District Outcomes and Tam 2000 Goals

This course addresses several of the district graduation outcomes. Specifically, Psychology has a **primary** emphasis on the following outcomes:

Grad. #1.....Communicate articulately, effectively ... when speaking and writing.
Grad. #2.....Read/view and analyze material in a variety of disciplines.
Grad. #14.....Demonstrate knowledge, skills ... to achieve and maintain good health.
System #3.....Develop a social awareness.
System #5.....Develop strong self-esteem and personal identity.
System #9.....Develop awareness of the impact of behavior on oneself and others.

In addition, the course has a **secondary** emphasis on the following outcomes:

Grad. #3.....Use technology to access information, analyze ... communicate ideas.
Grad. #5.....Apply mathematical knowledge and skills to ... solve problems.
Grad. #6.....Demonstrate scientific literacy.

Finally, the **Tam 2000** goals of student success and instruction are addressed through this academic elective course.

C. Articulation with Department and School

Within the district social studies program, this course complements and reinforces the knowledge of psychological concepts acquired by students in other social studies classes such as Geography, History, and Social Issues. However, unlike other classes in the department, this class provides students the opportunity for a detailed study of their own

behavior, as well as the behavior of those around them. This course will lay the curricular foundation for further study in Advanced Placement Psychology, and will serve as a prerequisite for that AP offering.

In respect to the overall school offerings, this course benefits from and supports the natural sciences curriculum.

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

A. Learning Outcomes

1. Given case studies describing various individuals and types of behaviors, individual students will be able to:
 - Describe behaviors using basic tools of scientific analysis and criteria for mental health (orally or in writing).
 - Explain behaviors and/or personalities from a variety of psychological theories and perspectives (orally or in writing).
2. Students will examine behavior by conducting a mini-study that features:
 - Correct use of the scientific method.
 - An attempt to predict behavior.
 - A thorough written analysis of findings.
 - A written critique of their own experimental methodology.
3. On a written exam, students will be able to identify and explain key ideas, concepts, theories, and people from the field of Psychology.
4. Course Content
 - A) Introduction to Psychology
 - What is psychology?
 - Goals of psychology
 - Psychological methodology
 - Ethics of research
 - B) The Brain, the Body, and Behavior
 - The human brain
 - The senses
 - C) Consciousness
 - What is consciousness?
 - Altered states of consciousness
 - D) Growth and Development
 - Stages of growth and development
 - Theories of growth and development (ex: Freud, Erikson, Piaget)
 - Aspects of growth/development: physical, emotional, cognitive
 - Heredity and environment – nature v. nurture
 - E) Learning and Cognition
 - Memory

- Learning
- Intelligence
- Thinking
- F) Theories of Personality
 - What is personality?
 - Psychoanalytic Theory (Freud)
 - Neo-Freudian Theory
 - Behaviorist Theory (Skinner)
 - Humanist Theory (Rogers, Maslow)
 - Cognitive Theory (Kelly)
 - Biopsychological Theory (Sheldon)
- G) Abnormal Psychology
 - What is “abnormal?”
 - Types of psychological disorders
- H) Therapy and Change
 - Trends and goals in psychological therapy
 - Types of group and individual therapy
- I) Social Psychology
 - Group influence and peer pressure
 - Socialization and prejudice
 - Propaganda and the media
 - Affiliation and intimacy
 - Gender and sexuality
- J) Careers in Psychology

Note: The list above highlights primary areas of focus. Individual teachers will decide the order and emphasis of presentation.

B. Means of Assessment

Assessment in this course will be aligned with instruction and will be “authentic” whenever possible. Projects, papers, journals, notebooks, tests, and discussion are some of the possible assessment tools to be employed by individual teachers at their discretion. Students will be given the course outcomes and a description of the methods of assessment and grading in writing at the beginning of the semester.

C. Course Assessment

At present, no formal course assessment exists for Psychology. Course instructors will collaborate regularly to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the course. Sources of data for course evaluation will include student feedback, grades, and student work.

III. METHODS / MATERIALS

A. Types of Activities

In order to help students attain the course outcomes, teachers will employ a variety of engaging activities including but not limited to the following: Group discussion, individual and group activities, teacher lecture, reading and analysis of primary and secondary sources, student oral and written reports, student experiments, guest speakers, interviews, videotapes, films, tests and quizzes.

B. Materials

One of the following texts will be used:

Exploring Psychology, 3rd Edition, David G. Myers, Worth Publishers, Inc., 1996.

Understanding Psychology, Richard A. Kasschau, Ph.D., Glencoe Division of Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1995.

Primary and secondary source documents will also be used as selected by teachers. Films and videotapes will be used as selected by teachers.

C. Technology

Technology will be employed to assist students in the following:

- Producing written work
- Preparing and performing oral presentations
- Retrieving information on research topics
- Collecting, organizing, and analyzing experimental data

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Prerequisites

There are no specific course prerequisites for this course. However, students enrolled in psychology should at least have completed the tenth grade. This course will serve as a prerequisite for Advanced Placement Psychology.

B. Graduation Requirements

This class fulfills one semester (5 units) of elective credit for graduation.

C. UC Requirements

This course can be used towards fulfillment of the University of California college preparatory elective course (letter F) entrance requirement.

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