

Curriculum Development
In the Fairfield Public Schools

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT

PSYCHOLOGY
FULL YEAR

Board of Education Approved 03/25/2008

PSYCHOLOGY - FULL YEAR COURSE

Social Studies Department Scope and Sequence

This course is offered as an elective open to only twelfth graders. The prerequisite for this course is the successful completion of required social studies courses in Highlights of Western Civilization, Justice in America, Modern Global Studies, and United States History.

Statement of Purpose

For our students to effectively function in an increasingly complex world they will need thinking skills that help them navigate the inherent life issues. This introductory Psychology course is designed to expose the students to the historical foundations of this evolving field of study, and to satisfy their growing curiosity in a range of life topics. Students will master meaningful content and apply critical thinking skills to practical situations.

Design and Description

This Psychology course deals with the ideas, research and personalities shaping modern thinking. Units of study include a historical overview of the discipline of Psychology, Human Development throughout the Lifespan, the correlation of Mind and Body, Learning and Cognitive Processes, Personality Theory, Social Psychology, Stress and Health, Therapy and Change and Disturbance and Breakdown.

Course Goals

Students should:

- understand human development and behavior
- explain and understand the structure of and the connection between the physical body and the mind.
- understand human relationships
- explain major schools and theories of psychology
- identify different methods of diagnosis and therapies

Essential Questions

- To what extent are current issues in Psychology rooted in their historical legacy? (Fairfield)
- How do we become who we are? (Fairfield)
- What is the relationship of body and mind in explaining human behavior? (Fairfield)
- How do our cognitive processes impact our learning and memory capabilities? (Fairfield)
- What are the major theories of personality? (Fairfield)
- What influences and relationships mold us as individuals? (Fairfield)
- What is the impact of stress on physical and emotional health and well-being? (Fairfield)
- What are the organic and inorganic therapies of choice for various psychological disorders? (Fairfield)
- How does abnormal behavior impact the quality of life? (Fairfield)

Units of Instruction Outline

- I.** Overview of the Discipline of Psychology
- II.** Human Development
- III.** Mind and Body
- IV.** Learning and Cognitive Process
- V.** Personality Theory
- VI.** Social Psychology
- VII.** Stress and Health
- VIII.** Therapy and Change
- IX.** Disturbance and Change

Psychology Standards (APA National Standards for HS Psychology Curricula)

APA Standards are met in the following areas:

- APA.I: Methods Domain**
- APA.II: Bio-psychological Domain**
- APA.III: Developmental Domain**
- APA.IV: Cognitive Domain**
- APA.V: Variations in Individual and Group Behavior Domain**

Course Materials

Main Text:

Blair-Broeker, Charles T. and Randal M. Ernst. Thinking About Psychology, 1st ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martins, W.H. Freeman and Worth Publishers, 2003.

Information and Technology Standards (to be added)

UNITS OF STUDY

I. Overview of the Discipline of Psychology

Core Topics

- History of psychology
- Modern perspectives of psychology
- Major sub-fields and possible careers in Psychology

Essential Question

- To what extent are current issues in Psychology rooted in their historical legacy?
(Fairfield)

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- IA-1.1 describe and compare the biological, behavioral, cognitive, socio-cultural, humanistic, and psychodynamic perspectives

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- define and explain key psychological terminology.
- summarize the major movements in the history of Psychology.
- develop an understanding of current Psychological perspectives and their foundation in the history of Psychology.
- identify possible careers in the field of Psychology.

Focus Questions

- How does the history of psychology compare to modern experience?
- Who are the key psychologists known for each perspective?
- What are the major sub-fields and careers in psychology?

Skill Objectives

Students will be able to:

- research and identify career opportunities in Psychology.
- demonstrate the ability to use technology to enhance analysis and communication.

Suggested Activities

- Research ethics discussion
- Research techniques using M and M's

Suggested Materials

- Psychology today "Pursuing happiness"

Sample Assessment

- Meet the Psychologists Project

Pacing

1 - 2 weeks

II. Human Development

Core Topics

- Pre-natal and natal development and issues
- Childhood physical, cognitive, social and motor development
- Physical, cognitive and social development in adolescence and adulthood
- Death and dying

Essential Question

- How do we become who we are? (Fairfield)

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- IIIA-1.1 describe physical, social, and cognitive changes from the prenatal period throughout the lifespan.
- IIIA-1.4 apply lifespan principles to personal experience.
- IIIA-3.1 explain various developmental models.
- IIIA-3.2 recognize how biological and cultural notions of gender shape the experiences of men and women.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify issues relating to prenatal and natal development.
- articulate, using appropriate developmental terminology, the key issues in childhood, adolescence and adulthood development.
- understand the physical, cognitive, social and moral developments through each stage of human development.
- understand the stages of death and dying.

Focus Questions

- What are the major physical, cognitive, social and moral developments in infancy and childhood?
- What are the major physical, cognitive, social and moral developments in adolescence?
- What are the major physical, cognitive, social and moral developments in adulthood?
- What are the stages within the grieving process?

Skill Objectives

Students will be able to:

- take useful notes and organize notes in a meaningful manner.
- read and interpret information.

Suggested Activities

- “Ordinary People” – movie dealing with grief and divorce
- “Invisible Children” – Child Development in non-western cultures

Suggested Materials

- Value Formation chart

Sample Assessments

- Child Development Interview
- Aged Interview

Pacing

5-6 weeks

III. Mind and Body

Core Topics

- Various divisions of the nervous system
- Brain structures and their functions
- Techniques used to study the brain
- Differences between Sensation and Perception
- The Senses
- Principles of Perception
- Extra Sensory Perception
- Altered States of Consciousness

Essential Question

- What is the relationship of body and mind in explaining human behavior? (Fairfield)

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- IIA-3.1 identify the structure and function of the major regions of the brain.
- IIA-3.3 describe lateralization of brain functions
- IIB-1.2 describe the operation of sensory systems.
- IVD-2.2 compare theories that explain why we sleep.
- IVD-2.3 assess types of sleep disorders.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explain and understand the connection between the physical body and the mind.
- identify the different divisions of the nervous system and brain functions.
- comprehend the different functions of the senses and the perception of them.
- summarize the various altered states of consciousness.

Focus Questions

- What are the brain structures and their functions?
- What are the functions of the left and right hemispheres?
- What are the senses and how do they function?
- What are the main principles of perception?
- What are the types of sleep?
- What are the theories which explain our need of sleep?
- What altered states of consciousness are commonly experienced by humans?

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- develop the ability to understand issues from diverse viewpoints.
- interact appropriately with others in interpersonal and group contexts.

Suggested Activities

- Guest speaker from Yale nursing on “Brain trauma and seizures”
- Sleep Diary

Suggested Materials

- SleepNet.com

Sample Assessment

- Blind Walk
- Senses project

Pacing

6 weeks

IV. Learning and Cognitive Process

Core Topics

- Classical Conditioning
- Operant Conditioning
- Observational Learning
- Information Processing and Memory
- Motivation

Essential Question

- How do our cognitive processes impact our learning and memory capabilities?

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- IVA-2.1 describe the classical conditioning paradigm.
- IVA-3.1 describe the operant conditioning paradigm.
- IVA-4.1 explain how observational learning works.
- IVB-3.3 relate difficulties created by reconstructive memory processes.
- IVC-2.2 explain the use of creative thinking in problem solving.
- IIC-3.1 describe one or more theories of motivation, such as expectancy value, cognitive dissonance, arousal, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and drive reduction.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify and understand the different aspects of cognition.
- classify terminology of classical, operant and observational learning.
- understand memory encoding, storage and retrieval.
- evaluate current opinions on memory validity.
- explain Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the drive reduction theory.

Focus Questions

- What are the main principles of classical conditioning?
- What are the main principles of operant conditioning?
- What are the characteristics of short-term and long-term memory?
- How do we retrieve information stored in memory?
- What interferes with memory?

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- synthesize information from a variety of sources.
- interact appropriately with others in interpersonal and group contexts.

Suggested Activities

- Guest speaker on SADS and Holiday Blues
- Thinking and problem-solving activities

Suggested Materials

- “Triumph of the Will” 1933 by Leni Riefenstahl on operant and classical conditioning

Sample Assessment

- Issues in Memory Roundtable

Pacing

4-5 weeks

V. Personality Theory

Core Topics

- Psychodynamic Theories
- Behaviorist/Social Cognitive Theories
- Humanistic Theories

Essential Question

- What are the major theories of personality?

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- IIIB-2.1 explain the characteristics of the psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, and trait approaches.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- express correct terminology for the psychoanalytic, humanistic and behavioral schools of personality.
- understand the major theories on personality development, such as Freud, Rogers and Skinner.
- identify the factors at work in individual personality development.

Focus Questions

- What are the main theories of psychoanalytic personality school?
- What are the main theories of humanistic personality school?
- What are the main theories of behavioral personality school?

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- take useful notes and organize notes in a meaningful manner.
- compare and contrast viewpoints from several sources.

Suggested Activities

- Personality test

Sample Assessment

- “Who am I” project
- Psycho social family tree

Pacing

3 - 4 weeks

VI. Social Psychology

Core Topics

- Individual interaction
- Group Interaction
- Attitudes and Social Influence

Essential Question

- What influences and relationships mold us as individuals?

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- VC-1.2 describe how attributions affect our explanations of behavior.
- VC-1.3 identify sources of attitude formation.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify the factors in the formation of first impressions.
- understand the forces at play in the development of individuals within the context of groups.
- express the roots and results of prejudice and discrimination.
- compare relationships within culturally diverse groups.

Focus Questions

- How do we form first impressions?
- How and why do we interact with others the way we do?
- Why do prejudices exist?
- Why do we perceive social situations the way we do?

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- develop the ability to understand issues from diverse viewpoints.
- interact appropriately with others in interpersonal and group contexts.

Suggested Activities

- New Parent Interview
- “12 Angry Men” – lessons on group conflict and resolution

Suggested Materials

- Advertisements on persuasion in advertising
- “The Killing of Kitty Genovese” article

Sample Assessment

- Psycho-social worksheet
- Socio cultural web search

Pacing

3 - 4 weeks

VII. Stress and Health

Core Topics

- Sources of stress
- Reactions to stress
- Coping with stress

Essential Question

- What is the impact of stress on physical and emotional health and well-being?

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- IID-1.1 identify and explain major sources of stress.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- understand the biological and environmental sources of stress.
- articulate the terminology associated with the issues of stress.
- identify the physiological and psychological manifestations of stress.
- learn skills to be utilized in coping with stress.

Focus Questions

- What are the sources of stress?
- What are the differing levels of response to stress?
- What are the techniques to be employed in the coping of stress?

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- read and interpret information.
- interact appropriately with others in interpersonal and group contexts.

Suggested Activities

- Stress Test
- Guest lecture on stress/trauma debriefing techniques in our fire and police departments

Sample Assessment

- Holmes and Rahe Social Readjustment Rating Scale exercise

Pacing

2 – 3 weeks

VIII. Therapy and Change

Core Topics

- Psychoanalysis Therapy
- Humanistic Therapy
- Behavior Therapy
- Cognitive Therapy
- Group Therapy
- Bio medical Therapy

Essential Question

- What are the organic and inorganic therapies of choice for various psychological disorders? (Fairfield)

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- VB-1.2 describe characteristics of effective treatment and prevention.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify the therapies utilized by each school of psychology, such as psychoanalytic, behavioral, cognitive, group and biomedical.
- explain the therapies available for various psychological disorders.

Focus Questions

- What are the therapies of choice for the various psychological disorders?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the psychoanalytic school?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the behavioral school?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the cognitive school?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the group school?
- What are the major treatments utilized by the biomedical school?

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- take useful notes and organize notes in a meaningful manner.
- compare and contrast viewpoints from several sources.

Suggested Activities

- Schools of Psychology Treatment options role play
- Type A vs. Type B testing

Sample Assessment

- Treatment worksheet

Pacing

1 week

IX. Disturbance and Change

Core Topics

- Definition and Classification of Disturbance
- The Neurosis
- The Psychosis
- The Personality Disorders

Essential Question

- How does abnormal behavior impact the quality of life? (Fairfield)

APA Standards

Students are able to:

- VA-3.1 discuss major categories of abnormal behavior.
- VA-4.2 discuss the stigma associated with abnormal behavior.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify the major categories of illness.
- use the appropriate terminology in describing causes, symptoms and treatments of each illness.
- relate to persons afflicted by these psychological disturbances.

Focus Questions

- What are the causes of the individual disorders?
- What are the everyday implications of life for persons living with various disorders?
- What are the major categories of the disturbances?

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- compare and contrast viewpoints from several sources.
- develop the ability to understand issues from diverse viewpoints.
- interact appropriately with others in interpersonal and group contexts.

Suggested Activities

- “A Beautiful Mind” – study of schizophrenia
- “Sybil” – study of multiple personality disorder

Sample Assessment

- Diagnosis of disorders as portrayed in “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”
- Project “me” presentations

Pacing

8 - 10 weeks