



MERCER
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

| Course Number | Course Title | Credits |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| PSY 101 | Introduction to Psychology | 3 |
| Hours: Lecture/Lab/Other | Co-requisite | Implementation Semester & Year |
| 3/0/0 | ENG 101 (students must be academically eligible for college-level work) | Fall 2022 |

Catalog description:

The scientific study of human nature -- covers facts, principles, and theories concerning the mental, emotional, neurological, and social dimensions of human experience. Topics include consciousness, learning, thinking, memory, brain structure and function, motivation and emotion, development, personality, mental illness and its treatment, relationships, and social influence.

General Education Category:
Goal 5: Social Science

Course coordinator:
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Required texts & Other materials:

Text: Feldman, R. (2021) Understanding Psychology, 15th edition. McGraw Hill Publishers (**with CONNECT access**)

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Identify the major fields of study and theoretical perspectives within psychology and articulate their similarities and differences. [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,11]
2. Apply psychological theories and findings of empirical studies to explanations of human behavior. [Supports ILGs#1,3,5,8,9,10 & 11]
3. Apply psychological concepts to their own lives. They will be able to recognize psychological principles when they encounter them in everyday life. [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,11]
4. Develop writing skills in conjunction with the use of APA format. [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,11]

Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Institutional Learning Goal 3. Science. Students will use the scientific method of inquiry, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge.

Institutional Learning Goal 5. Social Science. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective: Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action. Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy: Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking: Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:

Unit I – Introduction to Psychology and Research Methods [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3 & 4]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define psychology and trace its historical roots.
- Identify and describe psychology's major subfields.
- Describe the different psychological perspectives and explain how these perspectives influence behavior and mental processes.
- Describe the methods psychologists use to observe, describe, and explain behavior.
- Evaluate the various scientific methodologies in terms of advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches.
- Compare and contrast experimental research, descriptive research, and correlational research.
- Discuss the ethics of experimentation and explain why psychologists might use deception in their research with human subjects.

Unit II – Neuroscience and Behavior [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3 & 4]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Identify the major divisions of the nervous system.
- Describe the structure of a neuron and explain how the neuron functions.
- Discuss the role of neurotransmitters.
- Discuss the link between neurotransmitters and drug use.
- Discuss the organization of the brain, identifying its major structures and their functions. Describe the lobes of cerebral cortex.
- Discuss the concepts of cerebral lateralization and the malleability of the brain in terms of functioning.
- Describe the structure and function of the endocrine system.

Unit III – Life-Span and Personality Development [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3 & 4]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the gene, the basic unit of heredity, and discuss the nature/nurture question.
- Discuss the course of prenatal development.
- Define zygote, embryo, fetus, and discuss each stage.
- Describe and evaluate Piaget's view of cognitive development and discuss how learning changes over time.
- Discuss social and personality development including the origins and consequences of attachment and the eight stages of psychosocial development.
- Define "personality" and understand its components
- Describe, evaluate, compare and contrast between the various personality theories including, but not limited to, psychoanalytic, humanistic, cognitive, and trait.
- Explain how objective and projective tests are used to assess personality.

Unit IV – Sensation, Perception and Consciousness [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3 & 4]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe and distinguish between sensation (a bottom-up process) and perception (a top-down process).
- Discuss Gestalt psychology's contribution to our understanding of perception.
- Define consciousness and discuss its significance in the history of psychology.
- Describe the cyclical nature and possible functions of sleep and stages of sleep.
- Identify and describe major sleep disorders including, but not limited to, insomnia, sleep apnea, and narcolepsy.
- Discuss and evaluate the possible functions of dreams from different psychological perspectives.
- Discuss ways to alter consciousness without the use of drugs.
- Identify the major drug categories and describe the physiological and psychological effects of specific drugs.

Unit V – Learning and Memory [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3 & 4]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe and evaluate the processes involved in classical conditioning.
- Describe and evaluate the processes involved in operant conditioning.
- Describe and evaluate the processes involved in observational learning.
- Identify and explain conditioning and learning in everyday life.
- Explain memory in terms of information processing. Define the key aspects to encoding, storage, and retrieval.
- Explain how and why our memories can be forgotten or distorted.

Unit VI – Psychological Disorders [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3 & 4]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define abnormal.
- List the criteria for judging whether behavior is abnormal emphasizing the cultural determinants.
- Describe and evaluate the different perspectives on psychological disorders.
- Describe the system used to classify psychological disorders and explain the reasons for its development.
- Describe the various features of clinical disorders including anxiety disorders, mood disorders, dissociative disorders, and schizophrenia.

Unit VII – Social Psychology [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3 & 4]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the field and theories of social psychology.
- Explain how attributions and attitudes affect the way we perceive and judge others. Identify and explain the factors contributing to conformity and obedience.
- Explain how human behavior is influenced by being in a group including, but not limited to, social facilitation, social loafing, groupthink, group polarization, and deindividuation.
- Apply social psychology to social problems such as prejudice, discrimination, stereotypes, and destructive obedience.

Evaluation of student learning:

Exams (a maximum of 70% of overall course grade):

- Students will be required to take a series of tests and/or quizzes (at least two), each of which may consist of multiple choice, true-false, matching, completion, or essay type questions of any combination of the above.

Writing assignments (a minimum of 30% of overall grade):

- Students will be required to complete a series of writing assignments to assess specific knowledge, critical thinking skills, and the ability to apply psychological theory to everyday life. These writing assignments may consist of ongoing journaling, reflection or reaction papers, research or position papers. At least one assignment should incorporate information and computer literacy. In addition, students will be introduced to APA format and will be expected to incorporate this publication style into their writing assignments.