



COURSE OUTLINE FALL 2008

Course Number
PSY 101

Course Title
Introduction to Psychology

Credits
3.0

Hours:
lecture/Lab/Other
Lecture/15 weeks

Co- or Pre-requisite
ENG 101

Implementation
sem/year
Fall/2008

Catalog description (2006-2009 Catalog):

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.

Is course New, Revised, or Modified? Revised

Required texts/other materials:

Text: Carpenter, S., & Huffman, K. (2007). *Visualizing Psychology*. New York: Wiley Publishers.

Revision date:

May, 2008

Course coordinator:

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Information resources:

The library has an extensive collection of resources that students may use for extra reinforcement of the concepts being taught in this course.

Other learning resources:

Online: WileyPLUS (<http://edugen.wiley.com/edugen/secure/index.uni?protocol=http>)

Course Competencies/Goals:

The student will be able to:

- I. Identify the major fields of study and theoretical perspectives within psychology and articulate their similarities and differences.
- II. Apply psychological theories and findings of empirical studies to explanations of human behavior.
- III. Apply psychological concepts to their own lives. They will be able to recognize psychological principles when they encounter them in everyday life.
- IV. Develop writing skills in conjunction with the use of APA format.

Course-specific General Education Knowledge Goals and Core Skills.

General Education Knowledge Goals

Goal 1. Communication. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

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.

Goal 8. Diversity. Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.

Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action. Students will understand ethical issues and situations.

MCCC Core Skills

Goal A. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in speech and writing, and demonstrate proficiency in reading.

Goal B. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving. Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.

Goal C. Ethical Decision-Making. Students will recognize, analyze and assess ethical issues and situations.

Goal D. 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.

Units of study in detail

Unit I – Introduction to Psychology and Research Methods

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define psychology and trace its historical roots. [CG I; GE 5]
- Identify and describe psychology's major subfields. [CG I; GE 5]
- Describe the different psychological perspectives and explain how these perspectives influence behavior and mental processes. [CG I, II; GE 5, 8]
- Describe the methods psychologists use to observe, describe, and explain behavior. [CG I, II; GE 5]
- Evaluate the various scientific methodologies in terms of advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches. [CG I, II; GE 5, A, B]
- Compare and contrast experimental research, descriptive research, and correlational research. [CG I, II, III; GE 5, B]
- Discuss the ethics of experimentation and explain why psychologists might use deception in their research with human subjects. [CG I, II, III; GE 5, 9, B, C]
- Describe how psychologists' values influence their work and discuss whether application of the psychological principles is potentially dangerous. [CG I, II, III; GE 1, 5, 9, B, C]

Unit II – Biological Basis of Behavior

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the neuroscience perspective. [CG , II; GE 5, B]
- Identify the major divisions of the nervous system. [CG I, II; GE 5]
- Describe the structure of a neuron and explain how the neuron functions. [CG II; GE 5]
- Discuss the role of neurotransmitters. Understand the link between neurotransmitters and drug use. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Discuss the organization of the brain, identifying its major structures and their functions. Describe the lobes of cerebral cortex. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Discuss the concepts of cerebral lateralization and the malleability of the brain in terms of functioning. [CG II; GE 5, B]
- Describe the structure and function of the endocrine system. [CG II; GE 5]

Unit III – Life-Span and Personality Development

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the gene, the basic unit of heredity, and discuss the nature/nurture question. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Discuss the course of prenatal development. Define zygote, embryo, fetus, and discuss each stage. [CG II, III; GE 5]
- Describe and evaluate Piaget's view of cognitive development and discuss how learning changes over time. [CG II; GE 5]
- Identify the effects of early experience on cognitive development. [CG II, III; GE 5, 8, B]
- Discuss the origins and consequences of attachment. [CG II; GE 5]
- Describe the effects of different parenting styles on the child. Describe authoritarian parents, permissive parents, and authoritative parenting, and the effects on child development. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Define "personality" and understand its components [CG I, II; GE 5, 8, B.]
- Describe, evaluate, compare and contrast between the various personality theories including, but not limited to, psychoanalytic, humanistic, cognitive, and trait. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Explain how objective and projective tests are used to assess personality. [CG II, III; GE 5, 8 B]

Unit IV – Sensation, Perception and Consciousness

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe and distinguish between sensation (a bottom-up process) and perception (a top-down process). [CG II; GE 5]
- Discuss Gestalt psychology's contribution to our understanding of perception. [CG II; GE 5]
- Define consciousness and discuss its significance in the history of psychology. [CG I, II; GE 5]
- Describe the cyclical nature and possible functions of sleep and stages of sleep. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Identify and describe major sleep disorders including, but not limited to, insomnia, sleep apnea, and narcolepsy. [CG II, III; GE 5]
- Discuss and evaluate the possible functions of dreams from different psychological perspectives. [CG I, II, III; GE 5, B]
- Discuss ways to alter consciousness without the use of drugs. [CG II, III; GE 5, 9]

- Identify the major drug categories and describe the physiological and psychological effects of specific drugs. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]

Unit V – Learning and Memory

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe and evaluate the processes involved in classical conditioning. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Describe and evaluate the processes involved in operant conditioning. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Describe and evaluate the processes involved in observational learning. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Identify and explain conditioning and learning in everyday life. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Explain memory in terms of information processing. Define the key aspects to encoding, storage, and retrieval. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Explain how and why our memories can be forgotten or distorted. [CG I, II, III; GE 5, B]

Unit VI – Abnormal Behavior and Treatment

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define abnormal. [CG I, II, III; GE 1, 5, 9, B]
- List the criteria for judging whether behavior is abnormal emphasizing the cultural determinants. [CG I, II, III; GE 5, 8, 9, B, C]
- Describe and evaluate the different perspectives on psychological disorders. [CG I, II; GE 5, 8, 9, B, C]
- Describe the system used to classify psychological disorders and explain the reasons for its development [CG I, II; GE 5, 8, 9, B, C].
- Describe the various types of clinical disorders including anxiety disorders, mood disorders, dissociative disorders, and schizophrenia [CG II, III; GE 5, B].
- Discuss the major forms of therapy used to treat psychological disorders including, but not limited to, psychoanalysis, behavior therapy, cognitive behavior therapy, humanistic therapy, and biomedical therapies. [CG II, III; GE 5, 9, B, C]

Unit VII – Human Behavior in a Social Context

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the field and theories of social psychology. [CG I, II; GE 1, 5]
- Explain how attributions and attitudes affect the way we perceive and judge others. [CG II, III; GE 5, 8, 9, B]
- Identify and explain the factors contributing to conformity and obedience. [CG II, III; GE 5, 8, 9, B, C]
- Summarize the factors involved in interpersonal relationships. [CG II, III; GE 5]
- 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. [CG II, III; GE 5, B]
- Apply social psychology to social problems such as prejudice, discrimination, stereotypes, and destructive obedience. [CG II, III; GE 1, 5, B, C]

Evaluation of student learning:

Exams:

- Students will be required to take a series of tests (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:

- 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.

Academic Integrity Statement:

The issue of academic honesty is taken very seriously at Mercer County Community College and in this class. Cheating on assignments or exams and/or plagiarism is not to be tolerated. Students are expected to be responsible for their own work. In this course, cheating/plagiarism will result in, at minimum, a zero for that exam/assignment. Clear cases of intentional cheating will result in failure in the course. Please see the MCCC student handbook for a complete description of MCCC's academic integrity policy [<http://www.mccc.edu/pdf/handbook.pdf>].