



VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CHARTING THE COURSE

Department of Teaching & Learning
Parent/Student Course Information

Dual Enrollment Introduction to Psychology I
Tidewater Community College PSY 201
(PSY 201)

One Semester Course (One-half VBCPS credit, 3 TCC credits)

Counselors are available to assist parents and students with course selections and career planning. Parents may arrange to meet with the counselor by calling the school's guidance department.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to Psychology I is a dual enrollment, one-semester course providing the successful student with three college semester credits and one-half Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) elective credit. This course examines human and animal behavior, relating experimental studies to practical problems. It includes topics such as research methods, history, sensation, perception, learning, memory, emotion, cognition and sleep. Part I of II.

One Semester Course (One-half VBCPS credit, 3 TCC credits)

*Tuition, fees and textbook are the responsibility of the student in accordance with the dual enrollment regulation (5-30.2).

PREREQUISITE

None

Unit I - Scientific Inquiry Domain

Content Area: Perspectives in Psychological Science

1. Define psychology as the scientific study of behavior and mental processes.
2. Identify and explain the primary objectives of psychology (e.g. describing, understanding, predicting and controlling behavior and mental processes).
3. Describe how psychology emerged and evolved as a scientific discipline.
4. Identify overarching themes, persistent questions or enduring conflicts in psychology, such as the interaction of heredity and environment.
5. Identify and describe the major contemporary perspectives of psychology (e.g. psychodynamic, behavioral, humanistic, biological and cognitive).

Content Area: Research Methods and Measurement

1. Describe the scientific method and its role in psychology.
2. Explain the strengths, limitations and conclusions that can be drawn from various research designs and data collection methods (including case study, observation, survey, correlational and experiment).
3. Describe systematic procedures used to improve the credibility of research findings (e.g. blind or double-blind designs, control or placebo groups, peer-review and replication).
4. Explain the ethical obligations of researchers toward their research participants, both human and animal.

Content Area: Critical Thinking

1. Discern differences between personal views and scientific evidence in understanding behavior.
2. State connections between diverse facts and theories.
3. Identify arguments based largely on anecdotal evidence, personal experience and poorly supported assertions regarding behavior.
4. Describe attitudes associated with critical thinking such as tolerance of ambiguity and skepticism.
5. Apply psychological concepts, theories and research findings as these relate to everyday life.

Unit II - Biopsychological Domain

Content Area: Biological Bases of Behavior

1. Identify the major divisions and subdivisions of the human nervous system.
2. Identify the parts of the neuron and describe the basic process of neural transmission.
3. Differentiate between the structures and functions of the various parts of the central nervous system.
4. Discuss the mechanisms of and the importance of, plasticity of the nervous system.
5. Explain how evolved tendencies influence behavior.
6. Identify tools used to study the nervous system.

Unit III - Content Area: Sensation and Perception

1. Describe processes of sensation and perception and how they interact.
2. Explain the concepts of threshold and adaptation.
3. Describe the capabilities and limitations of sensory processes.
4. Explain the interaction of the person and the environment in determining perception.

Unit IV - Content Area: Consciousness

1. Identify states of consciousness.
2. Distinguish between processing which is conscious (i.e. explicit) and other processing which happens without conscious awareness (i.e. implicit).
3. Describe characteristics of sleep and theories that explain why we sleep and dream.
4. Characterize the major categories of psychoactive drugs and their effects.
5. Describe other states of consciousness such as meditation, hypnosis and flow states

Learning and Cognition Domain

Unit V- Content Area: Learning

1. Describe the principles of classical conditioning (e.g. acquisition, extinction, generalization, discrimination).
2. Describe the principles of operant conditioning (e.g. reinforcement, punishment, shaping, reinforcement schedules and extinction).
3. Describe cognitive approaches to learning (e.g. observational learning, social learning).
4. Describe applications of learning theories in real life (e.g. phobias, animal training and habit change).

Unit VI - Content Area: Language Development

1. Describe the structure and function of language.
2. Discuss the relationship between language and thought.
3. Describe theories and developmental stages of language acquisition.
4. Explain the relationship between language and the brain.

Unit VII - Content Area: Memory

1. Describe the differences between working memory and long-term memory.
2. Discuss types of memory and memory disorders.
3. Identify factors and strategies influencing how memories are encoded, stored and retrieved.
4. Explain how memories can be malleable.

Unit IX - Content Area: Thinking

1. Define processes involved in problem solving and decision making.
2. Describe obstacles to problem solving and decision making.
3. Describe aids to problem solving and decision making.

Unit X - Content Area: Intelligence

1. Discuss different perspectives on intelligence (e.g. general intelligence, multiple intelligences).
2. Discuss the history of intelligence testing, including historical use and misuse in the context of fairness.
3. Identify current methods of assessing human intelligence.
4. Discuss issues related to the consequences of intelligence testing.
5. Discuss the influences of biological, cultural and environmental factors on intelligence.

Unit XI - Content Area: Motivation

1. Describe biologically based theories of motivation.
2. Describe cognitively based theories of motivation.
3. Describe humanistic theories of motivation.

Unit XII - Content Area: Emotion

1. Describe the biological and cognitive components of emotion.
2. Differentiate among theories of emotional experience.
3. Describe how culture and gender influence emotional expression.

Unit XII- Content Area: Sociocultural Diversity

1. Discuss social and cultural diversity.
2. Discuss psychological research examining diversity among individuals.

Topics Covered in the Course

- Research Methods
- History of Psychology
- Biological Bases of Behavior
- Sensation and Perception
- Learning
- Memory
- Emotion and Motivation
- Cognitive psychology including Thinking, Language and Problem Solving
- States of consciousness including Sleep and Biological Rhythms

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For further information please call (757) 263-1070.

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