

AP[®] Psychology Curriculum Map

Unit I: History, Approaches, and Research Methods [SC1 & SC2]

3 weeks

- A. Logic, Philosophy, and History of Science
- B. Approaches/Perspectives
- C. Experimental, Correlation, and Clinical Research
- D. Statistics
- E. Research Methods and Ethics

Objectives

- Define psychology and trace its historical development.
- Compare and contrast the psychological perspectives.
- Identify basic and applied research subfields of psychology.
- Identify basic elements of an experiment (variables, groups, sampling, population, etc.).
- Compare and contrast research methods (case, survey, naturalistic observation).
- Explain correlational studies.
- Describe the three measures of central tendency and measures of variation.
- Discuss the ethics of animal and human research.
- **Unit II: Biological Basis of Behavior [SC3]**

3 weeks

- A. Physiological Techniques (e.g., imagining, surgical)
- B. Neuroanatomy
- C. Functional Organization of Nervous System

D. Neural Transmission

E. Endocrine System

F. Genetics

Objectives

- Describe the structure of a neuron and explain neural impulses.
- Describe neuron communication and discuss the impact of neurotransmitters.
- Classify and explain major divisions of the nervous system.
- Describe the functions of the brain structures (thalamus, cerebellum, limbic system, etc.).
- Identify the four lobes of the cerebral cortex and their functions.
- Discuss the association areas.
- Explain the split-brain studies.
- Describe the nature of the endocrine system and its interaction with the nervous system.

Unit III: Developmental Psychology [SC11]

3 weeks

A. Life-Span Approach

B. Research Methods

C. Heredity-Environment Issues

D. Developmental Theories

E. Dimensions of Development

F. Sex Roles, Sex Differences

Objectives

- Discuss the course of prenatal development.
- Illustrate development changes in physical, social, and cognitive areas.
- Discuss the effect of body contact, familiarity, and responsive parenting on attachments.
- Describe the benefits of a secure attachment and the impact of parental neglect and separation as well as day care on childhood development.
- Describe the theories of Piaget, Erikson, and Kohlberg.
- Describe the early development of a self-concept.
- Distinguish between longitudinal and cross-sectional studies.

Unit IV: States of Consciousness [SC6]

2 weeks

A. Sleep and Dreaming

B. Hypnosis

C. Psychoactive Drug Effects

• *Objectives*

- Describe the cyclical nature and possible functions of sleep.
- Identify the major sleep disorders.
- Discuss the content and possible functions of dreams.
- Discuss hypnosis, noting the behavior of hypnotized people and claims regarding its uses.
- Discuss the nature of drug dependence.
- Chart names and effects of depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogenic drugs.

- Compare differences between NREM and REM.
- Describe the physiological and psychological effects of depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens.
- **Unit V: Sensation and Perception [SC4 & SC5]**

3 weeks

A. Thresholds

B. Sensory Mechanisms

C. Sensory Adaptation

D. Attention

E. Perceptual Processes

- ***Objectives***

- Contrast the processes of sensation and perception.
- Distinguish between absolute and difference thresholds.
- Label a diagram of the parts of the eye and ear.
- Describe the operation of the sensory systems (five senses).
- Explain the Young-Helmholtz and opponent-process theories of color vision.
- Explain the place and frequency theories of pitch perception.
- Discuss Gestalt psychology's contribution to our understanding of perception.
- Discuss research on depth perception and cues.

Unit VI: Learning [SC7]

2 weeks

A. Classical Conditioning

B. Operant Conditioning

C. Cognitive Processes in Learning

D. Biological Factors

E. Social Learning (Observational Learning)

Objectives

- Describe the process of classical conditioning (Pavlov's experiments).
- Explain the processes of acquisition, extinction, spontaneous recovery, generalization, and discrimination.
- Describe the process of operant conditioning, including the procedure of shaping, as demonstrated by Skinner's experiments.
- Identify the different types of reinforcers and describe the schedules of reinforcement.
- Discuss the importance of cognitive processes and biological predispositions in conditioning.
- Discuss the effects of punishment on behavior.
- Describe the process of observational learning (Bandura's experiments).

Unit VII: Memory

2 weeks

A. Memory

Objectives

- Describe memory in terms of information processing and distinguish among sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory.
- Distinguish between automatic and effortful processing.
- Explain the encoding process (including imagery, organization, etc.).

- Describe the capacity and duration of long-term memory.
- Distinguish between implicit and explicit memory.
- Describe the importance of retrieval cues.
- Discuss the effects of interference and motivated forgetting on retrieval.
- Describe the evidence for the constructive nature of memory.

Unit VIII: Thinking and Language [SC8]

2 weeks

A. Language

B. Thinking

C. Problem Solving and Creativity

Objectives

- Describe the nature of concepts and the role of prototypes in concept formation.
- Discuss how we use trial and error, algorithms, heuristics, and insight to solve problems.
- Explain how the representativeness and availability of heuristics influence our judgments.
- Describe the structure of language (phonemes, morphemes, grammar).
- Identify language developmental stages (babbling, one word, etc.).
- Explain how the nature-nurture debate is illustrated in the theories of language development.
- Discuss Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis.
- Describe the research on animal cognition and communication.

Unit IX: Motivation and Emotion [SC9 & SC10]

2 weeks

- A. Biological Bases
- B. Theories of Motivation
- C. Hunger, Thirst, Sex, and Pain
- D. Social Motives
- E. Theories of Emotion
- F. Stress

Objectives

- Define motivation and identify motivational theories.
- Describe the physiological determinants of hunger.
- Discuss psychological and cultural influences on hunger.
- Define achievement motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
- Identify the three theories of emotion (James-Lange, Cannon-Bard, Schachter- Singer).
- Describe the physiological changes that occur during emotional arousal.
- Discuss the catharsis hypothesis.
- Describe the biological response to stress.

Unit X: Testing and Individual Differences [SC13]

2 weeks

- A. Standardization and Norms
- B. Reliability and Validity
- C. Types of Tests
- D. Ethics and Standards in Testing

E. Intelligence

F. Heredity/Environment and Intelligence

G. Human Diversity

Objectives

- Trace the origins of intelligence testing.
- Describe the nature of intelligence.
- Identify the factors associated with creativity.
- Distinguish between aptitude and achievement tests.
- Describe test standardization.
- Distinguish between the reliability and validity of intelligence tests.
- Describe the two extremes of the normal distribution of intelligence.
- Discuss evidence for both genetic and environmental influences on intelligence.
- Discuss whether intelligence tests are culturally biased.

Unit XI: Personality [SC12]

2 weeks

A. Personality Theories and Approaches

B. Assessment Techniques

C. Self-Concept/Self-Esteem

. Growth and Adjustment

Objectives

- Describe personality structure in terms of the interactions of the id, ego, and superego.
- Explain how defense mechanisms protect the individual from anxiety.

- Describe the contributions of the neo-Freudians.
- Explain how personality inventories are used to assess traits.
- Describe the humanistic perspective on personality in terms of Maslow's focus on self-actualization and Rogers's emphasis on people's potential for growth.
- Describe the impact of individualism and collectivism on self-identity.
- Describe the social-cognitive perspective on personality.
- Discuss the consequences of personal control, learned helplessness, and optimism.

Unit XII: Abnormal Psychology [SC14]

2 weeks

- A. Definitions of Abnormality
- B. Theories of Psychopathology
- C. Diagnosis of Psychopathology
- D. Anxiety Disorders
- E. Somatoform Disorders
- F. Mood Disorders
- G. Schizophrenic Disorders
- H. Organic Disorders
- I. Personality Disorders
- J. Dissociative Disorders

Objectives

- Identify the criteria for judging whether behavior is psychologically disordered.
- Describe the medical model of psychological disorders.
- Describe the aims of the most recent Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), and

discuss the potential dangers of diagnostic labels.

- Describe the symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder.
- Describe and explain the development of somatoform and mood disorders.
- Describe the various symptoms and types of schizophrenia.
- Describe the nature of organic and personality disorders.
- Describe the characteristics and possible causes of dissociative disorders.

Unit XIII: Treatment of Psychological Disorders [SC15]

2 weeks

A. Treatment Approaches

B. Modes of Therapy (e.g., individual, group)

C. Community and Preventive Approaches

• ***Objectives***

- Discuss the aims and methods of psychoanalysis.
- Identify the basic characteristics of the humanistic therapies.
- Identify the basic assumptions of behavior therapy.
- Describe the assumptions and goals of the cognitive therapies.
- Discuss the benefits of group therapy and family therapy.
- Discuss the findings regarding the effectiveness of the psychotherapies.
- Discuss the role of values and cultural differences in the therapeutic process.
- Identify the common forms of drug therapy and the use of electroconvulsive therapy.

Unit XIV: Social Psychology [SC16]

2 weeks

A. Group Dynamics

B. Attribution Process

C. Interpersonal Perception

D. Conformity, Compliance, Obedience

E. Attitudes and Attitude Change

F. Organizational Behavior

G. Aggression/Antisocial Behavior

Objectives

- Describe the importance of attribution in social behavior.
- Explain the effect of role-playing on attitudes in terms of cognitive dissonance theory.
- Discuss the results of Asch's experiment on conformity.
- Describe Milgram's controversial experiments on obedience.
- Discuss how group interaction can facilitate group polarization and groupthink.
- Describe the social, emotional, and cognitive factors that contribute to the persistence of cultural, ethnic, and gender prejudice and discrimination.
- Discuss the issues related to aggression and attraction.
- Explain altruistic behavior in terms of social exchange theory and social norms. φ