



# CHELMSFORD HIGH SCHOOL

## AP Psychology 2023-2024

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Explore the ideas, theories, and methods of the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. You'll examine the concepts of psychology through reading and discussion and you'll analyze data from psychological research studies

### **Program of Studies**

*Prerequisites: None*

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Myers Psychology for the AP Course (ISBN:9781319070502)

### **COURSE GOALS and STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

By the end of the course, students will be able to connect psychological concepts and theories to real life scenarios, understand and interpret data, and analyze research studies in psychology.

### **COURSE STANDARDS**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define psychology as a discipline and identify its goals as a science
2. Differentiate scientific and non-scientific approaches to knowledge
3. Explain the value of both basic and applied psychological research with human and non-human animals
4. Identify careers individuals can pursue in psychological science
5. Identify ways individuals can use psychological science in any career

### **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Chelmsford High School is committed to supporting the success and well-being of all students, regardless of varying abilities and levels of adaptive skills. The Special Education office provides services and resources to empower each student to attain their highest level of academic success and learning independence.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

At Chelmsford High School, students are expected to maintain high moral and ethical standards, as exemplified by the final sentence of our mission statement: *"A spirit of respect is fostered, as members take responsibility for their actions and acknowledge the rights and differences of others."* (CHS Mission Statement)

Students should respect themselves, other students, staff members and the school. The acts of cheating and plagiarism violate expectations that students will exhibit respectful, ethical behavior.

[The Academic Honor Code](#) exists to address the issues of cheating and plagiarism.

## **GRADING POLICIES**

Please connect with individual teachers for specific information regarding grading. Students will be able to monitor academic progress biweekly through X2/ASPEN.

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the academic support programs and services (such as PRIDE Block, after-school help, etc.) available to them to help ensure and support success. Information about these services can be found at <https://chelmsfordschools.org/>

## **COURSE SKILLS**

The following skills are addressed in this course: Connecting psychological concepts and theories to real-life scenarios, Understanding and interpreting data, Analyzing research studies in psychology

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Unit One: Scientific Foundations of Psychology**

*(10% - 14% of exam score)*

You'll learn about the basis of psychological theory as the study of human and animal behavior and mental processes and learn how psychologists design and conduct research.

Topics may include:

1. Major historical figures in psychology
2. Theoretical approaches to describing human behavior
3. Branches of psychology
4. A variety of research methods used by psychologists
5. The application of research design and statistical analysis in psychology
6. Ethical guidelines

### **Unit Two: Biological Basis of Behavior**

*(8% - 10% of exam score)*

You'll study behaviors and mental processes from a biological perspective and explore the effects of the interaction between human biology and our environment.

Topics may include:

1. The interaction of inherited traits, environment, and evolution in shaping behavior
2. Structures and functions of biological systems, including the endocrine system and nervous system
3. Brain function, neural firing, and the influence of medication
4. The study of the brain and research techniques for studying its structure and function
5. States of consciousness, including sleeping and dreaming
6. Addiction and dependency

### **Unit Three: Sensation and Perception**

*(6% - 8% of exam score)*

You'll examine how humans perceive and process the world around them via their senses and convert those observations into perceptions that influence how we think and behave.

Topics may include:

1. Basic principles of how humans experience and process stimuli
2. The role of experience and culture in perception
3. The mechanisms of the 5 senses and sensory disorders

#### Unit Four: Learning

*(7% - 9% of exam score)*

You'll learn about the field of psychology that studies how humans and other animals learn as well as how learning changes over a lifetime.

Topics may include:

1. Influential researchers and theories of learning
2. Results of famous learning experiments
3. Types of learning
4. Types of conditioning and their effects
5. Social and cognitive factors in learning

#### Unit Five: Cognitive Psychology

*(13% - 17% of exam score)*

You'll examine the complex nature of how memory, intelligence, and other mental processes impact human behavior.

Topics may include:

1. The cognitive and physiological processes that make up memory
2. Forgetting and typical memory errors
3. The biological basis of short and long term memory
4. Creative thinking and problem solving strategies
5. Biases and errors in thinking
6. Defining and measuring intelligence
7. The process of learning and using language

#### Unit Six: Developmental Psychology

*(7% - 9% of exam score)*

You'll study how physical and social changes over humans' lifespans can influence behavior and mental processes from a variety of perspectives.

Topics may include:

1. Physical and social development in childhood
2. Theories of cognitive development in childhood
3. Adolescent development in childhood
4. Adulthood and aging
5. Theories of moral development
6. Gender and sexual orientation

## Unit Seven: Motivation, Emotion, and Personality

*(11% - 15% of exam)*

You'll study personality through the lens of behavior and mental processes and how they interact to produce an individual's personality.

Topics may include:

1. Theories of motivation behind human and animal behavior
2. Major theories of emotion
3. Conceptions of personality, including behaviorist, social cognitive, humanistic, and trait theories
4. Research and assessments to measure personality

## Unit Eight: Clinical Psychology

*(12% - 16% of exam)*

Topics may include:

1. Standards for diagnosing and approaches to explaining psychological disorders
2. Neurodevelopmental and schizophrenic spectrum disorders
3. Bipolar, depressive, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorders
4. Dissociative, somatic, and trauma and stress related disorders
5. Substance abuse, eating disorders, personality disorders, and related conditions
6. Historical developments in psychological treatment
7. Modern treatment options and methods

## Unit Nine: Social Psychology

*(8% - 10% of exam)*

Topics may include:

1. How social and cultural categories like gender and race can impact self-concept and behavior
2. The factors that lead people to form and change attitudes
3. Group dynamics, including conformity, compliance, and obedience to authority
4. Types of behavior caused by the presence of others
5. Bias, prejudice, and discrimination
6. Altruism and aggression
7. The variables that contribute to attraction

*This syllabus and course outline are subject to change as Chelmsford High School seeks to continually improve the learning experiences for all students.*

***"We foster PRIDE\* in our pursuit of excellence."***

**PRIDE refers to our five core values – Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, and Empathy. These five pillars represent our points of emphasis in supporting the development of quality students and quality citizens.**