Greenwich Public Schools Curriculum Overview
AP Psychology

Personalized learning is achieved through standards-based, rigorous and relevant curriculum that is aligned to digital tools and resources.

Note: Teachers retain professional discretion in how the learning is presented based on the needs and interests of their students.

Course Description

AP Psychology is an introductory college-level psychology course. Students cultivate their understanding of the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes through inquiry-based investigations as they explore concepts like the biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, learning and cognition, motivation, developmental psychology, testing and individual differences, treatment of abnormal behavior, and social psychology. Consequently, the readings, pacing, and academic standards will simulate that of a college class. Students taking this course are expected to take the corresponding national Advanced Placement exam given in May.

Unit Pacing Guide

- Unit 0: The Scientific Attitude (~4-5 classes)
- Unit 1: Biological Bases of Behavior (~17-23 classes)
- Unit 2: Cognition (~17-23 classes)
- Unit 3: Development and Learning (~17-23 classes)
- Unit 4: Social Psychology and Personality (~17-23 classes)
- Unit 5: Mental and Physical Health (~17-23 classes)

Enduring Understandings for the Course

Human behavior is influenced by a variety of biological, cognitive and social factors.

Enduring Understandings by Unit:

Unit 0: The Scientific Attitude

- **Enduring Understanding:**
  - Students will understand that scientific and statistical thinking helps increase the validity and reliability of observations and experimentation, and overall advance the field of psychology.
- Standard Area: Scientific Inquiry and Research Methods
  - After concluding this unit, students understand:
    - 1. The nature of psychological science
    - 2. Research methods and measurements used to study behavior and mental processes

        - 3. Ethical issues in research with human and non-human animals
        - 4. Basic concepts of data analysis
- Content Standard 1: The nature of psychological science
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
    - 1.1. Define psychology as a discipline and identify its goals as a science
    - 1.2. Differentiate scientific and non-scientific approaches to knowledge
    - 1.3. Explain the value of both basic and applied psychological research with human and non-human animals
    - 1.4. Identify careers individuals can pursue in psychological science
    - 1.5. Identify ways individuals can use psychological science in any career
- Content Standard 2: Research methods and measurements used to study behavior and mental processes
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Describe research methods psychological scientists use
        - 2.2. Compare and contrast quantitative and qualitative research methods used by psychological scientists
        - 2.3. Describe the importance of representative samples in psychological research and the need for replication
        - 2.4. Explain how and why psychologists use non-human animals in research
        - 2.5. Explain the meaning of validity and reliability of observations and measurements
- Content Standard 3: Ethical issues in research with human and non-human animals
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 3.1. Identify ethical requirements for research with human participants and non-human animals
        - 3.2. Explain why researchers need to adhere to an ethics review process
- Content Standard 4: Basic concepts of data analysis
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 4.1. Define descriptive statistics and explain how they are used by psychological scientists
        - 4.2. Draw appropriate conclusions from correlational and experimental designs
        - 4.3. Interpret visual representations of data

<u>Unit 1: Biological Bases of Behavior:</u>

- **Enduring Understandings:**
    - Students will understand that…
        - scientific and statistical thinking helps increase the validity and reliability of observations and experimentation, and overall advance the field of psychology.
        - psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes.
        - the study of psychology is rooted in a biological basis.
        - knowledge of biological functions and mechanisms, especially how neurons communicate, how the brain functions, and how sleep and sensation impact behavior and mental processes.
    - <u>Standard Area: Perspectives in Psychological Science</u>

        - Content Standard 1: Development of psychology as an empirical science
            - 1.1 Define psychology as a discipline and identify its goals as a science.
            - 1.2 Describe the emergence of psychology as a scientific discipline.
            - 1.3 Describe perspectives employed to understand behavior and mental processes.
            - 1.4 Explain how psychology evolved as a scientific discipline.

        - Content Standard 2: Major subfields within psychology
            - 2.1 Discuss the value of both basic and applied psychological research with human and non-human animals.
            - 2.2 Describe the major subfields of psychology.
            - 2.3 Identify the important role psychology plays in benefiting society and improving people's lives.

    - <u>Standard Area: Research Methods, Measurement, and Statistics</u>
        - Content Standard 1: Research methods and measurements used to study behavior and mental processes
            - 1.1 Describe the scientific method and its role in psychology.
            - 1.2 Describe and compare a variety of quantitative (e.g., surveys, correlations, experiments) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, narratives, focus groups) research methods.
            - 1.3 Define systematic procedures used to improve the validity of research findings, such as external validity.
            - 1.4 Discuss how and why psychologists use non-human animals in research.

        - Content Standard 2: Ethical issues in research with human and non-human animals
            - 2.1 Identify ethical standards psychologists must address regarding research with human participants.
            - 2.2 Identify ethical guidelines psychologists must address regarding research with non-human animals.

        - Content Standard 3: Basic concepts of data analysis
            - 3.1 Define descriptive statistics and explain how they are used by psychological scientists.
            - 3.2 Define forms of qualitative data and explain how they are used by psychological scientists.
            - 3.3 Define correlation coefficients and explain their appropriate interpretation.
            - 3.4 Interpret graphical representations of data as used in both quantitative and qualitative methods.
            - 3.5 Explain other statistical concepts, such as statistical significance and effect size.

        - 3.6 Explain how validity and reliability of observations and measurements relate to data analysis.

    - Standard Area: Vocational Applications
        - Content Standard 1: Career options
            - 1.1 Identify careers in psychological science and practice.
            - 1.2 Identify careers related to psychology.

        - Content Standard 2: Educational requirements
            2.1 Identify degree requirements for psychologists and psychology-related careers.
            - 2.2 Identify resources to help select psychology programs for further study.
        - Content Standard 3: Vocational applications of psychological science
            - 3.1 Discuss ways in which psychological science addresses domestic and global issues.
            - 3.2 Identify careers in psychological science that have evolved as a result of domestic and global issues.

Unit 2: Cognition

- **Enduring Understandings:**
    - Students will understand that…
        - memory processes and contains content that is relevant to their daily lives, such as how people remember and perceive the world around them.
        - basic elements of thought, judgment, and problem-solving, as well as research-based strategies for memory improvement can be directly applicable to their lives outside of the classroom.
        - the measurement of intelligence and achievement have been used to identify students with aptitude to increase opportunities in school and the workplace.
- **Standard Area: Cognition**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Fundamental processes of thinking and problem solving
        - 2. Effective thinking processes
- Content Standard 1: Fundamental processes of thinking and problem solving
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Describe cognitive processes related to concept formation
        - 1.2. Explain processes involved in problem solving and decision making
- Content Standard 2: Effective thinking processes
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Describe obstacles to effective information processing and decision making
        - 2.2. Describe convergent and divergent thinking in problem solving and decision making
- **Standard Area: Memory**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Processes of memory

        - 2. Factors influencing memory

- Content Standard 1: Processes of memory
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Explain the processes of encoding, storage, and retrieval
        - 1.2. Describe systems of memory (i.e., sensory, working, and long-term memory)
        - 1.3. Differentiate types of memory (i.e., implicit and explicit)
- Content Standard 2: Factors influencing memory
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Explain strategies for improving the encoding, storage, and retrieval of memories
        - 2.2. Describe memory as a reconstructive process
        - 2.3. Explain kinds of forgetting or memory failures
        - 2.4. Identify disorders that impact the function of memory
- **Standard Area: Perception**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. The process of perception
        - 2. The interaction between the person and the environment in determining perception
- Content Standard 1: The process of perception
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Describe principles of perception
        - 1.2. Explain the concepts of bottom-up and top-down processing
- Content Standard 2: The interaction between the person and the environment in determining perception
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Explain Gestalt principles of perception
        - 2.2. Describe binocular and monocular depth cues
        - 2.3. Describe perceptual constancies
        - 2.4. Describe the nature of attention
        - 2.5. Explain how diverse experiences and expectations influence perception
- **Standard Area: Intelligence**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Perspectives on intelligence
        - 2. Assessment of intelligence
        - 3. Issues in intelligence
- Content Standard 1: Perspectives on intelligence
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Explain intelligence as a construct
        - 1.2. Describe various conceptualizations of intelligence
        - 1.3. Describe the effects of differences in intelligence on
        - everyday functioning
- Content Standard 2: Assessment of intelligence
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Analyze the history of intelligence testing, including historical use and misuse in the context of fairness
        - 2.2. Identify current methods of assessing human cognitive abilities

        - 2.3. Describe measures of and data on reliability and validity for intelligence test scores
- Content Standard 3: Issues in intelligence
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 3.1. Explain the complexities of interpreting scores on intelligence tests
        - 3.2. Describe the influences of biological, cultural, and environmental factors on intelligence

Unit 3: Development and Learning

- **Enduring Understandings:**
    - Students will understand that…
        - biological, cognitive, and environmental factors come together to influence growth throughout the lifespan.
        - people continue to grow and develop throughout their lives.
        - people experience formal and informal learning throughout a significant portion of their lives.

- **Standard Area: Life Span Development**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Methods and issues in life span development
        - 2. Physical, cognitive, and social development across the life span (prenatal, infancy, childhood, adolescence, emerging adulthood, adulthood, and older adulthood)
- Content Standard 1: Methods and issues in life span development
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Explain the interaction of environmental and biological factors in development, including the role of the brain in all aspects of development
        - 1.2. Explain issues of continuity/discontinuity and stability/change
        - 1.3. Distinguish methods used to study development
        - 1.4. Describe the role of sensitive and critical periods in development
- Content Standard 2: Physical, cognitive, and social development across the life span (prenatal, infancy, childhood, adolescence, emerging adulthood, adulthood, and older adulthood)
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Identify key features of physical development from prenatal through older adulthood
        - 2.2. Identify key features of cognitive development from prenatal through older adulthood
        - 2.3. Identify key features of social development from prenatal through older adulthood
- **Standard Area: Learning**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Classical conditioning
        - 2. Operant conditioning
        - 3. Observational learning, social learning theory, and mental processes in learning
- Content Standard 1: Classical Conditioning

    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Describe the processes of classical conditioning
        - 1.2. Describe clinical and experimental examples of classical conditioning
- Content Standard 2: Operant Conditioning
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Describe the processes of operant conditioning
        - 2.2. Describe clinical and experimental examples of operant conditioning
- Content Standard 3: Observational learning, social learning theory, and mental processes in learning
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 3.1. Describe observational learning and social learning theory
        - 3.2. Describe the role of mental processes in learning
- **Standard Area: Language**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Structural features and development of language
        - 2. Language and the brain
- Content Standard 1: Structural features and development of language
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Describe the structure of language from the level of speech sounds to communication of meaning
        - 1.2. Describe the relationship between language and cognition
        - 1.3. Explain the language acquisition process and theories
- Content Standard 2: Language and the brain
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Identify the brain structures associated with language
        - 2.2. Explain how damage to the brain may affect language

Unit 4: Social Psychology and Personality

- Students will understand that…
    - external social factors and internal personality variables come into play in a wide variety of everyday situations for people.
    - different theories have been proposed that categorize different personalities and explain their connection to behavior and mental processes.
    - what motivates us and/or our emotional responses vary amongst our individual differences.
- **Standard Area: Social**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Social cognition
        - 2. Social influence
- Content Standard 1: Social cognition
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Describe attributional explanations of behavior
        - 1.2. Explain how experiences shape attitudes and beliefs
        - 1.3. Explain how attitudes, biases, and beliefs affect behavior and relationships with others
- Content Standard 2: Social influence
    - Students are able to (learning targets):

        - 2.1. Explain how the presence of other people can affect behavior
        - 2.2. Describe how intergroup dynamics influence behavior
        - 2.3. Explain how persuasive methods affect behavior and beliefs
        - 2.4. Identify factors influencing attraction and relationships
        - 2.5. Identify factors influencing aggression and conflict
        - 2.6. Identify factors influencing altruism and helping behaviors
- **<u>Standard Area: Personality</u>**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Empirical approaches to studying and understanding personality
        - 2. Assessment of personality
- Content Standard 1: Empirical approaches to studying and understanding personality
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Explain how biological and environmental factors interact to influence personality
        - 1.2. Explain social-cognitive approaches to understanding personality
        - 1.3. Explain trait-based approaches to understanding personality
        - 1.4. Describe methods used to study personality scientifically
        - 1.5. Define self-concept
- Content Standard 2: Assessment of personality
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Differentiate personality assessment techniques
        - 2.2. Describe the reliability and validity of personality assessment techniques
        - 2.3. Analyze how personality researchers address issues of stability and change
- **<u>Standard Area: Multiculturalism and Gender</u>**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Psychological constructs of culture
        - 2. Psychological constructs of gender and sexual orientation
- Content Standard 1: Psychological constructs of culture
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Define culture and describe its role in individual and group characteristics
        - 1.2. Describe the relationship between culture and conceptions of self and identity development
        - 1.3. Explain how inequality of power and resources relate to privilege, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination
        - 1.4. Describe psychological effects of privilege, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination based on cultural identity
- Content Standard 2: Psychological constructs of gender and sexual orientation
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Compare and contrast sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation
        - 2.2. Describe diversity of gender identity and sexual orientation
        - 2.3. Describe psychological effects of privilege, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation
- **<u>Standard Area: Motivation and Emotion</u>**

    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Influences of motivation
        - 2. Domains of motivated behavior in humans
        - 3. Perspectives on emotion
        - 4. Emotional interpretation and expression (interpersonal and intrapersonal)
        - 5. Domains of emotional behavior
- Content Standard 1: Influences of motivation
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Explain biological, cognitive, and social factors that influence motivation
        - 1.2. Explain the role of culture in human motivation
- Content Standard 2: Domains of motivated behavior in humans
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Identify factors in motivation that influence eating and sexual behaviors
        - 2.2. Identify motivational factors that influence achievement and affiliation
- Content Standard 3: Perspectives on emotion
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 3.1. Explain the biological and cognitive components of emotion
        - 3.2. Describe the psychological research on basic human emotions
        - 3.3. Differentiate among theories of emotion
- Content Standard 4: Emotional interpretation and expression (interpersonal and intrapersonal)
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 4.1. Explain how biological factors influence emotional interpretation and expression
        - 4.2. Explain how culture and gender influence emotional interpretation and expression
        - 4.3. Explain how other environmental factors influence emotional interpretation and expression
- Content Standard 5: Domains of emotional behavior
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 5.1. Identify biological and environmental influences on the expression and experience of negative emotions
        - 5.2. Identify biological and environmental influences on the expression and experience of positive emotions

<u>Unit 5: Mental and Physical Health</u>

- **Enduring Understandings:**
    - Students will understand that…
        - the factors that help people lead mentally and physically healthy lives.
        - the factors related to mental health and happiness, focusing on positive emotions, cognitions, and experiences
        - psychologists who study and/or treat psychological disorders utilize theoretical perspectives to explain a disorder's origin and/or determine the best method for its treatment.

- **<u>Standard Area: Disorders</u>**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Perspectives of abnormal behavior
        - 2. Categories of psychological disorders
- Content Standard 1: Perspectives of abnormal behavior
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Define abnormal behavior
        - 1.2. Describe cross-cultural views of abnormality
        - 1.3. Describe major medical and biopsychosocial models of abnormality
        - 1.4. Explain how stigma relates to abnormal behavior
        - 1.5. Explain the impact of psychological disorders on the individual, family, and society
- Content Standard 2: Categories of psychological disorders
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Describe the classification of psychological disorders
        - 2.2. Describe the challenges associated with diagnosing psychological disorders
        - 2.3. Describe symptoms of psychological disorders
- **<u>Standard Area: Health</u>**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Stress and coping
        - 2. Psychological science promotes mental and physical health and wellness
- Content Standard 1: Stress and coping
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Define stress as a psychophysiological response to the environment
        - 1.2. Explain sources of stress across the life span
        - 1.3. Explain physiological and psychological consequences of stress for health and wellness
        - 1.4. Explain physiological, cognitive, and behavioral strategies to deal with stress
- Content Standard 2: Psychological science promotes mental and physical health and wellness
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Describe factors that promote resilience and flourishing
        - 2.2. Identify evidence-based strategies that promote health and wellness
- **<u>Standard Area: Therapies</u>**
    - After concluding this unit, students understand:
        - 1. Types of treatment
        - 2. Legal, ethical, and professional issues in the treatment of psychological disorders
- Content Standard 1: Types of treatment
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 1.1. Describe different types of biomedical and psychological treatments
        - 1.2. Explain why psychologists use a variety of psychological treatments

        - 1.3. Describe appropriate treatments for different populations, including historical use and misuse of treatment
- Content Standard 2: Legal, ethical, and professional issues in the treatment of psychological disorders
    - Students are able to (learning targets):
        - 2.1. Identify differences among licensed mental health providers
        - 2.2. Identify legal and ethical requirements for licensed mental health providers
        - 2.3. Identify resources available to support individuals with psychological disorders and their families

Standards

V. CONNECTICUT STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

There are no unique CT Psychology Standards. CT adheres to the American Psychological Association (APA) Standards (2022). Much of the information contained herein is excerpted from the APA National Psychology Standards and from the College Board A.P. Psychology Course Description (Fall 2024). *See individual units for APA Standards.

VI. CONNECTICUT STATE SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/11-12/

Key Ideas and Details:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.10

By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Greenwich Public Schools Vision of the Graduate:

- *Pose and pursue substantive questions*

    - Students will develop and explore their own research question during a variety of research assignments including development of the Capstone project and Grade 10 research paper.
- *Critically interpret, evaluate, and synthesize information*
    - Students will critically interpret, evaluate and synthesize information by analyzing a variety of primary and secondary sources and by conducting historical research. This source evaluation and research will allow students to gain a variety of historical perspectives.
- *Explore, define, and solve complex problems*
    - Students will apply historical knowledge to critically analyze current problems and issues. High school elective courses will allow for an in-depth study of many complex modern issues.
- *Communicate effectively for a given purpose*
    - Students will be evaluated on their ability to communicate effectively through a variety of methods. Through persuasive writing assignments, class discussions and presentations, students will continue to develop and improve their communication skills.
- *Advocate for ideas, causes and actions*
    - Students will evaluate past advocacy successes and failures and determine when others have chosen to fight for causes and taken action. Case studies in *Law in America*, for example, will be used to evaluate advocacy successes and failures.
- *Generate innovative, creative ideas and products*
    - Students will demonstrate their mastery of curriculum objectives with innovative projects. Students will explore answers to essential questions through creative and varied assignments with research structured by the use of GPS research process.
- *Collaborate with others to produce a unified work and/or heightened understanding*
    - Students will learn to collaborate with one another while working in structured groups in a variety of cooperative learning activities in order to create a final product.
- *Contribute to community through dialogue, service, and/or leadership*
    - Through the study of different world leaders and political systems, students gain the skills they need to evaluate qualities of an effective leader. Through student council, community service requirements and other school organizations and responsibilities students will contribute to the community.
- *Conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner*
    - Historical situations will be analyzed so students gain perspective and information in order to conduct themselves in a responsible manner.
- *Recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view*
    - Through the teaching of cultures from around the world students will recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view. By developing an understanding and empathy for others, students will appreciate differences and similarities between themselves and others.
- *Pursue their unique interests, passions and curiosities*
    - Students will have choice in many assignments and will be able to pursue their interests culminating in the Capstone project.
- *Respond to failures and successes with reflection and resilience*
    - Students will reflect on their writing and group work, in order to analyze what they did well and where they can improve. Frequent and constructive feedback by teachers will be used to ensure continuous reflection and refinement.

- *Be responsible for their own mental and physical health*
    - Social studies classes will help students develop study skills, and reduce stress through organization and planning.

Resources/Assessments

- Required Textbook
    - Myers, D.G., DeWall, N., & Yost Hammer, Elizabeth, *Myers' Psychology for the AP Course* (4th ed.) (2024).

- **Required Independent Reading Assignment:**
    - Students will select a non-fiction book about psychology and apply two perspectives in psychology in an in-class essay.
        - To be assigned in the beginning of the 3rd quarter to give students time to choose, obtain, and read their book
        - Students MUST have a hard-copy of the book (no ebooks, audio books, etc. unless 504 or IEP states otherwise)
        - In-class essay should be administered before April vacation
        - Students can bring their book with annotations and/or sticky notes but cannot bring separate notes and cannot use their devices during the assessment

- Course essential questions assessed in each unit with summative assessments modeled after College Board AP Psychology Exam Format.