

College of Micronesia-FSM  
PO Box 159  
Pohnpei, FM 96941

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Course Title: **General Psychology**

Department & Number: **SS/PY 101**

Social Science

**Course Description:** This course provides an introduction to the concepts, theories, and research behind the study of human thought, emotion, and behavior.

**Course Prepared by:** National Campus Social Science Division   **State:** Pohnpei

	Hours per week		No. of week	=	Total Hours	=	Semester Credits
<b>Lecture</b>	<u>  3  </u>	<b>x</b>	<u> 16 </u>	=	<u> 48 </u>	=	<u>  3  </u>
<b>Laboratory</b>	<u>      </u>	<b>x</b>	<u>      </u>	=	<u>      </u>	=	<u>      </u>
<b>Workshop</b>	<u>      </u>	<b>x</b>	<u>      </u>	=	<u>      </u>	=	<u>      </u>

**Purpose of Course:**

Degree Requirement     X    
Degree Elective         X    
Certificate                   
Other                    X  

**Prerequisite Courses:**     ESL 089  

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, Chairperson, Curriculum Committee

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Date Approved by Committee

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Signature, President, COM-FSM

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Date Approved by President

## **I. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

### **A. General Objectives**

1. Describe the field of Psychology and differentiate it from other fields of the social and behavioral sciences (unit 1).
2. Describe the research and analytical methods used by psychology including the 7 main psychological theories (unit 1).
3. Describe the ways in which the brain and nervous system function to produce our thoughts, emotions and behaviors (unit 2).
4. Describe the processes of sensation and perceptions (unit 3).
5. Describe the processes of nature and nurture in human development throughout the life-span (unit 4).
6. Describe the concepts, theories, research and physiological and psychological processes behind human motivation and emotion (unit 5).
7. Describe the concepts, theories, research and processes underlying human learning (unit 6).
8. Describe the concepts, theories, research and processes underlying human social behavior (unit 7).
9. Describe the various types of abnormal behavior and their causes (unit 8).
10. Describe the various types of psychotherapy (unit 9).
11. Describe the ways in which human behaviors affect human health (unit 10).

### **B. Specific Objectives**

Upon completing this course, a student should be able to:

#### ***Unit 1 – Introducing Psychology***

1. Describe the differences between the psychological approach to studying behavior and the approaches used by different social scientists including anthropologists, sociologists, and others.
2. Explain the ways in which psychologists describe, explain, predict and control behavior.

3. Describe the major research methods and the types of information that they provide.
4. Explain the seven main psychological theories and the ways in which they explain cause and effect.

### ***Unit 2 – Biological Psychology***

1. Explain how the ideas of evolutionary theory have affected the way we view human thought, emotion, and behavior.
2. Explain how genetic information can affect behavior.
3. Describe the structure and function of the nervous system and its main parts.
4. Describe the technologies that are used to understand the brain and its functions.
5. List the major chemicals on the body that affect our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

### ***Unit 3 – Sensation and Perception***

1. Distinguish between the processes of sensation and perception.
2. Describe the anatomy and functioning of the visual and auditory systems.
3. Describe the processes involved with taste, smell, touch, movement, and other sensations.

### ***Unit 4 - Development***

1. Explain the roles of nature and nurture in development and their relations to maturation and learning.
2. List the key milestones in physical development at birth, during infancy, and during childhood.
3. Explain Vygotsky's environmentally based theory of development.
4. Describe the abilities in each of Piaget's stages of development.
5. List the psychosocial stages of Erikson's theory and describe the characteristics of each stage.

### ***Unit 5 – Motivation and Emotion***

1. Describe how early psychologists explained motivation.

2. Describe how physiology influences motivation.
3. Explain how psychological needs and cognitive processes affect motivation.
4. Compare and contrast motivation and emotion.
5. List and describe the basic emotions, how they are expressed, and how they may differ across cultures.
6. Explain how the expression of emotions benefits us socially.

### ***Unit 6 – Learning***

1. Differentiate between habituation, instincts, and imprinting.
2. Describe learning through classical conditioning.
3. Describe learning through operant conditioning.
4. Describe the social-learning process.

### ***Unit 7 - Social Psychology***

1. Explain how we perceive and interpret information about ourselves and others.
2. List and describe the heuristics and biases that people use to help them understand and evaluate others.
3. Describe the nature of attitudes and their relationship to behavior.
4. Explain why people conform and comply with the behavior of others.
5. Discuss the processes whereby people are likely to exhibit prosocial and antisocial behavior.

### ***Unit 8 – Abnormal Psychology***

1. List the characteristics needed for behavior to be described as abnormal.
2. Describe the different theoretical approaches currently used by psychologists to deal with abnormal behavior and its causes.
3. Differentiate between the major classes of diagnoses.
4. Characterize the main DSM IV syndromes.

5. Explain some of the most important causes of suicide.

### ***Unit 9 – Psychotherapy***

1. Describe the goals and methods of psychodynamic therapies, and how these therapies differ from other approaches.
2. Describe the goals and methods of humanistic therapies, and how these therapies differ from other approaches.
3. Describe the goals and methods of behavioral therapies, and how these therapies differ from other approaches.
4. Describe the goals and methods of cognitive therapies, and how these therapies differ from other approaches.
5. Describe the goals and methods of biological therapies, and how to distinguish among psychotropic medications.
6. Describe group approaches to psychotherapy.

### ***Unit 10 – Health Psychology***

1. Describe the main concerns of health psychology.
2. Identify the various behavioral factors that are associated with the maintenance of good health.
3. State the relationship between stress and disease processes.
4. Describe the personality factors that are associated with health and well-being, as well as with disease.

## ***II. COURSE CONTENT***

### ***Unit 1 – Introducing Psychology***

History of Psychology  
The psychological theories  
    Evolutionary  
    Biological  
    Cultural  
    Psychodynamic

Cognitive  
Humanistic  
Behavioral

Psychological Research  
Basic and applied research  
Tests and surveys  
Case studies  
experiments

## ***Unit 2 – Biological Psychology***

The Central Nervous System & Peripheral Nervous System  
Cells  
Spinal cord  
Neurons  
Dendrites and synapses  
Neurotransmitters  
Autonomic, somatic, sympathetic, parasympathetic systems  
The Brain  
Hindbrain, midbrain, forebrain  
Thalamus, hypothalamus, limbic, hippocampus  
Cerebral cortex  
Frontal, parietal, occipital, temporal lobes  
Sensory, motor and association cortex  
Left and right hemispheres  
Endocrine glands – adrenal, thyroid, pituitary

## ***Unit 3 – Sensation and Perception***

Sensory Systems  
Signal detection  
Absolute threshold  
Receptor cells  
Transduction  
Sensory coding  
The Sense of Sight  
Light and the electromagnetic spectrum  
Anatomy and operation of the eye  
The Sense of Hearing  
The physical properties of sound – wavelength  
Anatomy & operation of the ear  
The Sense of Taste, Smell, & Touch  
Taste buds  
Olfaction  
Touch receptors

- Pain
- Perception
  - Absolute thresholds
  - Space perception
  - Form perception
  - Perceptual constancy
  - Depth of perception
  - Culture, experience and perception

#### ***Unit 4 - Development***

- The Nature vs Nurture Controversy
- Prenatal Development
  - Zygote, placenta, embryo & fetus
  - Prenatal risks
  - Fetal alcohol syndrome
- The Newborn
  - Sensory and reflex development
- Infancy
  - Physical development
  - Cognitive development
  - Socio-emotional development
- Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development
  - Schemas, assimilation, accommodation
  - Sensorimotor stage
  - Preoperational stage
  - Concrete operational stage
- Vygotsky's Theory of Cognitive Development
  - Internalization
  - Proximal zone of development
- Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development
  - Trust vs mistrust
  - Autonomy vs shame
  - Initiative vs guilt
  - Industry vs inferiority
  - Identity vs role confusion
  - Intimacy vs isolation
  - Generativity vs stagnation
  - Integrity vs despair
- Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development
  - Preconventional moral reasoning
  - Conventional moral reasoning
  - Postconventional moral reasoning
- Puberty & Adolescence
  - Physiological changes
  - Social and emotional changes

Personal fable  
Invincibility fallacy  
Adulthood and Old Age

***Unit 5 – Motivation and Emotion***

Instinct Theory  
Fixed action patterns  
Drive Reduction and Homeostasis Theory  
Primary drives  
Secondary drives  
Arousal Theory  
Optimal levels  
Incentive Theory  
Expectation of reward  
Hunger and Eating  
Nutrients and hormones  
Role of the hypothalamus  
Flavor learning and appetite  
Eating disorders  
Sexual Behavior  
Hormones and sexual desire  
Social and cultural factors  
Sexual dysfunctions  
Sexual “orientation”  
Biological factors  
Work and Success  
Achievement motivation  
Individual variability  
Gender variability  
Cultural variability  
Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs  
Self-actualization  
Esteem  
Belongingness and love  
Safety  
Physiological  
Emotion  
Defining characteristics  
Autonomic nervous system  
Fight or flight syndrome  
William James’ theory  
Schacter’s Cognitive Labeling theory  
Walter Cannon’s theory  
Emotional expression – innate & learned  
Sociocultural aspects of emotion



## ***Unit 6 – Learning***

- Classical Conditioning
  - Pavlov’s discovery
  - Unconditioned stimulus and response
  - Conditioned stimulus and response
  - Extinction and reconditioning
- Operant Conditioning
  - Thorndike’s law of effect
  - Reinforcement – positive and negative
  - Punishment and avoidance learning
  - Aversive conditioning
  - Learned helplessness
- The Research of B.F. Skinner
- Cognitive Processes in Learning
  - Latent learning
  - Cognitive map
- The Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura
  - Vicarious observational learning
  - Attention
  - Retention
  - Motivation
  - Potential reproduction
- The Role of Neural Networks and Cognitive Maps
- Cultural Factors in Learning and Teaching
  - Learning styles
  - Teaching styles

## ***Unit 7 - Social Psychology***

- The Social Construction of the Self
- Social Cognition
- Vygotsky’s Theory of Cognitive Development – Social Constructivism
- Social Identity Theory
- Social Cognition
  - Cognitive dissonance
- Social Perception
  - First impressions
  - Self-fulfilling prophecies
  - Attribution
  - Social desirability
  - Fundamental attribution error

- Actor-observer effect
- Self-serving bias
- Confirmation bias

#### Attraction

- Reinforcement theory
- Equity theory
- Balance theory
- Theories of love

#### Attitudes

- Attitude formation and function
- Cognitive, affective, behavioral components
- Attitude change
- Prejudice and stereotypes

#### Conformity, Compliance & Obedience

- Factors that affect conformity
- Types of compliance
- Milgram & Zimbardo experiments

### ***Unit 8 – Abnormal Psychology***

#### Defining disorders

- Statistical approach
- Valuative approach
- Practical approach
- The DSM-IV classification system

#### Explaining disorders

- The medical model
- The biological model
- The psychodynamic approach
- The cognitive-behavioral approach
- The humanistic/phenomenological approach
- Sociocultural factors
- The diathesis-stress integrated approach

#### Anxiety Disorders

- Phobias
- Generalized anxiety disorders
- Panic disorder
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Causes

#### Somatoform Disorders

- Conversion
- Hypochondriasis
- Somatization
- Pain disorder
- Causes

## Dissociative Disorders

- Amnesia
- Fugue
- Multiple personality disorder
- Causes

## Mood Disorders

- Depression
- Suicide
- Bipolar disorder
- Causes

## Schizophrenia

- General symptoms
- Residual schizophrenia
- Disordered schizophrenia
- Paranoid schizophrenia
- Catatonic schizophrenia
- Undifferentiated schizophrenia
- Causes

## Personality Disorders

- Schizotypal personality disorder
- Avoidant personality disorder
- Narcissistic personality disorder
- Antisocial personality disorder
- Schizoid personality disorder
- Borderline personality disorder
- Dependent personality disorder
- Obsessive compulsive personality disorder
- Histrionic personality disorder
- causes

## ***Unit 9 – Psychotherapy***

### Psychodynamic Therapy

- Psychoanalysis
- Free association
- Interpretation of dreams
- Transference
- Insight & catharsis

### Humanistic Therapy

- Client centered therapy
- Unconditional positive regard
- Empathy
- Congruence (genuineness)

### Behavioral Therapy

- Behavior modification
- Systematic desensitization
- Modeling

- Positive reinforcement
- Extinction
- Aversive conditioning
- Punishment
- Cognitive behavioral therapy – rational emotive and cognitive restructuring
- Biological Therapy
  - Electroconvulsive therapy
  - Psychosurgery
  - psychopharmacology

### ***Unit 10 – Health Psychology***

- The Stress Process
  - Stressors
  - Stress reactions
  - Stress mediators
- Stress Responses
  - Physiological stress responses
  - Emotional stress responses
  - Cognitive stress responses
  - Behavioral stress responses
  - Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Coping with stress
  - Problem focused coping skills
  - Emotion-focused coping skills
  - Stress & personality
- Stress and the Immune System
  - Psychoneuroimmunology

### ***III. TEXTBOOK***

Mastering the World of Psychology, Wood, Samuel E. , Ellen Green Wood & Denise Boyd. 2004 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. or current edition. ISBN# 0205457959.

### ***IV. REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS -- none***

### ***V. REFERENCE MATERIALS***

Cognitive Psychology, Payne & Wenger, Houghton Mifflin, 1998

Owner's Manual for the Brain, Howard, Bard Press, 2000

Evolutionary Psychology, Buss, Allyn & Bacon, 1999

How the Mind Works, Pinker, Norton, 1997

Emotion and Culture, Kitayama & Markus, APA 1994

Psychology: An Introduction, Kagan, HBJ, 1991

Understanding Human Behavior, Philipchalk, HBJ, 1994

Psychology: The Study of Human Behavior, Irwin Steub – HBJ 1998

Cross Cultural Topics in Psychology, Adler, Praeger, 1994

The Social Animal, Elliot Aronson, Freeman & Co., 1984

The Basic Writings of Carl Jung, Laszlo, Princeton Univ. Press, 1990

Social Psychology: The Theory & Application of Symbolic Interactionism, Lauer, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1977

The Mind in Society: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture, Cosmides, Oxford Press, 1992

The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture, Cosmides, Oxford Press, 1992

The Moral Animal: The New Science of Evolutionary Psychology, Wright, Vintage Press, 1994

## ***VI. INSTRUCTIONAL COST -- none***

## ***VII. METHOD OF INSTRUCTION***

This course outline is for both the online course and the classroom course. Therefore, there are two possible methods of instruction. The online course is developed along the lines of the classic correspondence course model where students do the reading, construct their own meaning, submit weekly assignments and then sit for comprehensive midterms and finals (3 midterms and 3 finals). The classroom method of instruction is the standard lecture format with unit tests, midterm exam, and final exam.

## ***VIII. EVALUATION***

The method of evaluation reflects the method of instruction. For the online course, students are evaluated via the weekly assignment and the large comprehensive midterm exams (3) and final exams (3). The weekly assignments consist of two essay exercises and one multiple choice assignment. The essay assignments are designed to get the students to apply the concepts and theories to real life, therefore demonstrating their understanding. The multiple choice exercises are designed to get the students to engage the textbook. For the classroom course, the students are evaluated via unit tests and a midterm exam and a final exam. As with the online course, there are both essay and multiple choice components designed to test both understanding and application and to get the students to engage the textbook.

## ***IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY***

The standard COM-FSM attendance policy applies to this course.

## ***X. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY***

The standard COM-FSM academic honesty policy applies to this course.