

Advanced Placement (AP®) Social Studies Courses

The AP® social studies courses are intended to provide a rigorous college level introduction to the social sciences for high school students. While no official AP® teacher certification is issued by the College Board or by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the College Board recommends that teachers complete an AP® Institute or workshop before teaching an AP® course. Additional information on teacher professional development, recommended texts, the courses, and the AP® exams is available to educators at the College Board website <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com>.

AP® teachers can also join a discussion group with other AP® teachers in their discipline by signing up on AP Central. Students can visit www.collegeboard.com/apstudents for additional information.

With the permission of the College Board, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has created course standards that reflect both the expectations of the College Board and the philosophy and format of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (SCS). However, these course outlines are not intended to replace the extensive guidelines provided by the College Board in AP course description books (often referred to as the *acorn books*) for each subject.

Since the College Board frequently revises recommended topics and required skills, AP® teachers should obtain and follow the current course description for their courses.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PSYCHOLOGY

Advanced Placement Psychology is designed to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of human development, behavior, learning, motivation, and personality of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with psychology. They also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice. The study of psychology enables students to recognize and cope with uncertainty and ambiguity in human behavior.

Strands: Research Methods, Biological Basis of Behavior, Sensation and Perception, States of Consciousness, Learning, Cognition, Motivation and Emotion, Life-Span and Development, Personality, Testing and Individual Differences, Abnormal Behavior and Treatment, and Social Psychology.

COMPETENCY GOAL 1: The learner will examine the history and theoretical approaches to psychology.

Objectives

- 1.01 Discuss the development of psychology.
- 1.02 Identify approaches in psychology.
- 1.03 Evaluate the contemporary perspectives used by psychologists to understand behavior and mental processes.
- 1.04 Outline the major subfields and career opportunities that comprise psychology.

COMPETENCY GOAL 2: The learner will become familiar with the research methods of psychology.

Objectives

- 2.01 Distinguish between different research strategies used by psychologists to explore behavior and mental processes.
- 2.02 Classify and employ basic concepts of statistical data.
- 2.03 Analyze the development of psychology as an empirical science.
- 2.04 Discuss the APA Standards of Ethics in research.

COMPETENCY GOAL 3: The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the biological bases of behavior.

Objectives

- 3.01 Identify the structure and function of a neuron.
- 3.02 Describe and explain the organization of the nervous system.
- 3.03 Review the structure and function of the brain.

- 3.04 Differentiate among technologies and clinical methods for studying the brain.
- 3.05 Compare and contrast the specialized functions of the hemisphere of the brain.
- 3.06 Describe the structure and function of the endocrine system.
- 3.07 Assess how heredity interacts with environment to influence behavior.
- 3.08 Explain how psychological mechanisms are influenced by evolution.

COMPETENCY GOAL 4: The learner will explore the basic concepts of sensation and perception.

Objectives

- 4.01 Explain thresholds and limitations of sensory processes and their basic concepts.
- 4.02 Examine the anatomy and function of the senses (emphasizing vision and hearing).
- 4.03 Define sensory adaptation, sensory disorders, and perceptual acuity.
- 4.04 Interpret the nature of attention.
- 4.05 Describe the interplay between the perceiver and the environment in determining perception.

COMPETENCY GOAL 5: The learner will analyze the differing states of consciousness.

Objectives

- 5.01 Classify the stages and characteristics of sleep and the theories that explain why we sleep.
- 5.02 Analyze theories used to explain and interpret dreams.
- 5.03 Examine the basic phenomena of hypnosis and its uses.
- 5.04 Categorize the different psychoactive drugs and their effects.

COMPETENCY GOAL 6: The learner will analyze factors influencing learned and unlearned behavior.

Objectives

- 6.01 Compare and contrast principles involved in classical and operant conditioning.
- 6.02 Identify processes in cognitive learning.
- 6.03 Describe biological factors that impact learning.
- 6.04 Explain social learning.

COMPETENCY GOAL 7: The learner will analyze factors influencing the cognitive domain.

Objectives

- 7.01 Describe processes of encoding, storing, and retrieving information into short-term and long-term memory.
- 7.02 Discuss methods for improving memory.
- 7.03 Explore various theories used in language acquisition.
- 7.04 Examine problem solving strategies and the role of creativity.

COMPETENCY GOAL 8: The learner will analyze basic concepts of motivation and emotion.

Objectives

- 8.01 Identify theories of motivation.
- 8.02 Examine biological and environmental cues instigating basic drives or motives.
- 8.03 Analyze theories and physiology of emotion.
- 8.04 Explore psychological and physiological reactions to stress.

COMPETENCY GOAL 9: The learner will examine developmental psychology.

Objectives

- 9.01 Explain development as a lifelong process.
- 9.02 Analyze research techniques used to gather data on the developmental process.
- 9.03 Differentiate between heredity and environment issues.
- 9.04 Analyze and critique developmental theories.
- 9.05 Discuss issues surrounding the developmental process (physical, cognitive, social, and moral dimensions of development).
- 9.06 Identify sex roles and sex differences.

COMPETENCY GOAL 10: The learner will evaluate individual differences in personality.

Objectives

- 10.01 Identify and explain personality approaches and their important contributions to the understanding of psychology.
- 10.02 Analyze different tools and tests used in personality assessment.
- 10.03 Identify the role of self-concept and self-esteem in development of the personality.
- 10.04 Explore factors that contribute to growth and adjustment of personality.

COMPETENCY GOAL 11: The learner will describe concepts related to the measurement of testing and individual differences.

Objectives

- 11.01 Explain how standardization, norms, reliability, and validity apply to testing.
- 11.02 Evaluate types of tests and confront the ethical issues that arise in connection with the use of tests.
- 11.03 Examine the nature of intelligence and intelligence testing.
- 11.04 Discover the impact of heredity and environment on intelligence.
- 11.05 Discuss human diversity and individual differences.

COMPETENCY GOAL 12: The learner will examine the characteristics of psychological disorders.

Objectives

- 12.01 Define abnormal behavior.
- 12.02 Identify theories of psychopathology.
- 12.03 Demonstrate the use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) in diagnosing psychopathological disorders.
- 12.04 Define the etiology and diagnostic criteria for the following disorders: anxiety, somatoform, mood, schizophrenic, organic, personality, and dissociative.

COMPETENCY GOAL 13: The learner will analyze the different theories of treatment for psychological disorders.

Objectives:

- 13.01 Compare and contrast treatment approaches such as insight therapies (psychodynamic and humanistic), behavioral, cognitive, and biological approaches.
- 13.02 Explore the modes of therapy (individual and group).
- 13.03 Evaluate community and preventive approaches to psychological disorders.

COMPETENCY GOAL 14: The learner will evaluate the social dimension of behavior.

Objectives:

- 14.01 Illustrate how the structure and function of a given group affects the behavior of the group and the individual.
- 14.02 Summarize attribution processes where individuals form judgments about self and others.
- 14.03 Verify the influence of stereotypes on attributions of behavior
- 14.04 Assess classic studies dealing with the concepts of conformity, compliance, and obedience.

- 14.05 Define attitudes and attitude changes.
- 14.06 Evaluate diverse offerings in organizational psychology.
- 14.07 Discuss aggression and antisocial behavior.