



## Santa Rosa City Schools Course Proposal: AP Psychology

**Proposal Submitted By: Ashley Bell and Jim Carroll**

**Needs Statement: Discuss how this course fits into your Site and/or the District's goals. Attach minutes of meetings where this course was approved at site or district leadership meetings.**

This course fits into both site and district goals.

SRHS has offered Psychology for over a decade, and it is consistently a very popular elective choice for Juniors and Seniors on our campus. By expanding our offerings to also include AP Psych, we are making it possible for those students to challenge themselves in a new way, potentially help them be more competitive when applying for colleges and diversify our AP offerings both on site and in the district as a whole.

AP Psych also meets many of the goals set in the SRCS Strategic Priorities.

**Embrace:** AP Psych will allow students to achieve a higher level of academic achievement than was previously possible, while exploring potential careers and building empathy and understanding for the challenges of the human experience.

**Engage:** Students already love the course and the teacher, and this will only draw more students into the class and offer them a deeper level of understanding. This course offers real life connections, and real-life applications that connect with students. The course covers a diverse set of topics that aren't covered in other classes that are offered.

**Empower:** Students will engage in high-level critical thinking, while preparing them for college level classes.

**Overview:** AP Psychology is a college-level course that introduces students to the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. Covering topics such as neuroscience, cognitive development, social psychology, and psychological disorders, the course helps students develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of themselves and others. Through experiments, case studies, and real-world applications, students explore how biological, psychological, and social factors influence thoughts and actions. AP Psychology not only prepares students for college coursework but also fosters empathy, mental health awareness, and an appreciation for the complexities of human behavior.

**Graduation Requirements: Specify which requirement is met. (High School only)**

Elective Course

**UC A-G Requirements: Specify which requirement is met. (High School only)**

This course will be submitted for approval as a “G” course by the UC/CSU systems.

**Explain the rationale for course addition or modification. How does this fit in with district/site goals? Is this course replacing a current course, which course is it replacing and why? Will this course require new sections? Be explicit.**

Adding AP Psychology provides students with access to a rigorous, college-level course that enhances critical thinking, scientific inquiry, and real-world application of psychological concepts. The course supports student engagement by covering diverse topics such as neuroscience, cognitive development, and social behavior, making it relevant to both academic and personal growth. Psychology is increasingly recognized as an essential subject for understanding human interactions, mental health, and decision-making—key skills for success in college and careers. Additionally, AP Psychology aligns with the growing interest in social sciences, behavioral studies, and mental health awareness, equipping students with knowledge that is applicable across disciplines.

The addition of AP Psychology aligns with district and site goals of expanding access to advanced coursework, increasing college and career readiness, and promoting student well-being through mental health education. Many districts emphasize broadening AP course offerings to provide equitable opportunities for all students. Furthermore, the course supports interdisciplinary learning by incorporating elements of science, history, and social studies, reinforcing a well-rounded education. Given the national focus on mental health awareness in schools, AP Psychology also serves as a proactive step in fostering emotional intelligence and resilience among students.

AP Psychology would not require any new section allocation. SRHS traditionally offers three sections a year, and one to three of those classes could become AP Psychology instead of the college prep option offered currently. This is an opportunity to maintain our current program and expand to include another level, creating more opportunities for students without having a major impact on section allocation or FTE.

**Explain the measurable learning outcomes**

Students will...

- Students will describe major psychological concepts, theories, and historical perspectives.

- Students will identify key figures in psychology and explain their contributions to the field.
- Students will define and apply psychological terminology across various domains.
- Students will apply psychological theories to real-world scenarios, case studies, and personal experiences.
- Students will analyze human behavior using multiple psychological perspectives (e.g., biological, cognitive, sociocultural).
- Students will examine how psychological principles apply to mental health, relationships, and decision-making.
- Students will interpret and evaluate psychological research studies, including their methodologies and ethical considerations.
- Students will analyze data from psychological experiments and draw evidence-based conclusions.
- Students will differentiate between various research methods (e.g., experiments, correlational studies, surveys) and assess their strengths and limitations.
- Students will construct and defend arguments using psychological evidence.
- Students will assess the validity of psychological claims by distinguishing between correlation and causation.
- Students will critique media representations of psychological concepts for accuracy and bias.
- Students will respond to multiple-choice and free-response questions in a manner that reflects AP exam expectations.
- Students will apply test-taking strategies to improve performance on the AP Psychology exam.
- Students will demonstrate mastery of psychological concepts through class discussions, projects, and presentations.

### **Course Description (To be used in the course catalog)**

The AP Psychology course introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. While considering the studies that have shaped the field, students explore and apply psychological theories, key concepts, and phenomena associated with major units of study, including biological bases of behavior, cognition, altered states of consciousness, perception and sensation, development, research techniques, motivation and emotion, learning, abnormal psychology, social psychology, personality, and mental and physical health. Throughout the course, students apply psychological concepts and employ psychological research methods and data interpretation to evaluate claims, consider evidence, and effectively communicate ideas.

### **Detailed Course Design**

(Course design should include the objectives, activities, assessments, and standards to be addressed in this course.)

## **Course Overview: Units of Study and Associated Activities:**

### **1. Psychology's History and Approaches**

- a. Topics: History, Modern Psychology, Subfields of Psychology

### **2. Biological Bases of Behavior**

- a. Topics:

- i. Neuroanatomy
- ii. Neural communication
- iii. Endocrine system
- iv. Genetics.

- b. Activities:

- i. Create neuron models to illustrate neural communication.
- ii. Analyze case studies on brain injuries and their behavioral impacts.

- c. Assessments:

- i. Quizzes on brain structures and functions
- ii. Analysis of case studies.

### **3. Cognition**

- a. Topics:

- i. Memory processes
- ii. Language acquisition
- iii. Problem-solving

- b. Activities:

- i. Conduct memory experiments to understand encoding and retrieval.
- ii. Debate theories of language development.

- c. Assessments:

- i. Essays on cognitive theories
- ii. Presentations on problem-solving strategies

### **4. Development and Learning**

- a. Topics:

- i. Stages of development
- ii. Learning theories
- iii. Conditioning

- b. Activities:

- i. Observe and document developmental behaviors in various age groups.
- ii. Simulate classical and operant conditioning scenarios.

- c. Assessments:

- i. Reflection papers on developmental observations
- ii. Tests on learning principles.

### **5. Sensation and Perception**

- a. Topics:

- i. Influences on perception
- ii. Visual organization and interpretation
- iii. Hearing
- iv. The other senses

- b. Activities:

- i. Exploring the different senses

- c. Assessments:
  - i. Active use of the senses in an examination
  - ii. Essay development

**6. Social Psychology and Personality**

- a. Topics:
  - i. Group dynamics
  - ii. Attribution theories
  - iii. Personality assessments.
- b. Activities:
  - i. Role-play exercises to explore conformity and obedience.
  - ii. Administer and interpret personality inventories.
- c. Assessments:
  - i. Group projects analyzing social phenomena
  - ii. Reports on personality assessments

**7. Mental and Physical Health**

- a. Topics:
  - i. Psychological disorders
  - ii. Therapeutic approaches
  - iii. Stress and health.
- b. Activities:
  - i. Research and present on various psychological disorders and treatments.
  - ii. Develop stress-reduction plans based on psychological principles.
- c. Assessments:
  - i. Case study analyses
  - ii. Creation of mental health awareness campaigns

**Assessments:**

**1. Formative:**

- a. Regular quizzes on key concepts.
- b. Class discussions and participation. AP Central+3AP Central+3AP Central+3
- c. Homework assignments applying concepts to real-world scenarios.

**2. Summative:**

- a. Unit tests combining multiple-choice and free-response questions.
- b. Research projects and presentations. AP Central
- c. Comprehensive final exam modeled after the AP exam format.

**Budget- budget figures must be included even if they are an estimate.**

Projected Costs	Start-up	Ongoing
<b>Personnel (Not to include classroom instructor unless a new section is needed)</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00

<b>Instructional Material Supplies per student (textbooks, software, etc.)</b>	Myers, David G., and Nathan DeWall. Myers' Psychology for AP Course. 4th edition. <del>2021</del> 3. New York: Worth. - \$ <del>209</del>	\$0.00
<b>Services (training, equipment maintenance, contracts, etc.)</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Capital Outlay (remodeling, technology, etc.)</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Projected Costs</b>	<del>7,315</del>	\$0.00


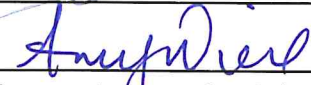

**Instructional Materials- must include an estimate for new materials even if none have been selected. Place in the chart above.**

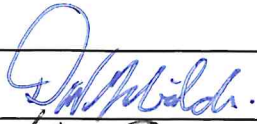

Type	Publisher	Title	ISBN	Author	Copyright	# Have/Need
Textbook	Worth Publishers	Myers' Psychology for AP Course	978-131 <del>292911</del> 658	Myers, David G., and Nathan DeWall	4th Edition	Need 35

**Funding Source(s) for Costs and Instructional Materials**

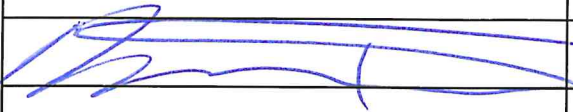
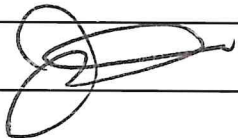

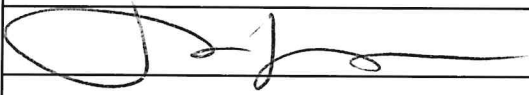

<b>Grants (indicate specific grant and grant timeline)</b>	
<b>Categorical Funds (include related programs)</b>	
<b>Career Technical Education (must be for an approved CTE course)</b>	
<b>Department Funds</b>	
<b>Other (be specific)</b>	

**District Principal Review and Approvals:**

Principals' Signatures	Site	Approved / Not Approved
	Elsie Allen High School	Approved
	Maria Carrillo High School	Approved
Verbal approval via online meeting. April Santos	Montgomery High School	Approved
	Piner High School	Approved

	Ridgway High School	Approve
	Santa Rosa High School	Approve

**District Department Chair Review and Approvals:**

Department Chair Signatures	Site	Approved / Not Approved
	Elsie Allen High School	Approve
	Maria Carrillo High School	Approve
	Montgomery High School	
	Piner High School	Approved
	Ridgway High School	APPROVED
	Santa Rosa High School	Approved
	Educational Services	

Course Catalog Information (To be filled by the District Office):

Course Number	HH060 A
Course Short Title:	AP Psych HP
Course Title:	AP Psychology
Number of Credits:	5 Honors
Grade Span:	9-12
Graduation Requirement:	Z
Prerequisites:	None
Course Department:	H
State Course Code:	9177
A-G Subject:	"G"
CTE Pathway:	N/A
Other Information:	Year long course