

College of San Mateo
Official Course Outline

1. **COURSE ID:** PSYC 301 **TITLE:** Psychology of Human Relationships and Adjustment
Units: 3.0 units **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours; 96.0-108.0 Homework hours; 144.0-162.0 Total Student Learning hours
Method of Grading: Letter Grade Only
Prerequisite: PSYC 100
Recommended Preparation:
 Completion of or concurrent enrollment in ENGL 100 or ENGL 105.

2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**
Degree Credit
Transfer credit: CSU; UC
AA/AS Degree Requirements:
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5b. Social Science
CSU GE:
 CSU GE Area D: SOCIAL SCIENCES: DSI - Social Institutions
 CSU GE Area E: LIFELONG LEARNING AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT: E1
IGETC:
 IGETC Area 4: SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES: Social and Behavioral Sciences

3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**
Catalog Description:
 A survey of current theoretical and applied psychological knowledge relevant to personal and social interactions and normal psychological adjustment. Examination of different psychological perspectives and theoretical foundations and how these are applied across a person's life taking into account the influence of culture, gender, ethnicity, historical, cohort, and social-economic status.

4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**
 Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:
 1. Identify and explain core areas of Adjustment: responses to stress, communication, interpersonal relationships, gender differences, human sexuality.
 2. Identify and describe the scientific method and research methods employed as applied to personal adjustment across the lifespan.

5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**
 Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:
 1. Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific method and research methods employed as it applies to personal adjustment across the life span.
 2. Compare and contrast major theories of personality as they relate to personal growth and adjustment.
 3. Evaluate the effects of stress.
 4. Compare and contrast the major coping strategies.
 5. Analyze the process of interpersonal and cross-cultural communication.
 6. Examine social perception, persuasion, conformity and social facilitation.
 7. Analyze friendship, love, and marriage.
 8. Critically analyze gender differences and stereotypes.
 9. Recognizing and distinguishing adjustment problems of adolescence adulthood.
 10. Identify challenges and adjustments associated with work and career.
 11. Critically analyze sexuality.
 12. Identify and describe psychological disorders.
 13. Critically evaluate forms of psychotherapy.
 14. Identify and describe the core aspects of positive psychology and the potential for influencing individuals and institutions through such methodologies.

6. **COURSE CONTENT:**
Lecture Content:
 1. Adjusting to Life
 - A. The paradox of progress

- B. The psychology of adjustment
 - a. Contexts, diversity, and adjustment
- C. The scientific approach to behavior
 - a. The scientific method
 - b. Experimental and correlational research
- D. The roots of happiness
 - a. Subjective well-being and adjustment
- 2. The Nature of Personality
 - A. What is personality?
 - B. Psychodynamic perspectives
 - C. Behavioral perspectives
 - D. Humanistic perspectives
 - E. Biological perspectives
 - F. Trait perspective
 - G. Contemporary empirical approaches to personality
 - H. Culture and personality
 - I. Assessing personality
- 3. Stress and Its Effects
 - A. The nature of stress
 - a. Stress and culture
 - B. Major sources of stress
 - C. Responding to stress
 - a. Emotional
 - b. Physiological
 - c. Behavioral
 - D. Potential effects of stress
 - E. Factors influencing stress tolerance
 - a. Social support
 - b. Hardiness
 - c. Optimism
 - F. Reducing stress through self-control
- 4. Coping Processes
 - A. The concept of coping
 - B. Common coping patterns of limited value
 - C. Nature of constructive coping
 - D. Appraisal-focused coping
 - E. Problem-focused coping
 - F. Emotion-focused coping
 - G. Emotional intelligence
- 5. Psychology and physical health
 - A. Stress, personality, and illness
 - B. Habits, lifestyles, and health
 - C. Reactions to illness
 - D. Understanding the effects of drugs
- 6. The Self, Identity, and Values
 - A. Self-concept
 - B. Self-esteem
 - a. Ethnicity, gender, and self-esteem
 - C. Basic principles of self-perception
 - a. Cognitive processes
 - b. Self-attributions
 - c. Explanatory style
 - D. Self-regulation
 - a. Self-efficacy
 - b. Self-defeating behavior
 - E. Self-presentation
 - a. Impression management
 - b. Self-monitoring
 - F. Building self-esteem
- 7. Social Thinking, Influence, and Intergroup Relations

- A. Forming impressions of others
- B. Problem of prejudice
- C. The power of persuasion
- D. The power of social pressure
 - a. Conformity and compliance
 - b. Authority
- E. Compliance tactics
 - a. Consistency
 - b. Reciprocity
 - c. Scarcity
- 8. Communicating Effectively
 - A. The process of interpersonal communication
 - a. Technology and communication
 - b. Communication and adjustment
 - B. Nonverbal communication
 - C. Toward more effective communication
 - D. Communication problems
 - E. Interpersonal conflict
 - a. Styles of managing conflict
 - b. Dealing constructively with conflict
 - F. Developing an assertive communication style
- 9. Friendship and Love Relationships
 - A. Attraction and relationship development
 - B. Friendship
 - a. Gender and sexual orientation
 - b. Conflict in friendships
 - C. Romantic love
 - a. Gender and sexual orientation
 - b. Theories of love
 - c. Course of romantic love
 - D. The internet and close relationships
 - E. Loneliness
- 10. Marriage and the Family
 - A. Challenges to the traditional model of marriage
 - B. Deciding to marry
 - a. Cultural influences on marriage
 - b. Selecting a mate
 - c. Predictors of marital success
 - C. Marital adjustment across the family life cycle
 - D. Vulnerable areas in marital adjustment
 - a. Gaps in role expectations
 - b. Work and career issues
 - c. Financial difficulties
 - d. Inadequate communication
 - E. Making marriage work
 - a. Gottman
 - F. Divorce & remarriage
 - G. Same-sex marriage
 - H. Alternatives to marriage
 - I. Understanding intimate partner violence
- 11. Gender and Behavior
 - A. Gender stereotypes
 - B. Gender similarities and differences
 - C. Biological origins of gender differences
 - D. Environmental origins of gender differences
 - E. Gender-role expectations
 - F. Gender in the past and in the future
 - G. Gender in the workplace
- 12. Sexuality
 - A. Becoming a sexual person

- a. Key aspects of sexual identity
 - b. Physiological influences
 - c. Psychosocial influences
 - d. Gender differences in sexual socialization
 - B. Sexual orientation
 - C. The human sexual response
 - D. Sexual expression
 - E. Patterns of sexual behavior
 - F. Practical issues in sexual activity
 - G. Enhancing sexual relationships
13. Careers and Work
- A. Choosing a career
 - a. Examining personal characteristics and family influence
 - b. Psychological tests for career decisions
 - B. Models in career choice and development
 - a. Holland's person-environment fit model
 - b. Super's developmental model
 - c. Women's career development
 - C. The changing world of work
 - a. Contemporary workforce trends
 - b. Workforce diversity
 - D. Coping with occupational hazards
 - a. Job stress
 - b. Sexual harassment
 - c. Unemployment
 - E. Work-life balance
 - F. Getting ahead in the job game
14. Psychological Disorders
- A. Abnormal behavior: Medical model, criteria, classification
 - B. Anxiety disorders
 - C. Obsessive compulsive disorder
 - D. Dissociative disorders
 - E. Depressive & bipolar disorders
 - F. Psychotic disorders: Schizophrenia
 - G. Autism spectrum disorder
 - H. Personality disorders
 - I. Eating disorders
15. Therapies
- A. Process of treatment
 - a. Treatments
 - b. Clients
 - c. Therapists
 - B. Insight-oriented therapies
 - C. Behavior therapies
 - D. Biomedical therapies
 - E. Current trends and issues in treatment
 - F. Looking for a therapist
16. Health & Positive Psychology
- A. Defining the scope of positive psychology
 - B. Positive subjective experiences
 - C. Positive individual traits
 - a. Hope
 - b. Resilience
 - c. Grit
 - d. Gratitude
 - D. Positive institutions
 - E. Problems and prospects
 - F. Boosting happiness

7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Activity
- C. Discussion
- D. Guest Speakers

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

Writing Assignments:

- A. Term paper in APA format applying critical thinking and integration of research-based perspective targeting a core topic of course information from a biopsychosocial perspective.
- B. Written synthesis of scholarly research and application to core areas of content of personal adjustment.

Reading Assignments:

- A. Reading of academic research-based text with minimum of 30-40 pages per week
- B. Reading of primary source material related to psychological adjustment.

Other Outside Assignments:

- A. Group presentation integrating academic research with core course topic area. Critical evaluation and analysis of core issue related to adjustment and application of strategies to enhance coping and adjustment.

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Class Work
- C. Exams/Tests
- D. Group Projects
- E. Homework
- F. Oral Presentation
- G. Papers
- H. Projects
- I. Quizzes
- J. Research Projects
- K. Written examination

10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Weiten, W., Dunn, D. & Yost Hammer, E. *Psychology applied to modern life: Adjustment in the 21st century*, 13th ed. Cengage, 2023
- B. Rathus, S. & Nevid, J. *Psychology and the challenges of life: Adjustment and growth*, 14th ed. Wiley, 2019

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Course Originator: Michelle Mullane