**PSYCHOLOGY Course Outline and Instructional Activities:**

**I.** Psychological Perspectives and Methods of Inquiry Psychological knowledge is based on scientific methodology, the systematic, empirically-based investigation of phenomena through observations and measurements. Psychologists use scientific methods to establish knowledge and explain phenomena, and employ a variety of methods to observe and measure behavior.

Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of the scientific methods that are at the core of psychology.

Students will investigate human behavior from biological, cognitive, behavioral, and sociocultural perspectives.

Students will discuss theories, methodologies, and empirical findings necessary to plan, conduct, and especially interpret research results.

Students will adhere to and consider the impact of American Psychological Association and federal guidelines for the ethical treatment of human and nonhuman research participants.

Students will explain how the validity and reliability of observations and measurements relate to data analysis.

Students will collect and analyze data designed to answer a psychological question using basic descriptive and inferential statistics.

Students will explore multicultural and global perspectives that recognize how diversity is important to explaining human behavior.

II.  Influences on Thoughts and Behavior Psychologists

have long considered the extent to which human behavior is malleable and the degree to which it varies between people and populations. Psychologists examine genetic predispositions to behavioral patterns, but human behavior is also influenced by the environment. Research has shown that biological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors play important roles in shaping the way we see and react to the world around us.

Students will explain the complexities of human thought and behavior, as well as the factors related to the individual differences among people.

Students will describe biological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors that influence individuals’ cognition, perception, and behavior.

Students will explain the interaction of biology and experience (i.e., nature and nurture) and its influence on behavior.

Students will identify the role psychological science can play in helping us understand differences in individual cognitive and physical abilities.

Students will explain how social, cultural, gender, and economic factors influence behavior and human interactions in societies around the world.

III.  Critical Thinking: Themes, Sources, and Evidence Psychological inquiry is based on a variety of sources and materials that are read and analyzed. The study of psychology brings together common themes that include ethics, diversity, scientific attitudes, and skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving). Informed by these themes and supported by sources, psychologists make evidence-based conclusions which in turn can lead to further questions and answers.

Students will explain common themes across the field of psychological science, including ethical issues, diversity, developmental issues, and concerns about health and well-being.

Students will use information from different psychological sources to generate research questions.

Students will use existing evidence and formulate conclusions about psychological phenomena.

Students will use critical thinking skills to become better consumers of psychological knowledge.

Students will acknowledge the inter-connectedness of knowledge in the discipline of psychology.

IV.  Applications of Psychological Knowledge Psychological knowledge can be useful in addressing a wide array of issues, from individual to global levels. In order to understand behavior and mental processes, psychologists apply their psychological knowledge to the world around them. Psychological knowledge directly relates to everyday and civic life, and its application can benefit society and improve people’s lives.

Students will apply psychological knowledge to their daily lives.

Students will apply the major theoretical approaches in psychology to educational, emotional, political, ethical, motivational, organizational, personal, and social issues.

Students will suggest psychologically based ethical solutions to actual problems including, but not limited to, those encountered in education, business and industry, and the environment.

Students will discuss ways in which the applications of psychological science can address domestic and global issues.

Students will use psychological knowledge to promote healthy lifestyle choices.

Students will apply psychological knowledge to civic engagement.