

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

GE-020-256

New GE course proposal:

Psychology 2201 – Introduction to Psychology
New GE Area 4A

General Education Committee

Date: 2/11/2026

Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded

Date: 2/18/2026

Academic Senate

Date: 2/25/2026
First Reading

Background

Survey and exploration of scope, methods, and content of both the qualitative and quantitative areas of psychology including: research methods, development, perception, learning, memory, motivation, emotion, personality, social, abnormal, clinical, and interpersonal relations.

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate a general knowledge and understanding of:

- A. The background of modern psychology
- B. The various methods of psychological investigation
- C. The development of cognitive and language skills, and basic developmental processes
- D. Theories and assessment of intellectual functioning
- E. Theories and assessment of personality
- F. Psychological theories of emotion and motivation
- G. Theories, definitions, and taxonomies of abnormal behavior
- H. Major approaches to psychotherapy
- I. Major content areas of social psychology
- J. Classic and current research methods and findings in selected areas of psychology (e.g., health psychology, stress and coping, and industrial organizational psychology)
- K. The research process through direct participation in research

Content

- A. A minimum of 10 of the following topics will be covered:
 1. Introduction - nature and history of psychology as a science and discipline; and how psychology applies to everyday life
 2. Research Methods in Psychology – a brief overview and how it applies to life
 3. Developmental processes
 4. Perception
 5. Psychological processes in learning
 6. Psychological processes in memory
 7. Cognition and language
 8. Psychological processes in motivation and emotion
 9. Intellectual functioning and its assessment
 10. Personality
 11. Social Psychology
 12. Abnormal Psychology
 13. Psychotherapy
- B. A minimum of 2 of the following topics will be covered:
 1. Health Psychology
 2. Stress and Coping
 3. Psychological Approaches to Interpersonal Interactions
 4. Industrial-Organizational Psychology (or Human Factors in Vocational Interest)
 5. Careers in Psychology
- C. Participation in research (2 hours per student recommended)

1. Serving as a research participant via research participation system
OR
2. Since research participation is voluntary, alternative assignments are made available to all students, through the administrator.

Evaluation

At least three of the following methods will be used to evaluate student learning:

EVALUATION TOOLS	OUTCOMES
A Objective Quizzes and Exams	Students will be able to (a) define and describe psychological theories and principles of human behavior, and (b) apply these theories and principles to objective questions, some of which will contain examples of behaviors students will recognize as representing studied concepts.
B Writing Assignments	Students will be able to identify psychological principles and theories of human behavior in everyday life examples, as well apply them to their past and current personal experiences
C Oral Presentations (accompanied by a written product)	Students will be able to express and orally demonstrate their understanding of psychological theories and principles of human behavior by conducting an in-depth presentation on a relevant and current topic in psychology, including popular media topics that assist students in understanding the interface between the study of human behavior and everyday human interactions.
D Small Group Projects (experiential activities)	At the conclusion of these out-of-class projects, students will be able to apply psychological theories and principles to their project experiences.
E Participation In Activities and Demonstrations	At the conclusion of these activities, students will be able to immediately integrate course materials and sampled behavior, especially as they relate to their own behaviors.

Written assignments (at least one of the following) are required for this course. It is generally expected that at least two will be used.

1. Reading reflections- detailed and cited engagement with course readings. A prompt may be used to instigate discussion, or the student may be asked to select a topic from the reading.
2. Literature review- an integrated overview of the body of research and key debates within a subfield.
3. Term paper/research paper- an in-depth exploration of a key topic or debate in the field. Correct citations are expected.
4. Original research project with written report- a written analysis based on empirical research.
5. Essay exams- a component of the course exams will contain a written response to questions or prompts that require students to respond with a coherent narrative answer.
6. Short response essays or posts- students will respond in class, online or on paper, to a short prompt for discussion.

In the major curriculum, the course functions as a basic introduction to the field, including its historical and contemporary contexts and the major domains, theories, and research methods in the field. Because of its broad set of topics and its introduction of psychological methodologies, it serves as a prerequisite for many courses in the department. In particular, it is a prerequisite to PSY 2204: Research Methods.

As an introductory survey course, PSY 2201 introduces students and/or helps develop nearly every SLO in the Psychology BA Program. Specifically, this course introduces and/or develops SLOs that align to the following PLOs:

- PO1: **Understand Science.** *Students will understand and participate in the generation of knowledge through the scientific process.*
- PO2: **Knowledge.** *Students will understand traditional and contemporary discipline-based knowledge, and will be able to access future knowledge.*
- PO3: **Communication.** *Students will be able to communicate empirical and theoretical information effectively when generating knowledge or when using knowledge in applied settings.*
- PO4: **Application.** *Students will be able to use the knowledge base provided by the discipline to foster their own well-being and life-long intellectual pursuits.*

This class is designed to meet the GE-SLOs of **Information Literacy** and **Civic Literacy** (reproduced below).

Information literacy: Students will responsibly identify, locate, and critically evaluate the array of information sources and voices necessary to engage in sound inquiry.

Students are given opportunities to demonstrate Information Literacy via **written assignments**. For example, students may be assigned a literature review, or a research article summary requiring them to critically evaluate claims or hypotheses stated by the author and weigh evidence for or against those claims or hypotheses. Similarly, narrower-scoped assignments such as reading responses, article discussions, short essays, written exam questions, or discussion posts that prompt students to evaluate psychological claims across multiple sources (ie. newspaper articles, press releases, anecdotes, textbooks) would also potentially achieve this GE-SLO. These written assignments (and others listed above) could be used to assess this GE-SLO with the University-adopted rubrics. Faculty choose at least two methods of written assignments to utilize.

Civic Literacy: Students will apply civic knowledge, associated with historical structures of power, to self-discovery and responsibility to the community.

The class evaluates the Civic Literacy SLO via **written assignments, essay questions on exams, small group projects, and/or through participation**, at least one of which is required for evaluation in the course (the course requires 3 methods of assessment). The Civic literacy GE-SLO is closely related to CLO J, CLO K, and SLOs P4b, P4c and P4d. All of which require that students engage with and understand civic responsibilities of volunteering. For example, the course requires students to explain and apply psychological strategies for improved mental health such as stress reduction. Additionally, it requires students to participate in campus events and activities, such as volunteering for the human subject pool and/or in the community. Concepts relating to Civic Literacy are also relevant to many of the subfields of psychology that are introduced in this course (see alignment below). Thus, written assignments working towards these CLOs and SLOs, such as reading responses, essays, written participation summaries, and/or written exam questions, will also be relevant for evaluating the Civic Literacy GE-SLO. These assignments can be assessed using the university-adopted rubric.

As this class is an introduction to the science of Psychology, there is substantial focus on how psychological knowledge and information is amassed through research and experimentation, and with that comes a critical analysis of the sources of this knowledge. Students are introduced to the major research methods (CLO B). The strengths and limitations of the methods as sources of knowledge are addressed. Students are introduced to the scientific literature, taught to find and read psychological research papers (CLO A, B, J; criteria: Identify voices/sources & Locate voices/sources), and use the evidence from that research to make decisions and draw conclusions (criteria: Evaluate voices/sources). Topics covered also teach students about influences other than scientific research that may lead to poor decision making and incorrect conclusions. For example, the class covers obedience to authority (CLO C,

I), Bias ((CLO C) , errors in memory, and how processes such as motivation and emotion influence judgement (CLO F).

Students will apply psychological concepts such as social influence, prejudice, and moral development to evaluate the responsibilities of individuals within a diverse and democratic society. Through these applications, students will develop the knowledge and empathy necessary to engage ethically and effectively as active citizens. Here are some examples of how specific topics within PSY 2201 pertain to civic literacy and engagement.

- **Social Psychology (CLO A,I, J):** Examines conformity, obedience, groupthink, stereotypes, and prejudice, helping students understand the psychological roots of civic challenges like discrimination, polarization, and collective action.
- **Developmental Psychology (CLO C):** Investigates how culture, family, and education shape moral reasoning and identity, linking personal development to active and responsible civic participation.
- **Cognitive Psychology (CLOs B,C,D):** Explores decision-making and bias (e.g., confirmation bias, availability heuristic), equipping students to recognize how individuals process civic information and make choices in democratic contexts.
- **Abnormal Psychology & Mental Health (CLOs G, J):** Highlights stigma, equity, and access to care, encouraging civic responsibility in advocating for inclusive policies and public health initiatives.

Resources Consulted

PSY provided both an ECO and example syllabus for the course, uploaded to Curriculog.

On November 26, 2025, General Education Committee sent out a solicitation email to the following constituencies:

- Department chairs
- Deans and associate deans

We asked to provide input via online survey to ensure that new GE course proposals aligned with the existing GE policy, including learning outcomes and concerns surrounding expertise. Responses were collected through mid-December. GE Committee received **no responses** about this course.

Discussion

GE Committee received this referral on November 13, 2025. This course is being evaluated to ensure compliance with CPP's General Education Policy (GE-001-245), passed by the Senate in 2024.

This course is applying for **GE Area 4A: Social and Behavioral Sciences**. In addition to meeting the core subject matter requirements for this area, new courses must include the learning outcomes **Information Literacy** and **Civic Literacy**.

This course fulfills the requirements of this GE area by centering the scientific study of human behavior through psychological theory and research methods in both historical and contemporary contexts. Through engagement with diverse perspectives, interdisciplinary applications, and critical evaluation of evidence, students examine how psychological knowledge is produced. This course also encourages students to understand how human behavior is shaped by interconnected social, political, and cultural forces.

The ECO meets the requisite elements of the subject matter in this area. The Committee felt that this was a strong proposal that also adequately addressed learning outcomes. Finally, GE Committee recommends the department include the identified GE SLOs in the sample syllabus, in addition to the full text of the GE Meaning and Purpose Statement (GEMPS).

Recommendation

On February 11, 2026, the GE Committee voted 11-0-0-0 (Conditional Accept – Revise and Resubmit – Reject – Abstain) to **conditionally accept** this proposal. Two members were absent.

Conditional acceptance indicates that the required revisions are limited to relatively minor editorial changes. Given the volume of new proposals under review and the limited timeline for committee action, the GE Committee is utilizing this layered review process to allow timely advancement of proposals while ensuring that required revisions are completed.

The proposal has been returned to the Department Chair on Curriculog for the requested revisions, with a deadline of March 2, 2026. The proposal's originator has also been notified. Upon confirmation that the revisions have been satisfactorily addressed, the course should move forward as approved.

If the requested revisions are not submitted by the deadline, the GE Committee's recommendation will be withdrawn. Accordingly, the GE Committee would recommend that the Academic Senate not approve the course at that time and defer action pending confirmation until the required revisions have been completed.