

Form Codes: SS475, ST475

EXAM INFORMATION

This exam was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that learned by students taking the course. This exam covers topics such foundations of psychology, biological bases, sensation and perception, developmental psychology, personality theories, social psychology and psychological disorders.

The exam contains 100 questions to be answered in 2 hours.

EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

The following is an outline of the content areas covered in the examination. The approximate percentage of the examination devoted to each content area is also noted.

I. Foundations of Psychology 13%

- a. History and Approaches
- b. Research Methods
- c. Ethics in Research

II. Biological Bases 9%

- a. Brain Structures and Functions
- b. Neural Communication
- c. Genetics and Behavior

III. Sensation and Perception 9%

- a. Sensory Processes
- b. Perception
- c. States of Consciousness

IV. Learning, Cognition and Memory 12%

- a. Classical and Operant Conditioning
- b. Observational Learning
- c. Memory Models

CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated the DSST test development process and content of this exam. It has made the following recommendations:

Area or Course Equivalent: Introduction to Psychology

Level: Lower-level baccalaureate

Amount of Credit: 3 Semester Hours

Minimum Score: 400

Source: www.acenet.edu

- d. Intelligence and Language

V. Developmental Psychology 12%

- a. Cognitive Development Stages
- b. Psychosocial Stages
- c. Moral Development

VI. Motivation and Emotion 9%

- a. Motivation Theories
- b. Emotion Components

VII. Personality Theories 12%

- a. Trait Theories
- b. Biological, Psychological, and Social Approaches
- c. Assessment Methods

VIII. Social Psychology 11%

- a. Social Cognition and Perception
- b. Group Dynamics
- c. Self and Identity
- d. Relationships

IX. Psychological Disorders, Treatment and Health 13%

- a. Disorder Categories
- b. Symptoms and Diagnostic Criteria
- c. Psychotherapy Approaches
- d. Stress and Coping Mechanisms

REFERENCES

Below is a list of reference publications that were either used as a reference to create the exam, or were used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. You may reference either the current edition of these titles or textbooks currently used at a local college or university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference more than one textbook on the topics outlined in this fact sheet.

You should begin by checking textbook content against the content outline provided before selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study.

Sources for study material are suggested but not limited to the following:

Spielman, R. M., Jenkins, W. J., & Lovett, M. D. (2020). Psychology 2e. OpenStax.

Myers, D. G., DeWall, C. N., & Gruber, J. (2024). Psychology (14th ed.). Worth Publishers.

Nolan, S. A., & Hockenbury, S. E. (2025). Discovering psychology (10th ed.). Worth Publishers.

Rathus, S. A., & Rathus, T. L. (2027). PSYCH (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.

All test questions are in a multiple-choice format, with one correct answer and two incorrect options. The following are samples of the types of questions that may appear on the exam.

1. Which hormone would a sleep specialist test if they suspect a patient might have a sleep disorder?
 - a. Free T3
 - b. Melatonin

- c. Oxytocin
2. A person dislikes wearing a seatbelt while driving, but uses it to avoid the annoying noise of an unfastened seatbelt. Which type of operant conditioning does this scenario illustrate?
 - a. Positive reinforcement
 - b. Primary reinforcement
 - c. Negative reinforcement
 3. A student determines their professor is introverted and not personable based on how they interact with students. The student does not know that the professor is very jovial outside of the classroom. Which of the following **BEST** describes this judgment?
 - a. Primacy effect
 - b. Situational awareness
 - c. Fundamental attribution error
 4. A science teacher asks students to solve a problem involving a hypothetical planet with different gravity than Earth. Students who can reason through the possible outcomes are **MOST** consistent with which stage of cognitive development?
 - a. Concrete operational stage
 - b. Formal operational stage
 - c. Preoperational stage
 5. Which Erikson's psychosocial stage focuses on children developing competence through school performance and social interactions?
 - a. Trust vs. Mistrust
 - b. Industry vs. Inferiority
 - c. Generativity vs. Stagnation

Answers to sample questions:

1-B; 2-C; 3-C ; 4-B; 5-B