

## Advanced Placement Psychology Course Syllabus

### ➤ *What is AP Psychology?*

AP Psychology introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, including principles and phenomena associated with each of the major sub fields within psychology. They also learn about the methods psychologists use in their science and practice. The course covers such topics as: Biological Bases of Behavior, Sensation, Perception, States of Consciousness, Cognition, Motivation and Emotion, Personality, Testing and Individual Differences, Abnormal Psychology, Treatment of Psychological Disorders and Social Psychology.

### ➤ *What is the purpose of the course?*

The purpose of this course is ultimately to prepare students for the Advanced Placement Psychology Exam. In evaluating exam results, the achievements of high school students are compared statistically to the achievements of college students in an introductory college psychology course.

The instructor's job is to facilitate your drive and accomplishment by structuring learning situations and selecting tools to help you attain your goals: a successful score on the AP Psychology Exam in May, and to provide enrichment of your life through the acquisition and enjoyment of psychological knowledge. Please remember that you are enrolled in a college level course. You must be prepared for the work and dedication that such a class requires.

### ➤ *Textbook Used*

- Myers, D.G. Psychology. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Worth, 2003.

### ➤ *Additional Resources:*

- Weiten, W. Psyktrek 2.0. New York/Paris: Artists Rights Society, 2002.
- Swinkels, A. & Giuliano, T. Instructor's Resource Manual for Psychology (Saul Kassin) 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001.
- Short articles and readings from books, journals, newspapers and magazines will be assigned periodically during the year as appropriate.
- [www.worthpublishers.com](http://www.worthpublishers.com)

### ➤ *How is this course graded?*

The following school issued grading scale will be used for each nine-week period and the final average grade:

A	94-100
B	86-93
C	78-85
D	70-77
F	69 and below

Percentages will be equated from a ratio of total points possible to total points achieved. This means that tests/quizzes are not weighted higher than other assignments. Percentages will be rounded off precisely.

Points will be accumulated in 5 major areas:

1. Tests: You will be tested often throughout the year. Unit tests will follow the AP exam format (Multiple Choice and Free Response). Tests in this class are cumulative. The AP Exam attempts to test *all* of your psychology knowledge. Therefore no information is ever considered old. \*\* Please note: My test questions are high level and application oriented. Be ready to prepare yourself for each test.
2. Quizzes: We will start each unit with a vocabulary/reading quiz. Also, you may be quizzed on any information associated with this class (readings, lectures, videos, etc...) Some quizzes will be announced, others will not.
3. Chapter Outlines: When dealing with so much information, reading the text is a must. Therefore, every chapter must be read and outlined. These outlines are to be handwritten and will be graded. I will discuss the proper format in class. The outlines, though a lot of work, serve as a great source for review.
4. Homework: Various homework will be assigned including supplemental readings.
5. Projects: Projects will be assigned throughout the year.

\*\*\*\*\* NOTE: An automatic zero is given for any exam/assignment in which cheating is involved.\*\*\*\*\*

➤ *How is makeup work handled?*

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain his/her makeup work. There is a makeup folder for each subject that contains assignments. After an absence, check this folder for assignments that you have missed. When you have completed your makeup work, write the day you were absent on the sheet and place it in the bin labeled makeup work – NOT late work.

Assignments are to be made up within 3 days of the absence.

It is **YOUR** responsibility to make up tests and quizzes. You have three days to make up any tests or quizzes missed. You must tell me at the **beginning** of class that you will be taking the test/quiz. Any tests/quizzes not made up within the 3 days will receive a zero.

Tests/assignments must be completed/turned in the day the student returns if the student was present when the test or assignment was scheduled.

➤ *May I turn in late work?*

The pace of this course requires that work be turned in completed and on time. All assignments are handed out at the beginning of the unit and are expected to be turned in on time. 50% of a grade will be deducted for any assignment that is handed in 1 school day late. Additionally, I will not accept any work that is turned in 2 or more days late.

➤ *What if I am tardy or I need a pass to go somewhere?*

First and foremost, do not be late for class. The door will be locked at the time of the tardy bell and late students will need a tardy slip to gain admittance.

Passes to other locations must be signed prior to reaching this class. The student is responsible for all missed work and information.

➤ *What should I know about the AP examination?*

The AP Psychology Examination includes a 100 question, 70-minute multiple-choice section that accounts for two-thirds of the student's exam grade and a 50-minute free-response section made up of two questions, which accounts for one-third of the student's exam grade.

➤ *What will be taught this year?*

This class is delivered in a 90 minute block format. Classes will meet every other day. Each Roman numeral represents the units that are taught throughout the year. The percentages listed with each unit represent the approximate percentage of the exam that is devoted to each area.

**I. History and Approaches (2-4 %)**

**2 Blocks**

- A. Logic, Philosophy, and History of Science
- B. Approaches (Perspectives)
  - 1. Biological
  - 2. Behavioral
  - 3. Cognitive
  - 4. Humanistic
  - 5. Psychodynamic
  - 6. Sociocultural
  - 7. Evolutionary/Sociobiological

## **II. Research Methods (6-8 %)**

### **5 Blocks**

- A. Experimental, Correlational, and Clinical Research
  - 1. Correlational (e.g. observ., survey, clinical)
  - 2. Experimental
- B. Statistics
  - 1. Descriptive
  - 2. Inferential
- C. Ethics in Research

## **III. Biological Bases of Behavior (8-10 %)**

### **10 Blocks**

- A. Physiological Techniques (e.g. imaging, surgical)
- B. Neuroanatomy
- C. Functional organization of Nervous System
- D. Neural Transmission
- E. Endocrine System
- F. Genetics
  - **Projects might include: Brain Mobile, 3-D Neurons, History of Psychology Timeline, Nature/Nurture Essay, Creation of “Mock” Experiments**

## **IV. Sensation and Perception (7-9 %)**

### **7 Blocks**

- A. Thresholds
- B. Sensory Mechanisms
  - Parts of eye/ear
  - Color vision theories
- C. Sensory Adaptation
- D. Attention
- E. Perceptual Processes
  - Gestalt

**V. States of Consciousness (2-4 %)**

**3 Blocks**

- A., Sleep and Dreaming
  - NREM, REM
- B. Hypnosis
- C. Psychoactive Drug Effects
  - Stimulants, Depressants,  
Hallucinogens

**VI. Learning (7-9 %)**

**8 Blocks**

- A. Classical Conditioning (Pavlov)
  - Elements: UCR, CR, UCS, CS
  - Processes
- B. Operant Conditioning (Skinner)
  - Schedules, Positive/Negative  
Reinforcement, Punishment
- C. Cognitive Processes in Learning
- D. Biological Factors
- E. Social Learning (Bandura)

**VII. Cognition (8-10 %)**

**10 Blocks**

- A. Memory
- B. Language
- C. Thinking
- D. Problem Solving and Creativity

**VIII. Motivation and Emotion (7-9 %)**

**7 Blocks**

- A. Biological Bases
- B. Theories of Motivation
- C. Hunger, Thirst, Sex, and Pain
- D. Social Theories
- E. Theories of Emotion
- F. Stress
  - **Nine Weeks Projects may include: Maslow's Personal Hierarchy of Needs, M. C. Escher Monocular Cues, Drunk Driving Goggles, Sensations experiment, Ice Cube Addiction Role Play, Sleep Diary**

**IX. Developmental Psychology (7-9 %)**

**8 Blocks**

- A. Life-Span Approach
- B. Research Methods (e.g. longitudinal, cross-sectional)
- C. Heredity-Environment Issues
- D. Developmental Theories
  - 1. Physical
  - 2. Cognitive - Piaget
  - 3. Social - Erikson
  - 4. Moral - Kohlberg
- E. Sex Roles, Sex differences

#### **X. Personality (6-8 %)**

##### **5 Blocks**

- A. Personality Theories and Approaches
- B. Assessment Techniques
- C. Self-concept, Self-esteem
- D. Growth and Adjustment

#### **XI. Testing/Individual Differences (5-7 %)**

##### **4 Blocks**

- A. Standardization and Norms
- B. Reliability and Validity
- C. Types of Tests
- D. Ethics and Standards in Testing
- E. Intelligence
- F. Heredity/Environment and Intelligence
- G. Human Diversity
  - o **Nine Weeks Projects: Developmental Baby Book; Old Age Simulation, Personality Assessment,**

#### **XII. Abnormal Psychology (7-9 %)**

##### **8 Blocks**

- A. Definitions of Abnormality
  - DSM-IV
- B. Theories of Psychopathology
- C. Diagnosis of Psychopathology
  - 1. Anxiety Disorders
  - 2. Somatoform Disorders
  - 3. Mood Disorders
  - 4. Schizophrenic Disorders
  - 5. Organic Disorders
  - 6. Personality disorders
  - 7. Dissociative Disorders

### **XIII. Treatment of Psychological Disorders**

(5-7 %)

#### **4 Blocks**

- A. Treatment Approaches
  - 1. Insight Therapies: Psycho-dynamic/Phenomenological Approaches
  - 2. Behavioral Approaches
  - 3. Cognitive Approaches
  - 4. Biological Approaches
- B. Modes of Therapy (e.g., individual, group)
- C. Community and Preventive Approaches

### **XIV. Social Psychology (7-9 %)**

#### **5 Blocks**

- A. Group Dynamics
- B. Attribution Theory
- C. Interpersonal Perception
- D. Conformity, Compliance, Obedience (Asch, Milgram)
- E. Attitude and Attitude Change
- F. Organizational Behavior
- G. Aggression/Antisocial Behavior
  - **Nine Weeks Projects: Freud's Fractured Fairy Tales, Social Psychology Video Experiment, Develop/create a Review Game for the final**

#### ➤ *Helpful Tips:*

1. Though not required, a Princeton or Barron review book is recommended and can be helpful.
2. Make your chapter outlines as complete as possible. Allow yourself some space for any additions and clarifications. Put information into your own words and ASK about anything that you do not understand. It is a good idea to mark concepts that you are not sure about when reading so you can ask questions about them during our discussion. Review your notes frequently so they stay fresh in your mind.
3. Read actively. Do not waste your time reading without comprehension. Do not ignore pictures and graphs. They often clarify information.
4. Pay close attention to the vocabulary. Review these terms frequently. A strong knowledge of psychological terminology will be invaluable on the exam.

#### ➤ *Final note*

Be aware, I have high expectations for my AP students. Many of you have been/currently are enrolled in other advanced placement courses and should be familiar with the heavy workload. AP Psychology is no exception. However, as the year progresses, you will find yourself becoming more efficient. Hopefully, this class will serve as a stepping stone for your higher education experience. You may not be majoring in the Psychology field, but knowledge of how the mind works is beneficial in any profession.



