

# *AP Psychology Course Syllabus*

## AP Psychology Exam – Tuesday May 12, 2020

- Instructor: Benjamin Hromanik
- Room: A109
- Instructor Contact: [hromanikb@dcpsmd.org](mailto:hromanikb@dcpsmd.org)

### Course Purpose:

This course introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. In this way, the course will illustrate that while psychology covers diverse topics, these topics are not completely distinct, but instead integrate to make up the general field. Furthermore, students will learn methodologies used by psychologists to understand the value of empirical data as well as ethical considerations in the field of psychology.

### Course Description:

The purpose of AP Psychology is to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. A variety of activities, demonstrations, and projects will be provided to meet this goal of instructing scientific and empirical approaches.

### Course Objectives:

1. Students will prepare to do acceptable work on the AP Psychology Exam.
2. Students will study the major core concepts and theories of psychology. They will be able to define key terms and use them in their everyday vocabulary.
3. Students will learn the basic skills of psychological research and be able to apply psychological concepts to their own lives.
4. Students will develop critical thinking skills.

### How to be Successful in This Course:

In this class successful students are diligent in all aspects of the class. This includes attending class and being engaged and inquisitive while present. Successful students take advantage of the standing invitation to come to after-school help sessions and invest in one of the supplemental books listed below. Although not necessary, these supplemental books are helpful tools to use throughout the year, not only to prep for the test. Most psychological concepts are abstract, and class time is focused on making these concepts more concrete for the student. If the student is not engaged in semantic encoding during class, then the year will essentially be an autodidact exercise which generally leads to less desirable results.

Successful students also keep an up to date calendar/planner of upcoming assignments and dedicate 45 minutes to 1 hour of time every night to course work and studying.

### Required Textbook and Materials:

- Myers, David G. *Psychology for AP 1st edition*. New York: Worth Publishers, 2011.
- Three ring binder
- Spiral notebook
- Access to the internet, Microsoft Office 365/Google Docs

### **Suggested Course Materials (at least one of the following books)**

- o Advanced Placement Psychology Study Guide (Myers' Psychology for AP\* companion.)\*
- o Barron's AP Psychology\*
- o Cracking the AP Exam\*
- o 5 Steps to a 5\* (provided for you)

### **Classwork, Homework, & Assessment Expectations:**

- o Students will have daily readings/videos which align to the content being discussed in class. Readings/videos are not optional, the information discussed in the text is crucial for engaging in class discussion, activities, experiments, and assessments. Readings/videos will be assessed in the form of quizzes on a daily basis at the instructor's discretion. Students are expected to take detailed notes on the readings/videos. While there is no prescribed note taking strategy, students are encouraged to use Cornell notes or a guided outline style of note taking. Students are encouraged to speak with the instructor if they need help creating a note taking strategy.
- o Students will be given vocabulary lists for each unit of study. Vocabulary will be due on the day of that unit assessment
- o Any additional homework assignments will be assignments which students do not finish in class, scholarly articles to read, videos they are to watch, studying for assessments, or another enrichment activity the instructor feels is necessary.
- o Students are expected to complete and submit all assignments in class, collaborate with their peers effectively and professionally, and adhere to all academic integrity policies during classwork, homework, and assessments.

### **Grading Policy**

#### **Summative Assessments**

60%

Projects  
Papers  
Presentations  
Exams  
Journal Entries

#### **Grading Scale**

A	100-90%
B	89-80%
C	79-70%
D	69-60%
E	59-0%

#### **Formative Assessments**

40%

Classwork  
Warm Ups  
Exit tickets

## Course Sequences and Timelines

### Unit I: History and Approaches & Research Methods : Myers: pgs 2-11, Myers: pgs 19-44

- Logic, Philosophy, and History of Science
- Approaches/Perspectives
- Subfields of psychology
- The Scientific Attitude
- The Scientific Method
- Descriptive Models: Case Study, Survey, and Naturalistic Observation
- Correlation and Causation
- Experimentation: experimental model, variables, creating and evaluating experiment
- Statistics: making sense of statistics, describing data, making inferences using data
- Ethics and professionalism in and out of the laboratory

### Unit 2: Biological Basis of Behavior: Myers: pgs 50-108

- Neurons: how they communicate, the role of neurotransmitters
- The Nervous System: peripheral and central nervous systems
- The Endocrine System
- The Brain: Brain structures and their roles
- Behavior genetics and predicting individual differences
- Evolutionary psychology: understanding and critiquing natural selection and the evolutionary perspective
- Cultural and Gender similarities and differences

### Unit 3: Sensation and Perception Myers: 114-166

- Thresholds
- Sensory Mechanisms
- Sensory Adaptation
- Attention
- Perceptual Processes

### Unit 4 Learning: Myers 214-253

- Define learning: both associative and observational
- Classical Conditioning, behaviorism, Pavlov and Watson, ethics in the laboratory
- Operant Conditioning, reinforcement, Thorndike and Skinner
- Observational Learning, Bandura, and prosocial behavior

### Unit 5: Cognition, Memory, and Intelligence Myers: 298-319, Myers: 255-297

- Cognition, concepts, problem solving strategies and obstacles, and making decisions
- Language structure and development
- Influence of language in thinking
- Encoding, storage, and retrieval of information
- Failures of Memory
- Memory Construction: misinformation, source amnesia, validity of memories
- Views on intelligence: general ability vs. several specific abilities and/or multiple intelligences
- Assessment of Intelligence: origins, modern testing, test construction
- Genetic and environmental influences on testing
- Group differences and bias

**Unit 6: Developmental Psychology** Myers: pgs 410-473

- Prenatal Development and the Newborn:
- Infancy and Childhood: physical, cognitive and social development
- Theorists: Piaget, Vygotsky, and Harlow
- Adolescence: physical, cognitive, moral and social development; Theorists: Kohlberg and Erikson
- Adulthood: physical, cognitive and social development

**Unit 7: Motivation and Emotion and Personality** Myers: 326-397, Myers: 478-516, Myers: 522-554

- Instinct, Drive, and Arousal Theories
- Maslow: Hierarchy of Motivations/Needs
- Physiological motivations of hunger and sex
- Eating Disorders
- Cannon-Bard, James-Lange, and Schachter-Singer theories of emotion
- Physiological aspects of emotion
- Cultural specific vs. cultural universal expression of emotion
- Stress response system/ fight or flight
- Psychophysiological illness / stress and the immune system
- Promoting health by managing stress
- Assessment and analysis of four leading perspectives.
- Psychoanalytic perspective: Freud and the unconscious mind; Neo-Freudian and Psychodynamic theorists
- Jung, Adler and Horney; use of projective tests
- Humanistic perspective: Maslow & Rogers; assessing the self
- Trait Perspective: Eysenck; factor analysis; biology and personality; personality inventories; MMPI – 2; the “Big Five”
- Social-Cognitive perspective: Bandura, Seligman; reciprocal determinism; personal control; learned helplessness and optimism

**Unit 8 Abnormal Psychology:** Myers pg 560-599, Myers; pg 604-637

- Defining and classifying disorders: DSM-V and labeling effects, prevalence
- Biopsychosocial approach in evaluation, and assessment of risk
- Anxiety Disorders
- Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders
- Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders
- Dissociative Disorders
- Somatic Symptoms and Related Disorders
- Mood Disorders
- Schizophrenia
- Personality Disorders
- Psychological Therapies: Psychoanalysis, Humanistic, Behavior, Cognitive, Group and Family Therapies
- Evaluating Psychotherapies: comparing therapies; effectiveness, placebo effect
- Biomedical Therapies: specific use and treatment utilizing, psychopharmacology, ECT, rTMS, and psychosurgery
- Privacy Rights and ethics in the practice of therapy

**Unit 9: Social Psychology:** Myers: pgs 642-688

- Social Thinking
- Social Influence
- Social Relations