

Advanced Placement Psychology



Course Description

AP Psychology is a full year elective one credit social sciences course for grades 11 and 12 designed to mirror an entry-level college course. Acting as college students, participants are expected to seek, find and internalize knowledge as they are introduced to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Included is a consideration of the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. Students will also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice.

Course Objectives

Students will prepare to successfully complete the AP Psychology examination.

Students will seek, find and internalize knowledge related to the field of psychology.

Students will apply American Psychological Association (APA) ethical standards to past and current psychological research.

Beneficence and Non-maleficence

Fidelity and Responsibility

Integrity

Justice

Respect for People's Rights and Dignity

Student will think critically.

Students will read, analyze and write psychological reports while conducting research.

Students will formulate and express views orally and in writing.

Essential Questions

1. What makes psychology a science? What methods are used to examine behavior and mental processes?
2. How does the brain process information and how does the body adapt to the demands of its environment?
3. How do we make changes in our behavior through experience with the environment, focusing on classical conditioning, instrumental conditioning and cognitive learning?
4. Are people more shaped by their biology (nature) or by their environment (nurture)?
5. How do psychologists measure, compare and understand people who vary by ethnicity, race, class, sexual orientation, religion, gender and ability?
6. How can a person improve the ability to interact effectively with others?
7. What are the values of the discipline of psychology?

Course Expectations

ALL students will take the official AP Exam administered in the spring by the College Board.

Summer work is a requirement for this class. It is the students responsibly to obtain the work from their instructor prior to the start of school. All summer work is due on the first day of school.

Homework will be every evening – regardless of whether or not the class meets the next day. Students are expected to outline each chapter, define and review vocabulary, work on projects, and do assigned work. Students should expect to spend 30-45 minutes each night for AP classes.

It is required that each student maintains a three ring binder with the following sections:

- Textbook Notes/Outlines
- Unit Vocabulary
- Lecture Notes
- FRQs
- Course Materials

If you are absent, you will have the number of school days you were absent to hand in the work – regardless of whether or not the class meets. Late work is not accepted (see below.)

Students should check the teacher’s website regularly for homework information and updates on the class.

Textbooks and Resources

Myers, David G. *Psychology*, 9th ed. New York: Worth Publishers. 2008
Hock, Rodger R. *Forty Studies That Changed Psychology*. Prentice Hall. 2010.
Straub, Richard O. *Study Guide* to accompany Myers *Psychology* 9th ed. New York: Worth Publishers. 2008

Grading Rationale

Formative Assessments	30 – 40%
Examples: Class Work	
Homework	
Participation – Oral, Class and Group	
Summative Assessments	60 – 70%
Examples: Tests	
Quizzes	
Projects	

Each quarter grade is worth 22.5% of the year grade. The midterm exam is worth 10% of the year grade.
The AP exam replaces the final exam.

Assessments

LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED. This collegiate level course moves quickly, and work will only be accepted on the due date. (Please recall – the grading policy does not apply to any AP course.)

Unit Outlines – Students must outline each unit of the text book.

Unit Vocabulary – Students must define each key term and write an application of the term using the format provided in class.

Pop Quizzes - There will be open notebook pop quizzes throughout each unit. This is a way to check students are completing their notes thoroughly and on time.

Unit Exams have two components, and are given in a 58 minute time block:

- 50 multiple choice questions completed in 33 minutes
- Free response questions completed in 25 minutes

Midterm Exam – 100 multiple choice questions in 50 minutes, 2 Free Response questions in 50 minutes

Class Discussion - This is the most crucial (and the most interesting) part of the course. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the day’s topic and participate enthusiastically and respectfully in daily class discussions.

Projects - Periodically throughout the course, students will be asked to work individually and in groups to prepare presentations, conduct research and compose written reviews, abstracts and essays.

Content Outline

These are the major content areas covered by the AP Psychology Exam, as well as the approximate percentages of the multiple-choice section that are devoted to each area.

Percentage Goals for AP Exam

Content Area (multiple-choice section)

I. History and Approaches (2 weeks)	2–4%
A. History of Psychology	
B. Approaches	
1. Biological	
2. Behavioral	
3. Cognitive	
4. Humanistic	
5. Psychodynamic	
6. Sociocultural	
7. Evolutionary	
8. Biopsychosocial	
C. Subfields in Psychology	
II. Research Methods (3 weeks)	8–10%
A. Experimental, Correlational, and Clinical Research	
B. Statistics	
1. Descriptive	
2. Inferential	
C. Ethics in Research	

III. Biological Bases of Behavior (4 weeks)	8–10%
A. Physiological Techniques (e.g., imaging, surgical)	
B. Neuroanatomy	
C. Functional Organization of Nervous System	
D. Neural Transmission	
E. Neuroplasticity	
F. Endocrine System	
G. Genetics	
H. Evolutionary Psychology	
IV. Sensation and Perception (2 weeks).....	6–8%
A. Thresholds and Signal Detection Theory	
B. Sensory Mechanisms	
C. Attention	
D. Perceptual Processes	
V. States of Consciousness (2 weeks).....	2–4%
A. Sleep and Dreaming	
B. Hypnosis	
C. Psychoactive Drug Effects	
VI. Learning (2 weeks).....	7–9%
A. Classical Conditioning	
B. Operant Conditioning	
C. Cognitive Processes	
D. Biological Factors	
E. Social Learning	
VII. Cognition (3 weeks)	8–10%
A. Memory	
B. Language	
C. Thinking	
D. Problem Solving and Creativity	
VIII. Motivation and Emotion (2 weeks)	6–8%
A. Biological Bases	
B. Theories of Motivation	
C. Hunger, Thirst, Sex, and Pain	
D. Social Motives	
E. Theories of Emotion	
F. Stress	

IX. Developmental Psychology (3 weeks)	7–9%
A. Life-Span Approach	
B. Research Methods (e.g., longitudinal, cross-sectional)	
C. Heredity–Environment Issues	
D. Developmental Theories	
E. Dimensions of Development	
1. Physical	
2. Cognitive	
3. Social	
4. Moral	
F. Sex and Gender Development	
X. Personality (2 weeks).....	5–7%
A. Personality Theories and Approaches	
B. Assessment Techniques	
C. Growth and Adjustment	
XI. Testing and Individual Differences (2 weeks).....	5–7%
A. Standardization and Norms	
B. Reliability and Validity	
C. Types of Tests	
D. Ethics and Standards in Testing	
E. Intelligence	
XII. Abnormal Behavior (2 weeks).....	7–9%
A. Definitions of Abnormality	
B. Theories of Psychopathology	
C. Diagnosis of Psychopathology	
D. Types of Disorders	
1. Anxiety	
2. Somatoform	
3. Mood	
4. Schizophrenic	
5. Organic	
6. Personality	
7. Dissociative	
XIII. Treatment of Abnormal Behavior (2 weeks)	5–7%
A. Treatment Approaches	
1. Psychodynamic	
2. Humanistic	
3. Behavioral	
4. Cognitive	
5. Biological	
B. Modes of Therapy (i.e., individual, group)	
C. Community and Preventive Approaches	

XIV. Social Psychology (2 weeks)	8–10%
A. Group Dynamics	
B. Attribution Processes	
C. Interpersonal Perception	
D. Conformity, Compliance, Obedience	
E. Attitudes and Attitude Change	
F. Organizational Behavior	
G. Aggression/Antisocial Behavior	
H. Cultural Influences	