

# AP® Psychology Syllabus

## Course Goals and Description:

The goal of this course is to increase the understanding of psychology, its methods, theory and research, with the objective that each student pass the Advanced Placement Examination. The course will explore the psychological facts, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields of psychology. The course will explore the psychological facts, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major areas of psychology.

## Course Objectives:

- 1) Students will learn about the differing concepts and theories of psychology and applications of those theories and concepts in their daily life.
- 2) Students will utilize critical thinking skills to investigate recent research and case studies in the different areas of psychology.
- 3) Students will explore different psychological perspectives.

## Textbook:

Myers, David G., *Myers Psychology for AP*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York: Worth Publishers/BFW, 2013.

## Grading Procedures:

All work will be assigned a point value and each marking period a grade will be computed by dividing the total number of points by the total number of points earned. The categories of assignments are as follows:

Homework: There will be a variety of homework assignments. Some examples are defining terms, reading assignments, case study analysis, reading, writing, thinking activities, and worksheets. Homework will be assigned on a regular basis.

Class work: There will be class periods devoted to work that is to be finished during class. Some examples are comprehension questions, group work, and worksheets.

Quizzes: There will be quizzes – both announced and unannounced. The content will come from reading assignments, class discussions and/or notes. They will be short and usually true or false, multiple choice, or matching. They will be given at random several times during each unit.

Tests: There will be a test at the conclusion of every unit. The test will consist of multiple choice questions as well as an essay question.

Projects: There will be projects included at least once a marking period. They will vary by type and value with each unit.

Participation: Students will be expected to attend and participate in class discussion on a regular basis. Note-taking is a requirement and will be assessed as a part of the grade for each marking period. Students will also be expected to bring their book, binder, paper and writing utensil to class everyday. Points will be deducted from their grade if they come to class unprepared.

Extra Credit: For each unit the students will have the option of answering an additional essay question on the unit test. There will also be an option to define key people with each unit for extra credit points

Recommended Supplies:

Three ring binder  
Paper  
Writing utensil

Optional Supplies:

Highlighter  
Binder Dividers

**Course Outline:**

- I. History and Approaches [CR1]
  - A. Subfields of Psychology
  - B. Historical Schools
  - C. Modern Approaches
  
- II. Research Methods in Psychology [CR2]
  - A. Critical Thinking in Psychology
    - 1. Role in Scientific Research
    - 2. Role of Theories
  - B. Research Methods in Psychology [CR16]

1. Observation
  2. Case Studies
  3. Surveys
  4. Correlation Studies
  5. Experiments
  - C. Statistical Analysis of Research Results
    1. Descriptive
    2. Inferential
  - D. Ethical Guidelines for Psychologists [CR16]
- III. Biological Aspects of Psychology [CR3]
- A. Neural Processing and the Endocrine System
    1. Neural Communication
    2. Nervous System
    3. Endocrine System
  - B. The Brain
    1. Tools used to study the brain
    2. Brain Anatomy
  - C. Genetics, Evolutionary Psychology, and Behavior
- IV. Sensation and Perception [CR4]
- A. Sensation
    1. Basic Principles
    2. Five Sensory Systems
  - B. Perception
    1. Organization
    2. Interpretation
- V. Consciousness [CR 5]
- A. Sleep and Dreams
  - B. Hypnosis
  - C. Drugs and Consciousness
- VI. Learning [CR6], [CR 15]
- A. Classical Conditioning
    1. Pavlov's discovery
    2. Components of Classical Conditioning
    3. Extinction and Spontaneous Recovery
    4. Generalization and Discrimination
    5. Applications of Classical Conditioning
  - B. Operant Conditioning
    1. Skinner
    2. Components of Operant Conditioning
    3. Applications of Operant Conditioning
  - C. Observational Learning

## VII. Cognition [CR7]

### A. Memory

1. Phenomenon of Memory
2. Information Processing
  - a. Encoding
  - b. Storage
  - c. Retrieval
3. Forgetting
  - a. Encoding Failure
  - b. Storage Decay
  - c. Retrieval Failure
4. Memory Construction
5. Improving Memory

### B. Thinking, Problem Solving, Creativity, and Language

## VIII. Motivation and Emotion [CR8]

### A. Motivation

1. Concepts
2. Hunger
3. Sexual Motivation
4. Need to Belong

### B. Emotions, Stress, and Health

1. Theories
2. Embodied
3. Expressed
4. Experienced
5. Stress and Health

## IX. Developmental Psychology [CR 9]

### A. Prenatal and Newborn

### B. Infancy and Childhood

### C. Parents and Peers

### D. Adolescence

### E. Adulthood

### F. Reflections on the Three Major Development Issues

1. Nature and Nurture
2. Continuity and Stages
3. Stability and Change

## X. Personality [CR10]

### A. Psychoanalytic Perspective

### B. Humanistic Perspective

### C. Trait Perspective

### D. Social-Cognitive Perspective

### E. Exploring Self

XI. Testing and Individual Differences [CR 11]

- A. What is Intelligence?
- B. Assessing Intelligence
- C. The Dynamics of Intelligence
- D. Genetic and Environmental Influences on Intelligence

XII. Abnormal Psychology [CR 12]

- A. Perspectives on Psychological Disorders
  - 1. Defining
  - 2. Understanding
  - 3. Classifying
  - 4. Labeling
- B. Anxiety Disorders
- C. Somatoform Disorders
- D. Dissociative Disorders
- E. Mood Disorders
- F. Schizophrenia
- G. Personality Disorders
- H. Rates of Disorders

XIII. Treatment of Psychological Disorders [CR 13]

- A. Psychological Therapies
  - 1. Psychoanalysis
  - 2. Humanistic Therapies
  - 3. Behavior Therapies
  - 4. Cognitive Therapies
  - 5. Group and Family Therapies
- B. Evaluating Psychotherapies
- C. Biomedical Therapies
  - 1. Drug Therapies
  - 2. Brain Stimulation
  - 3. Psychosurgery
  - 4. Therapeutic Lifestyle Change

XIV. Social Psychology [CR 14]

- A. Social Thinking
- B. Social Influence
- C. Social Relations

XV. Additional Topics

- A. Careers in Psychology
- B. Psychology at Work
- C. Promoting Health
- D. Animal Thinking and Language

## **Curricular Requirements:**

The Curricular Requirements of the course is referenced in the Course Outline. Throughout the course we will be addressing these requirements in various ways multiple times. The references in the course outline have been annotated at the most obvious topics. This should not be considered an exclusive list.

CR1 – This course provides instruction in history and approaches.

CR2 – This course provides instruction in research methods.

CR3 – This course provides instruction in biological bases of behavior.

CR4 – This course provides instruction in sensation and perception.

CR5 – This course provides instruction in states of consciousness.

CR6 – This course provides instruction in learning.

CR7 – This course provides instruction in cognition.

CR8 – This course provides instruction in motivation and emotion.

CR9 – This course provides instruction in developmental psychology.

CR10 – This course provides instruction in personality.

CR11 – This course provides instruction in testing and individual differences.

CR12 – This course provides instruction in abnormal psychology.

CR13 – This course provides instruction in treatment of psychological disorders.

CR14 – This course provides instruction in social psychology.

CR15 – This course provides instruction in empirically-supported psychological facts, research findings, terminology, associated phenomena, major figures, perspectives, and psychological experiments.

CR16 – This course provides instruction in ethics and research methods used in psychological science and practice.