



AP Central



Textbook Resources



Spark Notes

Advanced Placement Psychology

Course Syllabus and Curriculum

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Plan: 3A or 2B

Purpose of the course:

The purpose of the AP course in psychology is to introduce 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, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. They also learn about the methods psychologists use in their science and practice. (From the *Advanced Placement Course Description for Psychology*, published by the College Board)

Psychology helps you in finding out who you are, why you do what you do, and how to improve your relationships with others as well as better yourself. The more you put into this course, the more you will get out of it. Period. I look forward to getting to know you this year! (From *Ms. Young's Advance Placement Course Description for Psychology*)

Text:

Myers, D.G. (2011). *Psychology for AP*. New York: Worth.

If you were taking this course in college and had to purchase the current edition of this book, it would cost you over \$100.00. Use this book and milk all the knowledge you can from it, but treat it kindly. College books, unlike those manufactured for high school courses, are made with weak bindings because they generally only have to last for one semester. You have the privilege of being some of the first owners of these books and supplemental reading materials. I need your cooperation to keep them in useable shape.

Consider your book your new spouse. You and your book will be spending a lot of quality time together this year. **It is your responsibility to love and respect your book, even during moments you don't like it....to cherish it in good times and in bad, till May 2015 do you part.**

Unless I specifically tell you otherwise, you do not need to bring your book/spouse to class. However, you will need to bring your **MacBook** as well as a **three-ring notebook with you every day to class** that will contain your handouts, supplemental readings, and class notes.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will learn and understand the language of psychology.
2. Students will learn and understand the systematic and scientific study of behavior and mental processes in humans and other animals.
3. Students will identify and differentiate between the major theories, figures, experiments, principles, facts, and phenomena associated with each area within psychology.
4. Students will identify various research methods and demonstrate ethical evaluations of these methods.
5. Students will understand the relevance of psychology to human concerns and develop knowledge about the practice of psychology.
6. Students will apply psychological concepts to their own lives.
7. Students will develop their reading, writing, and discussion skills.
8. Students will develop their critical thinking skills and learn to evaluate arguments with careful, objective analysis.

Expectations:

1. R-E-S-P-E-C-T, find out what it means to me...

Respecting all individuals in the class is a must. I love a discussion-oriented environment. All students should feel welcome to share their ideas, discuss their experiences, and ask questions.

Lying and cheating will not be tolerated. I find both to be disrespectful to yourself, to me, and to those around you. In the event of cheating or plagiarizing a zero will be entered for the grade.

2. You know it's just a little too late...

All work is due by 2:30 p.m. on the due date of an assignment. The all-too-familiar excuses of the bad paper eating dog, the printer out of ink, the file not opening, the paper in the car, etc. do not justify its lateness. After 2:30, the highest possible grade awarded will be a "C."

In the event that you are sick or are unable to attend class, it is your responsibility to make up the notes and assignments. *All make-up tests, quizzes, and assignments must be completed within 1 class day after returning to class.* After this time, the highest possible grade rewarded will be a "C." Students need to be the initiator in the make-up process.

3. You belong with me...

AP Psychology is a college level class. As with any college level class, attendance is critical to success in the course. Attending class is vital for understanding the material as much of the information covered on assignments and tests comes from in-class lectures and discussions. Attending class is more than just having your body in the classroom. It is important to be prepared, be focused, take notes, and participate. **Unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your class participation grade.**

4. It's tough, so tough...

This is an advanced placement course and as such, it will require a significant amount of reading and writing. We will be covering a lot of material and you will be expected to learn and truly understand the information- not simply memorize it. One of my goals is to help you acquire skills you can apply in other environments. Note-taking, critical thinking, reading, and writing are some of those skills. Crying a river over the amount of work will not make a difference in

the amount of work you receive, besides if you cry that much you might have a major health issue. I will do my best to provide you with the information, help you to truly understand it, inspire you to apply it to your life, and prepare you for the AP exam. Your success in this class is going to depend on your ability to work hard and challenge yourself.

Complaining about having to read is one thing- informing me about the events and important things going on in your life is another. Your life expands far beyond this classroom. Please know that I am always available to listen or talk.

Grades:

Grades will be determined by your performance on tests, quizzes, participation, and assignments. They are based on a total point system so that you will have the ability to keep track of your own grade.

- 90-100% = A
- 80-89% = B
- 70-79% = C
- 60-69% = D
- 59% and below = F

Attendance Policy – A high school student whose attendance falls below 90% in one semester will receive a percentage deduction by course as outlined in the table below. If the student is failing a course, he/she will receive an “F”.

Attendance % By Course	% Grade Reduction
90%+	0%
85-<90%	5%
80-<85%	10%
75-<80%	15%
70-<75%	20%
65-<70%	25%
60-<65%	30%
55-<60%	35%
50-<55%	40%

Tardy – If for some reason you find yourself tardy, you will be required to obtain a pass from the office and make up each moment you missed during your absence. If tardiness becomes a problem there will be detentions and parent/student/teacher (administrators a possibility as well) meetings to correct the behavior. (YOU GET 3 FREEBIES)

- 1st tardy: student given a verbal warning by the teacher
- 2nd tardy: student given a verbal warning by the teacher
- 3rd tardy: teacher will call home and issue the student a Teacher Detention (this be task orientated)
- 4+ tardies:
 - a. Student will be referred to the office on a Discipline Referral Form by their teacher
 - b. Student will be issued a 1 day of ISS for being tardy (and each subsequent tardy).

Summary of Course Content and Examination Content:

The following is an outline from the *Advanced Placement Course Description in Psychology*. This outline contains the major content areas covered by the AP exam, as well as the approximate percentage of the test that is devoted to each content area. This outline serves as a guide and is not a total and complete list of the topics covered in this course.

I. History and Approaches.....	2-4%
A. Logic, Philosophy, and History of Science	
B. Approaches	
1. Biological	
2. Behavioral	
3. Cognitive	
4. Humanistic	
5. Psychodynamic	
6. Sociocultural	
7. Evolutionary/Sociobiological	
II. Research Methods.....	8-10%
A. Experimental, Correlational, and Clinical Research	
1. Correlational (e.g., observational, survey, clinical)	
2. Experimental	
B. Statistics	
1. Descriptive	
2. Inferential	
C. Ethics in Research	
III. Biological Bases of Behavior.....	8-10%
A. Physiological Techniques (e.g., imaging, surgical)	
B. Neuroanatomy	
C. Functional Organization of the Nervous System	
D. Neural Transmission	
E. Endocrine System	
F. Genetics	
IV. Sensation and Perception.....	6-8%
A. Thresholds	
B. Sensory Mechanisms	
C. Sensory Adaptation	
D. Attention	
E. Perceptual Processes	
V. States of Consciousness.....	2-4%
A. Sleep and Dreaming	
B. Hypnosis	
C. Psychoactive Drug Effects	
VI. Learning.....	7-9%
A. Classical Conditioning	
B. Operant Conditioning	
C. Cognitive Processes in Learning	
D. Biological Factors	
E. Social Learning	
VII. Cognition.....	8-10%

A. Memory	
B. Language	
C. Thinking	
D. Problem Solving and Creativity	
VIII. Motivation and Emotion.....	7-9%
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.....	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 Roles, Sex Differences	
X. Personality.....	5-7%
A. Personality Theories and Approaches	
B. Assessment Techniques	
C. Self-Concept, Self-Esteem	
D. Growth and Adjustment	
XI. Testing and Individual Differences.....	5-7%
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	
XII. Abnormal Psychology.....	7-9%
A. Definitions of Abnormality	
B. Theories of Psychopathology	
C. Diagnosis of Psychopathology	
D. Anxiety Disorders	
E. Somatoform Disorders	
F. Mood Disorders	
G. Schizophrenic Disorders	
H. Organic Disorders	
I. Personality Disorders	
J. Dissociative Disorders	
XIII. Treatment of Psychological Disorders.....	5-7%
A. Treatment Approaches	
1. Insight Therapies: Psychodynamic/Humanistic Approaches	

- 2. Behavioral Approaches
- 3. Cognitive Approaches
- 4. Biological Approaches (Psychopharmacology/Psychosurgery)
- B. Modes of Therapy (e.g., Individual, Group)
- C. Community and Preventative Approaches
- XIV. Social Psychology.....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

The AP Psychology Exam:

Date: May 4th, 2015

Cost:

Description: The Advanced Placement Psychology Exam is approximately two hours long. It includes 100 multiple-choice questions and two free-response essays. The multiple-choice portion of the exam counts for two-thirds of your score and the essays count for one-third of your overall score. The test is scored on a five-point scale:

- 5- Extremely qualified
- 4- Well qualified
- 3- Qualified
- 2- Possibly qualified
- 1- No recommendation

Most colleges grant credit and placement for a score of 3 or higher on the exam. However, some institutions require a score of at least a 4 and some do not accept any AP scores. It is extremely important to contact the head of the psychology department at the school(s) you are interested in attending in order to know which of these categories your school falls in to. Additional information about AP and other College Board programs is available at: www.collegeboard.com

What can you do to help yourself?What past students have said----

- 1. Don't miss class
- 2. Your number one goal should be to learn psychology. If you are determined to learn psychology, everything else will fall in place.
- 3. Don't be afraid to get help if you do not understand something. How can you get help?
 - A. Ask a classmate.
 - B. See me after school. I'm usually in my classroom.
 - C. Arrange to meet me during my plan period or advisory
 - D. E-mail me: pat.okeefe@nkcschools.org
- 4. Keep up! Don't fall behind!!! Set a schedule and be disciplined enough to stick to it. Complete assignments and finish reading on time. Be prepared for class every day. Review each week.
- 5. Take complete, dated class notes. Put them in your own words. Don't write down something you don't understand without asking about it. Leave some blank space on each page to make additions and clarifications. It is very important to review your class notes each day while they are still fresh in your mind. Expand them, clarify them and add examples so they will make

sense when you go back to study them later. Note anything that doesn't make sense and ask questions in class the following day.

6. Learn to read more effectively

- A. **Read actively.** Don't just look at the words. Effectively reading a college-level text requires a great deal more effort and concentration than reading your favorite novel.
- B. Preview a chapter before you begin. Review frequently as you read. Pause at the end of each paragraph and summarize mentally, in your own words, what you just read.
- C. Do not try to read an entire chapter at once. It's divided into sections for a reason!
- D. Do not ignore pictures, diagrams and tables in the book.
- E. Take notes as you read.

7. Form study groups. Help each other. If you need help finding a study group, please see me.

8. Half the battle is vocabulary. I suggest you make a set of vocabulary flashcards on 3 x 5 index cards. Flashcards offer all the following advantages:

- A. The process of making the cards, if you think about what you are doing, can help you learn the vocabulary
- B. You can separate the terms you know from those you need to work on more. This makes for efficient studying.
- C. They are reversible. You can look at the terms and practice the definitions, or you can look the definitions and practice the terms.
- D. Having a set of flashcards for each chapter provides an excellent means of review. Think of how nice it will be to have them to prepare for the comprehensive final and the AP exam.

All Vocabulary will be answered in the following D.E.A. format:

D: Define the Word

E: Explain it in your own words

A: Apply your word to a real world application/use

I look forward to getting to know you as we tackle AP Psychology together. The more you put into this course, the more you will get out of it. It is my sincere hope that you will remember this class as one of the best you ever took; a course that challenged you and encouraged you to learn all you could about a most fascinating subject- psychology.

Textbook Resources: http://bcs.worthpublishers.com/myers9e/#t_512463

Spark Notes/Review: <http://www.sparknotes.com/psychology/>