

**Course Description:**

This course takes a thematic approach to the study of human behavior. Areas examined are research methods, biology, life span development, cognition, sociocultural influences, motivation, emotion, stress and health, personality development, psychological health, disorders and therapy. Students are encouraged to use technology to investigate websites to access extra information, tutorials, and online quizzes. Assessment is done regularly to prepare students for the Advanced Placement exam so that they may be able to earn college credit.

**Student Expectations:**

1. Responsibility- be sure you have your work in on time, be prepared (pens, pencils, paper), participate in class discussions. (Don't sit back)
2. Punctuality- be in your seat when the bell rings
3. Respect- everyone has different opinions, do not be rude to those whose views differ from your own.

\*This is a college level course and will be treated in that manner.

**Curriculum Guidelines:**

1. This is a year long course. Grades are based on the Board of Education's guidelines (see pg. 5). The exam is in May and EVERYONE is expected to take it.
2. Any student who, at progress report or report card time, has less than a **70%** will receive the comment "**In danger of failing,**" along with "**Please contact teacher.**"
3. Reading is assigned **daily** and will be posted in the class reading calendar. This calendar will be shared with you on the first day of school. This is typically 8-10 pages of reading a night, mixed in with projects or assignments designed for each chapter.
4. There will be a **daily vocabulary quiz**. The purpose of a daily quiz is to ensure that you are comprehending the terms.
5. **All assignments are due at the beginning of the period, and should be in blue or black-ink or typed, unless otherwise noted. Late work will not be given full-credit; 10 points will be taken away every day the assignment is late.** unless there was prior approval from the teacher. Work that is not completed in ink, or typed when required, will be returned to the student and not scored until the student completes it properly.
6. In the case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to check for missed work. Absence does not excuse late work and only work handed in on time will receive full credit (see above). If it is known that there will be an absence the day an assignment is due, it is the student's responsibility to make sure the assignment is

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handed in on time; otherwise, prior approval for late work must be arranged with the teacher.

7. There will be an exam for every chapter and most chapters will include a review day in class. All test dates will be given in advance. If a student misses the review, they will still be held responsible for the test on the day of the test. Students will be expected to take the missed exam no later than 2 days after they return, and must be arranged with the teacher prior to their return (e.g., contacting the teacher on the day of the absence to notify the teacher when they will be returning and negotiating a time for the make-up). If the student does not make up their test within the agreed upon time frame, they will receive an “INC” or “0” for that test. **Habitual absences (2 or more) on test dates will result in a parent-teacher conference.**
8. **Students are highly encouraged to have a notebook specifically for vocabulary and a separate notebook or binder** to keep all of their notes in. Finally, students should have 14-two pocket folders designated for each unit, this will help keep everything organized.
9. Students are **highly encouraged** to purchase an AP Test Prep book. I recommend the **Barron’s** or **AP Psychology Crash Course**. See my website under “tools and resources” for further details.
10. Every student is **required** to take the AP Exam in May. The AP exam is designed to show what the students have learned in the year. By taking the AP exam and passing it, the student has the opportunity to get college credit for this class (see the College Board website for details regarding how your college accepts credit for this course). The exam is **FREE**.

### ***Course Outline:***

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The following is a description of the major content areas covered by the AP Psychology exam, the textbook chapters where the materials can be found, and the approximate percentages of the multiple choice sections that are devoted to each area.

<b>UNIT</b>	<b>Percentage of questions on the exam</b>
I: History and Approaches.....	2-4%
a. History of Psychology	
b. Approaches	
c. Subfields in Psychology	
II: Research Methods.....	8-10%
a. Experimental, Correlational, and Clinical Research	
b. Statistics	
c. Ethics in Research	
III: Biological Basis of Behavior.....	8-10%
a. Psychological Techniques	
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.....	6-8%
a. Thresholds and Signal Detection Theory	
b. Sensory Mechanism	
c. Attention	
d. Perceptual Process	
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 Process	
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.....	6-8%

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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-Environmental Issues	
d. Developmental Theories	
e. Sex and Gender Development	
X: Personality.....	5-7%
a. Personality Theories and Approaches	
b. Assessment Techniques	
c. 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	
XII: Abnormal Behavior.....	7-9%
a. Treatment Approaches	
b. Modes of Therapy	
c. Community and Preventive Approaches	
XIV: Social Psychology.....	8-10%
a. Group Dynamics	
b. Attributions	
c. Interpersonal Perception	
d. Conformity, Compliance, Obedience	
e. Attitudes and Attitude Change	
f. Organization Behavior	
g. Aggression/Antisocial Behavior	
h. Cultural Influence	

### ***Learning/Teaching Strategies***

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Lecture	Discussion
Interviews	Field Work (e.g. Naturalistic Observation)
Demonstrations	Video Modules
Note-Taking	Journal Entries

### ***Evaluation***

- 60% Assessments:** test, quizzes, text driven assessment, projects curriculum based and completed with accuracy.
- 20% Class work:** Daily assignments completed,
- 10% Disposition** actively engages in class, participates in group, displays perseverance, integrity
- 10% Homework:** assignments independently completed outside of the classroom.

Because this is an advanced placement course, you will probably find it more difficult to earn top grades in the class. In general, students have found the class difficult at first but have done better as the year progressed. Setting a high standard has several tangible benefits. You will learn a great deal about psychology, you will be better prepared for college work, and you will be ready to excel on the AP Psychology Exam.

### ***Academic Responsibility***

All students are expected to abide by ethical standards in preparing and presenting material, which demonstrates their own level of knowledge. Such standards are founded on the basic concepts of honesty and integrity. We all want to do well and avoid poor grades. A higher goal, however, is to do so honestly and be worthy of the grade that we receive. Academic honesty is its own reward. It makes us feel whole and full of integrity. Any type of academic dishonesty diminishes us and makes us less than what we are. This should be a special consideration if we are tempted to ask others to collaborate in dishonest behavior. Academic dishonesty in an advanced placement course is particularly useless since it will not improve your AP exam grade at all.

### ***Classroom Expectations***

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- A. You are expected to be in class on time everyday. I have found that there are strong correlations between class attendance, achievement in the course, and success on the advanced placement exam.
- B. You will need to only bring your note-taking notebook/binder to class everyday. Your vocabulary notebook and textbook can remain in your locker or at home.
- C. There will be a reading schedule at the beginning of every month. Included in the reading schedule will be assignment due dates and unit test dates. This calendar will be published online.
- D. You will be given a daily reading quiz to help maximize and retain material. These quizzes will be given during the first five minutes of class and they may NOT be made up.
- E. Home assignments (reading and writing) are given not only to enhance understanding of the material, but also to promote class discussion. Written assignments, (such as study guides and journal entries) that are turned in late will receive 5 points off everyday it is late.
- F. Unit Tests must be made up the day you return to class following the absence (at a mutually convenient time, not during class time).
- G. If you miss class for any reason it is your responsibility to retrieve the material for that class. Anyone absent from class without a valid excuse forfeits the right to complete makeup work. Being absent on the date an assignment is due is not, in itself, a legitimate excuse for not having it done since you will know well in advance what is expected of you. If you know early that you will be out on a certain day let me know and we can work something out.
- H. Since it is necessary to follow a strict time schedule order to complete the fourteen chapters in the Meyers' text, to have class time for active learning strategies and to review for the exam in May, you (the student) must assume the primary responsibility for mastering the material in your textbook.
- I. You are going to be asked to demonstrate your ability to apply many of the concepts learned in the course to your life throughout the year. Journal entries will be assigned sporadically to help you to see these concepts can be applied and used in real life.
- J. As a senior there are many activities and other academic courses that will be competing for your time and energy. It is up to you to manage your obligations in a mature and responsible manner. The key to success is to plan carefully to meet all of your obligations. When you are having a problem, feel free to ask me for help in solving it.

### ***Course Rationale:***

*Before you commit yourself to any task-particularly a demanding task- you need to ask, "Why am I doing this?" "Why is this worth my effort and my commitment?" In the case of*

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*the AP Psychology course, the answers to those questions should be clear and powerful. They relate to the most interesting, exciting, and complex of all things worth knowing: the human being itself.*

*What impels us to act? How does memory work? What happens when someone is “mentally ill”? How can he or she be helped back to health? How do humans develop cognitively and emotionally? How are fears created? How was my self-concept developed? What is the interplay between thought and behavior? Does my brain control me, or do I control it? How much of “me” was determined genetically at birth, and how much was acquired by experience and learning? Do I have freedom and control of my behavior, or does my psyche control me? How much am I in charge of my life? These and many other fascinating questions will frame the subject matter of the course.*

*The AP Psychology program is intended to provide the scope and level of academic accomplishment expected in a college introductory course in psychology. This we will accomplish, along with the acquisition of a substantive amount of knowledge, skills and attitudes to apply to our own lives. We will also plan to enjoy this learning experience.*

*Please understand from the outset one fact of paramount importance: the least important person in this classroom is the instructor. Acting as a college students, you are expected to charge ahead in your own, to seek, find, and internalize knowledge on your own- in short, to be the main agent in your educational process.*

*The instructor’s job is to facilitate your drive and your accomplishment by structuring learning situations and selecting learning tools that will help you attain your goals: passing the AP exam, enriching your life by the acquisition of psychological knowledge, and enjoying the course of study.*

*In the end, you will have acquired the most fundamental, important, and useful of all kinds of knowledge- knowledge about yourself and other human beings. Regardless of what your future life and career choices are, your psychological knowledge will help you to be a more effective and fulfilled human begins- on the job, with your loved ones, in social situations, or in the quiet satisfaction of just being yourself.*

***Welcome to the study of human behavior!!!***