

# **AP Psychology**

**Ms. Frances Sterling**

# **Course Syllabus**

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of AP Psychology is to introduce students on a collegiate level, to the studies of behavior and mental processes of humans and animals. Students will be provided with an overview of the study of Psychology, focusing on the theories and research methods used in psychological science and practice.

It is possible to explore the field of Psychology using a variety of methods. The course information will be presented through lectures, power-points, class activities, and audio-visual aids.

Students will use the text books and other resources in order to understand concepts. Students will learn about methods and ethical approaches of professional Psychology.

The goal is to create a level of understanding and interest in psychology beneficial to the student in other aspects of their education and life.

**COURSE TEXT:** Myers' Psychology for AP

## **CLASS POLICIES**

**General Expectations:** Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions and activities, and complete all assigned readings and other assignments.

(The instructor reserves the right to modify the following syllabus as time deems necessary)

Test questions consist of multiple-choice, short answers and an essay question.

Grades will be determined by performance on the tests, essays, paper on a concept and a project.

## **Grading Criteria:**

Tests: 100 points each

Directed question analysis: varying posted points

Student engagement and preparedness: Rubric

Book analysis and paper: 100 points

Culminating Project: 200 points

The above all account for 80% of the semester grade.

The final accounts for 20% of the final grade. There are no exemptions from the AP final exam.

Students are responsible for reading and studying the text. Most of the text material will be discussed in class. Students are responsible for all material discussed and covered in class. Text material will be reviewed before a test for relevance, and students understanding of what they need to know from text.

**KEEPING UP WITH THE READING IS CRUCIAL FOR SUCCESS !**

## **Videos:**

Some documentaries and movies are used to enable students to see concepts depicted and explained and encourage critical thinking, allowing students to analyze and apply concepts learned.

**Electronic Devices:**

No cellular phones are allowed to be used during class, unless instructed to do so as instructed, for research purposes.

**Make Up Policy:**

If a student misses an assignment or a class you are responsible for the work missed.

Tests are announced well in advance.

All make up exams have to be arranged with the teacher. Students are responsible to arrange this.

All e-mailed communications and assignments will receive a confirmation of having been received.

**Assistance:**

I am available weekdays Monday thru Thursday unless required meetings are scheduled.

**AP COURSE DEMANDS**

Students should expect a workload equal to that of a college course.

This will involve extensive reading, participation in class discussions and activities, taking notes, doing research and completing a project at the end of the semester.

**COURSE PLAN**

This class will cover the following topics:

- 1.The Evolution of Psychology- History and Approaches
- 2.Research in Psychology Methods used
- 3.Biological Basis of Behavior The brain, senses and perception
- 4.States of Consciousness, normal and altered
5. Human growth and development
6. Personality formation and theory
7. Learning Cognition and testing
8. Motivation and Emotion
- 9.Stress and Health
- 10.Abnormal Psychology & Treatments
- 11.Social Psychology

# AP PSYCHOLOGY REQUIRED SUMMER READING LIST

Students must read three books from the following list. Students may choose books from one or varied categories. Students are to write a brief one to two page double spaced review summary of their understanding of the subject matter and what the book addressed. The three reviews will be due by the end of the first week of school.

- **NEUROSCIENCE**

**A Child Called Noah: A Family Journey**, Josh Greenfield. A story of a family's day-to-day life living with and loving a brain-damaged child.

**Receptors**, R.M. Restak Thorough and readable exploration of synapses and neurotransmitters and their links to drugs, moods, behavior, personality and mental illness.

**The Science of Happiness: How our Brains Make Us Happy and What We Can Do to be Happier**, Stefan Klein. Leading science journalist explains how happiness is generated in our brains and what is required to foster the "pursuit of happiness".

**Stumbling on Happiness**, Daniel Gilbert. The book describes the foibles of imagination and illusions of foresight that cause each of us to misconceive our tomorrows and misestimate our satisfaction.

- **HISTORY**

**Cassandra's Daughter, A History of Psychoanalysis**, Joseph Schwartz. History of psychoanalysis from its origins in 19<sup>th</sup> century medical science to the present day. From the couch to Prozac.

**Opening Skinner's Box: Great psychological Experiments of the Twentieth Century**, Lauren Slater. Ten examples of experiments by psychology's innovative thinkers. Traces the evolution of the century's pressing concerns.

- **CONSCIOUSNESS**

**Sleep Thieves: an eye opening exploration into the science, S**, Coren The need for sleep is real. Most of us know very little about sleep. Recently researchers have shown the damage sleep deprivation causes.

**How the Mind Works**, S. Pinker Wide ranging discussion of how we process information.

- **MEMORY**

**Witness for the defense: the accused, the eyewitness, and the expert who puts memory on trial**, E. and K. Ketcham Loftus. Lively, personal, and informative examination of the eight court cases that centered on disputed eyewitness identification in light of what psychology has to tell us about human memory.

- **SOCIAL ADOLESCENCE**

**Don't Ask Miranda**, Lila Perl Miranda has an unstable home life and must change schools frequently. She is never in one place long enough to develop relationships with her peers. When she is finally asked to join a group, she learns that she must cheat and steal for acceptance.

**I Am The Cheese**, Robert Comier. Follows the life of a young boy whose happy, if somewhat unusual life with his friends and family gradually starts to unravel, until the truth of the boy's situation is finally revealed. He seeks to uncover the secret he knows is locked in his subconscious mind that will allow him to locate his parents who mysteriously disappeared during his childhood.

**The Other Wes Moore**, Wes Moore. One name two fates. Two kids with the same name, born blocks apart in a decaying city, within a year of each other. One grew up to be a Rhodes Scholar, combat veteran, White House Fellow and business leader. The other is serving a life sentence for murder. Stories about both appear in a newspaper the same day. One asks himself of the other, "who are you? How did this happen?"

- **ABNORMAL**

**I Never Promised You A Rose Garden**, Hannah Green. An adolescent girl's successful struggles with depressive and psychotic symptoms at a psychiatric hospital.

**The Quiet Room**, Lori Schiller and Amanda Bennett. Offers a powerful look into a young woman's descent into and coping with schizophrenia.

**Brilliant Madness**, Patty Duke. Actress, Patty Duke, writes about having bipolar disorder and how it both destroys her as well as allows her a measure of "brilliance"

**A Beautiful Mind**, Sylvia Nasar. There can be a fine line between brilliance and illness, between genius and madness. This biography of John Forbes Nash, Jr., explores the life of a man who emerged from the torture of paranoid schizophrenia, which he suffered for 30 years, to accept the Nobel Prize for economics, honoring work accomplished in the 1950s, before madness obscured his mathematical genius.

**An Unquiet Mind**, Kay Redfield Jamison. Memoir of a leading researcher of manic-depressive illness based on her experiences as a researcher, clinician, and as a person ravaged (and enriched) by the disease.

**Girl Interrupted**, Susanna Kaysen. Autobiographical account of psychological decompensation during late teens. The subsequent psychiatric hospitalization for two years, and the later understanding of the process.

**Nobody's Child**, Marie Balter & Richard Katz. Marie Balter spent twenty-five years of her life in mental hospitals, then went on to attend Harvard University and to assume a role as spokesperson for the mentally ill.

**Tales From A Traveling Couch**, Robert U. Akeret. A New York psychotherapist sets out to find his most memorable patients and discover what has become of their lives.

**The Minds Of Billy Milligan**, Daniel Keyes. Story of Billy Milligan's 24 personalities. Milligan was the first person acquitted of a crime due to multiple personalities.

**There's A Boy In Here**, Judy and Sean Barron. Account of a mother and her autistic son written alternately from the viewpoint of the mother and then the son.

- **ABNORMAL DEVELOPMENTAL**

**Dibbs, In Search Of Self**, Victoria Axline. Dibbs presents as a child locked away in his own world...withdrawn and antisocial, unable to relate to anyone. This is a true story, written from his case notes, classified as educationally subnormal...and then he enters therapy.

- **INTELLIGENCE**

**Creating minds**, H. Gardner. Applies the theory of multiple intelligences to understanding creativity in such people as Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, T.S. Eliot, Martha Graham, and Mahatma Gandhi

**Wisdom, Intelligence, and Creativity Synthesized**, Robert Steinberg. A Critical review and summarization of the best research on human intelligence. He goes beyond the standard pencil and paper tests currently in use.

- **STEREOTYPING**

**Whistling Vivaldi**, Claude Steele. The story of a young black man who realizes that he can defuse the fears of others by whistling melodies from Vivaldi. The book sheds light on how stereotypes perpetuate themselves.

- **DECISION MAKING**

**Mistakes Were Made But Not by Me**, Carol Tavaris and Elliot Aronson. The book offers an explanation of self-deception, how it works, the harm it can cause and how we can overcome it. How do individuals pull the wool over our own eyes.