

AP Psychology Course Description

Course Syllabus, Fall 2010

AP Psychology is a college level course designed to prepare students for their transition from High School to College. For many of you this class will be your first experience with a social science course. Due to the subjective nature of this class, you will be exposed to thinking styles and terminology that are unique and at first may seem perplexing. As you learn more about this type of material some of this initial frustration will diminish. The social sciences (especially this class) are relatively new fields of study. As a result, they can be both fascinating but, at times, demanding. There are few absolutes in the social sciences as compared to the natural sciences, but the human aspects of these fields are quite interesting to both professionals and to laymen who study them. The information in this course will be presented in a variety of ways. There will be lectures, class participation projects, audio-visual aids, and guest speakers when available. In order to understand the material, students are required to read and analyze supplemental readings, primary source, journal articles and of course the textbook. They must show understanding through multiple choice questions, free response essays, journal writing, critiquing journal article and other outside material. It should be understood at the outset that the expectations of this class are consistent with those of any Advanced Placement course. Students should expect a workload similar to what they would have if they were to complete this course at the college level. This includes extensive reading, active involvement in class discussions, taking notes and doing research (on their own).

The intellectual competencies required for this course are as follows:

- **Reading at the college level is essential and means the ability to analyze and interpret a wide variety of printed materials. One skill that this course helps develop is reading, especially the textbook, to the end of understanding and applying the information.**
- **Critical Thinking: one goal of this course is to help students learn to think critically in psychological terms. Critical thinking skills include: pattern recognition, practical and creative problem solving, scientific problem solving, psychological reasoning and perspective.**

This course is taught in two quarters (or one semester), the first consisting of 9 weeks. During each unit, students are assigned pages to read in the textbook. At any given time, the teacher will give unannounced open note quizzes. This is

designed to strengthen note taking ability as well as interpreting information. At the end of each unit, students will take an objective test that consists of 30-50 multiple choice questions, that require a high level of reading and preparation, and a free response essay to be completed in a 90 minute period. Several in class journal entries and/or essays will be assigned on required outside reading. These will be completed in class, separate from test days.

Recommended Supplies: three-ring notebook

Dividers at least 14, one for each unit

Paper

Pen/pencil

Additional books, magazines-- may be required later in class.

Grading Rules: Tests and major projects 60%

Quizzes 30%

Homework/Class work 10%

All Tests are incremental: We keep referring back to research many times and you may have questions from a previous unit on a current test.

Summer Reading List is available in the Front office. Please pick one up before the end of school.

Major Projects: one research paper per semester and one cumulative project at the end of the semester.

Essay: two part essay on Ordinary Men by Christopher Browning

Text:

Passer, Michael and Smith, Ronald: PSYCHOLOGY: THE SCIENCE OF MIND AND BEHAVIOR. To be used at home

Myers, David G, Exploring Psychology: Sixth Edition In Modules.

New York: Worth Publishers To be used in Class

Supplementary sources and material:

Hock, Roger R. Forty Studies That Changed Psychology. Explorations into the History of

Psychological Research.

New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall, Fifth edition

Scientific American: Psychology Reader to accompany Introductory Psychology Texts by

David G. Myers, Scientific American ©2004

Other primary sources pulled from various journals or internet resources.

Internet resources:

apa.org/science/lib.html

Allydog.com

TOPSS.com

www.collegeboard.com/ap