

AP Psychology

2021-2022

Dear Students,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to AP Psychology! I am thrilled to guide you through this journey into the depths of human thoughts and behavior. I hope this experience will stimulate a deeper appreciation for this constantly changing scientific field. My goal is create in you a deep understanding and appreciation for the field of psychology. I will also prepare you to pass the AP exam in May for the chance to earn college credit. As a result, you should expect this course to be incredibly challenging, but plan to have a great time along the way. I have attached a course syllabus and AP Study Tips for your benefit. Please keep this guide with you as a reference throughout the semester. I am looking forward to a great year with each of you!!!

Sincerely,

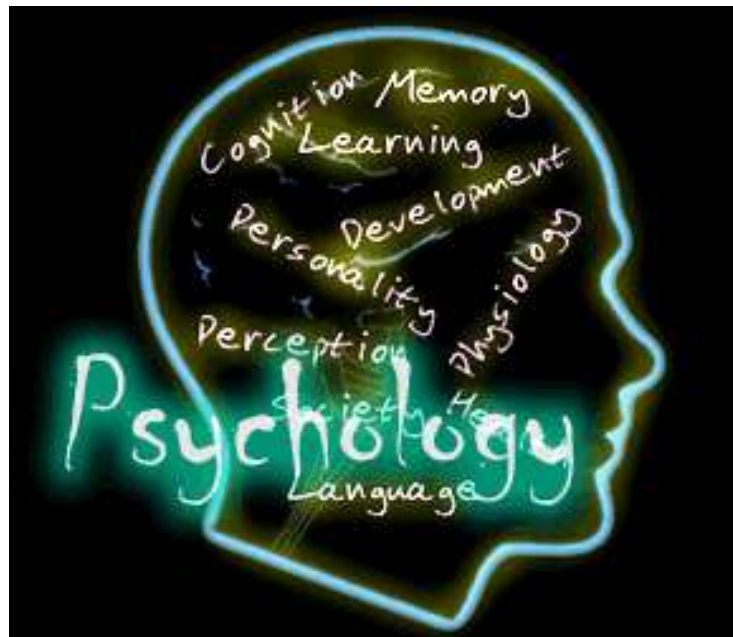
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Course Syllabus

Advanced Placement Psychology

Mr. Steve Harris

Purpose of the Course

According to the College Board, "The AP Psychology course is designed 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 ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice."

Primary Course Objectives

1. Students will be prepared to pass the Advanced Placement Exam in Psychology to earn college credit at participating universities.
2. Students will understand the core concepts and theories of psychology. This includes defining key terms, connecting them to the bigger concepts/approaches and applying all terms to everyday life.
3. Students will understand the basic principles of psychological research.
4. Student will develop critical thinking skills. They will become aware of the dangers of blindly accepting or rejecting arguments without objective, scientifically valid evaluation.

Course Materials

You are required to obtain:

- 2" binder devoted **ONLY** to this class (Please keep in mind that you will NOT be able to purge this at semester break)
- Several spiral notebooks OR lots of loose leaf paper
- Pencils AND Pens
- I highly recommend buying divider tabs to divide units in your spiral notebook.

Textbooks

Your primary textbook is **David Myer's *Psychology for AP* (3rd ed).**

This is a college level textbook that has adjusted some of the examples to be more relevant for high school students. David Myers is the leading textbook author for introductory psychology textbooks for AP and college courses, for good reason. His book is very approachable and easy to understand for a college level text. *Please do NOT store anything in the book. That will destroy the binding, and you will be responsible for replacing the book (\$132)*

Your secondary reader is **Roger Hock's *40 Studies That Changed Psychology* (7th ed).**

This book is commonly used in college courses and is a great overview of numerous psychologists and terms you are required to know, as well as our all-important research methodology.

Your AP Psychology Exam Review Guide ***Barron's AP Psychology***

In my opinion, the best review guide available for the AP Psychology exam. VPHS provides a copy you may use to review, but you may not write in. If you prefer to use a different review, or would like to write in the text, you may purchase your own. (Most are less than \$20)

Student Expectations

1. Keep in mind that this is a College Class.

- Your work ethic, responsibility, attitude, work submitted, etc. must be at college level. There are certain restrictions placed by a high school setting, but as much as possible, consider yourself stepping into a college course.

2. Take responsibility for your own learning.

- **Be prepared:**

- Have what you are supposed to have, when you are supposed to have it. Usually, this means you have your psychology notebook and something to write with.
 - *You do NOT need to bring your textbooks to class unless you are specifically told otherwise.*
- Have all assigned work completed, by the date required, I provide you with a unit outline EVERY unit that sets readings and assignments for every class period of that unit. Please use this to plan around your schedule. There is no place for excuses if things are not done when they should be.

- **Take the necessary time to be successful:**

- Many of you are used to the high school fluffiness. In a college course, you cannot be successful without outside preparation. Most colleges suggest that you should spend about 3 hours of out-of-class time studying for every hour in class. Previous students generally say AP Psychology class requires 5-7 hours each week to be successful.
- Don't be tempted by the "short-cuts!" There are lots of ways that you can "speed up" completion of the assignments and/or readings. Many high school students have developed very poor study habits over their school career. Ultimately, poor study habits and short-cuts don't work well in college. Keep in mind that taking short-cuts buys you time right now, at the expense of quality learning
- Work on "effortful processing" instead of quick completion. This will build habits that make your studying better and faster in the long run. The challenge is that it requires more time invested up front, when you don't have a deadline or test date hanging over you. The benefit is better learning and retention.
- Cramming doesn't work for long-term retention! Avoid it as much as possible! (A good grade on tomorrow's test is useless if you fail the AP exam)

- **Read often, Read properly**

- You have to read! Most of your out-of-class time for this class will involve thoughtfully reading and studying the text. Research has shown that the strongest correlation with success in AP classes is reading ability. If you are already a strong reader, great! If not, you will need to take more time than some of your peers to develop some of these skills.
- One of the top things VPHS alumni say when asked about the weakness of their education here was that they were never forced to read. In college, you fail if you don't read. Start practicing now!
- Many students state "I read it, but I don't remember it." I believe them, but this means you wasted a lot of time skimming and looking at pages without thinking. (My reading quizzes are designed to see if you read thoughtfully. If you skimmed, you will not do well)
- When you take notes, make sure they are in YOUR OWN WORDS. Leave some space for extra examples, clarifications, questions, etc.

- **Be Honest, with Mr. Harris, and with yourself**
 - When you do take the short-cuts, if you get called out on it, be honest and don't pretend you gave full effort. That is one of my biggest pet peeves.
 - Practice academic honesty. Don't put yourself in any position where I am forced to question if you cheated. The damage to your integrity and reputation from one poor choice is difficult, if not impossible, to repair. It's much too great a price to pay.
 - If I ask for feedback, or update on your learning, either from the class, or having a personal conversation with you, I want the real stuff, not the answer you think your teacher wants to hear. (The middle of class may not always be the best time, but if you see me privately and your intentions with the feedback are good, I'll always be receptive)
- **Stay up to date**
 - I will use Infinite Campus or Textnow if there is an important announcement or change.
 - Please make sure that the school has your most current email address and cell number. If a message is sent via Infinite Campus, you will be held accountable for that information.
 - Twitter (@VP_Harris) usually has those same messages, but is a way to quickly communicate with me. I also share interesting items that relate to the course and could help you make connections to be more successful!
 - Check my website every unit. Some units require you to link through my website, but EVERY unit has supplemental material that can be helpful. There are also numerous links that can help you be more successful!
- **Make connections**
 - One of the coolest things about psychology is how it can connect to everyday life. You should be connecting to your life every day. Share some of these, especially if it will help us remember the concept or give us a good laugh!
- **Take risks**
 - Psychology has awesome demonstrations. Volunteer to be our participant!
 - Answer questions even if you aren't sure. (Wrong answers can sometimes be better to see what the class needs help with). Ask a question, even if you think you are the only one who doesn't get it (You aren't)
- **Seek help when you need it, even if you aren't sure if you need it.**
 - I AM ALWAYS HAPPY TO HELP!!!
 - One major difference in college is that the instructors do not seek you out if you have a few bad grades. By choosing to enroll in an AP course, I assume you are a reflective learner that will take necessary steps to succeed. I also know that only sometimes requires a teacher's help. Sometimes it only requires another look. If you got a bad grade, I assume: 1) You saw the feedback you were given and figured out how to fix it on your own. 2) You talked to a friend in the class and they helped you fix it. 3) You did some other research to help you understand. 4) You have a plan to come see me at another time to discuss how to fix it. (Notice, all 4 options are **you** taking responsibility to take care of any issues).
 - Do not wait until after the test to realize you did not understand something.

- **Learn the language**
 - Certain psychological concepts have very specific language, and it may not be what you are used to hearing. You **MUST** learn this language to be effective. (For example, “negative” always means taking something away, it never means “bad.” “Learning” refers to associating different phenomena, but does **NOT** refer to remembering something (that’s cognition!)).
- **Don’t miss class.**
 - If you know ahead of time, inform me that you will be absent. Either way, take the actions to make up that absence ASAP so you don’t get further behind.
 - Since you receive a complete unit outline, you are still expected to be caught up with all readings and assignments when you return. (If you are absent when the outline is handed out, a copy will be available on my website or Google Classroom.)
 - If you miss a test, I reserve the right to give you an alternate test, which may be a different format from the standard test that students receive on the test day.

3. **Maintain an academic environment**

- Keep your brain engaged! Don’t accept an idea just because it was stated. Continuously ask yourself how that could have been studied, how else could that be explained. Challenge and ask “Why!”
- Don’t disrupt the learning of others. A good general rule to follow: if it distracts me, it’s inhibiting learning
 - Common distractions include: using your devices at the wrong time, needing to leave the room, asking questions with the purpose of derailing the discussion.
- Respect: We study some controversial topics. We won’t always agree, but it is critical to make sure that everyone feels safe speaking, even if they are the minority opinion.
 - However, keep in mind that this is a science class, so your opinions should be supported by evidence when possible. Saying something with no scientific validity and ending with “well that’s my opinion,” has no place in a science class.

4. **KEEP IN MIND: WE ARE ALWAYS ON THE SAME TEAM: YOURS!!!**

- We have the same goal: For you to be successful in this class. For you to earn college credit.
- We are **NEVER** adversaries. It can be easy to forget when you get a bad test grade or if you don’t like the feedback you received. Always consider me a mentor who wants you to experience total success!

What to expect from Mr. Harris

1. Preparation for the AP Exam

99% of AP Psychology students who have stayed with me for the full year and taken the Exam have earned college credit. The majority have earned 5s! (*Past performance cannot guarantee future results, but is a pretty reliable predictor). It is impossible to cover every single term and psychologist that the AP Exam will ask. However, using all the resources I have available, I make sure you have an understanding of the big concepts and fill in many of the gaps left by your textbooks.

2. Honest Feedback

I'll be honest with you, especially if you ask for feedback. I try to be as nice and helpful as possible, but honesty takes priority and I have a tendency to be more blunt than I should sometimes. I ultimately believe that honest feedback is the only way to ACTUALLY get better.

3. Challenging, but consistent and fair expectations

Taking an AP class can be more work and contain more challenging fast-paced content than you may be used to. Some students will find this adjustment more challenging than others. However, my goal is to ensure that you are never surprised by the expectations of this course and that you always have the tools and information necessary to be successful.

4. A passionate instructor.

Of the nine AP Social Studies courses (I could have chosen to teach any of the 7 available), I chose Psychology because it has always fascinated me, and it is so easy to help students connect to their lives. There is a plethora of engaging activities that can help our content become more fun and more applicable to your life. I want you to succeed, so while you will see passion for psychology, I also hope you will see passion for helping you become a better student and better person. I'm the nerdy coach who is always rooting for you, and always wants you to improve!

5. Respect

Treat you with the respect you deserve. You aren't freshmen anymore. You enrolled in this class knowing it would take more work and has a reward of college credit. I respect that and want to help you achieve your goals.

The AP Exam

- The AP Test is a national test. Many schools offer college credit for earning a certain score on an AP Test. These tests are challenging and comprehensive. A passing score basically allows you to "test out" of your Introductory Psychology class in college. It generally costs about \$86, which is a bargain when compared to the college courses that could cost \$1500!
- The test is scored on a five-point scale: 5: Extremely well qualified, 4: Well qualified, 3: Qualified, 2: Possibly qualified, 1: No recommendation. Most colleges grant 3 hours of credit for passing the exam. Each college has a different requirement. Most accept a 3. Some require a score of 4 or 5. Some colleges offer 6 credit hours for a score of 5. There are some elite schools who do not accept AP credit. To see what your college's AP Policy is, see the link on my website.
- The AP Test for Psychology is 100 Multiple Choice Questions (70 minutes) and 2 written essays (50 minutes). Most of the test is based on being able to understand and apply terms in psychology. As a result, we will spend a lot of time emphasizing terminology and vocabulary in this course.
- I assume you want to pass the AP Exam. Although it is not a requirement to take the exam, you will still be accountable for all course work, even if it only applies to exam practice.

Assessment Policy

Special Note: On every assessment, you will be held accountable for any information assigned in readings as well as anything discussed in class. Just because something was not discussed in class does not make it any less important. Many of the concepts that are easier to understand will not be discussed in class. On the same note, if you don't understand something in the readings, please see me for clarification, just as you would about something you didn't understand in class. Please don't be the student who fails the first test because you thought you didn't need to know anything in the book!

Learning Activities, including reading quizzes, practice assignments, etc., will make up 7% of your grade.

Homework: You should expect homework every night. Most homework will be reading. You will receive a unit outline with a reading schedule on the first day of each unit so you can plan around your schedule. However, once we reach the date on the schedule, you should expect a quiz over any reading material required up to that point. Students will also be given additional assignments to practice application or skills relating to more difficult concepts. Any additional assignments may be corrected and resubmitted if students desire. Reading quizzes are final and cannot be retaken.

Late Work: Assignments can be turned in any day prior to the test date for full credit. If work is corrected during this time, it can be rescored to earn a higher grade. If work is submitted on the test date or later, you will still receive feedback, but will only earn 50% of the original score on that assignment. HOWEVER, if you do not submit work on the due date, you waive the right to expect prompt feedback (read this as "probably won't get it back before the test.") Students who complete on time work take priority on grading. (Trust me, you want to do everything you can to get those assignments back before the test)

Major Assessments such as tests and projects will make up 58% of your grade.

Test Format: All unit tests will be modeled after the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions and one smaller FRQ. Some tests may also include additional activities relating to concepts from that unit. ALL TESTS WILL BE COMPREHENSIVE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR. A topic discussed in August could be on a test in April. Since the AP test requires knowledge of every unit, you cannot forget material after taking a test. (See attached study tips page for help on effortful processing). With very few exceptions, retakes will NOT be permitted on tests. (College level classes are exempt from this district requirement)

Papers/Projects: Each semester, students will be required to complete 1-2 projects or papers. All of these must be completed at the undergraduate level.

The Cumulative Final Exam will make up 35% of your grade.

Final Exams will be modeled after the AP exam with 100 multiple choice questions and two essays with the same time controls as the National Exam.

Extra Credit

NO! Your grade reflects how you are doing on class standards. It will not include fluff. Please don't insult the integrity of your grade by asking.

Major Units of AP Psychology

To meet College Board requirements, our year will be broken down as follows:

***Note: The percentages after each unit indicate the percent of the AP test devoted to that topic.*

First Semester

Unit 1 Scientific Foundations of Psychology (10-14%)

A: History and Approaches

B: Research Methods, Data Analysis and Ethics

Unit 2: Social Psychology (8-10%)

Unit 3: Biological Bases of Behavior (aka Neuroscience) (8-10%)

Unit 4: Cognition (13-17%)

A: Memory, Thinking and Problem Solving

B: Language

C: Measuring and Testing Intelligence

Unit 5: Sensation and Perception (6-8%)

First Semester Final Exam

Second Semester

Unit 6: States of Consciousness (This chapter is weighted within Unit 3)

Unit 7: Learning (7-9%)

Unit 8: Motivation and Emotion (*6-8%*)

Unit 9: Developmental Psychology (7-9%) and Personality (*5-7%*)

A: Development

B: Personality

Unit 10: Clinical Psychology (12-16%)

A: Psychological Disorders

B: Treatment of Psychological Disorders

Unit 11: Course Review and Practice AP Exams

AP EXAM: TUESDAY, MAY 3: 12:00-3:00

One last thing...

My overall goal is to help you be successful—In this course, in school and in life! I truly hope you leave this course remembering it as one of your favorites! This class will be challenging, especially if you have not had an AP course before. While I cannot lower my standards, I can put in some extra time to help you reach them. I never want you to feel left behind. Feel free to come by for help before or after school or during academic advisory. As long as you are putting in the effort, I will always be willing to help you succeed!

AP Psychology Study Tips

Research based strategies to keep in mind while you study (for anything/everything)

1. Learn to read more effectively.

- Read *actively*. Don't just look at the words. ***If you spend a half hour "reading," but are unable to recall anything when you are done, you have wasted your time.*** Effectively reading a college-level text requires a great deal more effort and concentration than *Harry Potter* or *The Hunger Games*.
- Preview a unit 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.*
- *Do not try to read an entire unit at once.* It's divided into sections for a reason!
- *Do not ignore photographs, figures, tables, boxes, and sidebars in your book.* These features serve to make the text more interesting and often contain important information.
- *Take notes as you read.* If you can condense a 30 page unit to a few pages of good notes, it's going to be much easier to review.
 - (I'm not easily talked into things, but you could probably make a very good case on why you should be able to use your own handwritten reading notes on a reading quiz)

2. Don't study distracted!

- Research shows that multitasking does not work. (It also shows that the more convinced a person is that they can do it well, the LESS effective they actually are).
- Set up a timing system. Put your phone, computer, etc. OUT OF SIGHT for 20 minutes, while you read/study. Then give yourself of a set amount of time to mess around on your devices. Then go back to studying. 20/10/20/10/20 (60 minutes of quality studying) is MUCH more effective than sitting for 2 hours with devices available (even if you don't look) ("Serial Position Effect" also helps here!)
- Don't have music on while you study.
 - Music with lyrics makes the brain fight to interpret language from two sources at once! (It is IMPOSSIBLE to successfully do this)
 - Your brain also associates the music with the concepts, which means taking away music inhibits recall ability!

3. The more ways you can store information, the better!

- Hear it, Write it, Look at it, Say it, Think about it, Apply it, Repeat
- Make up a song and dance!

4. Drilling (like flashcards) works short term, but meaningful application is the key to long term memory.

- "Semantic Encoding:" You remember things with meaning, much more than things you've heard or seen. The more connections you make, to other concepts, to your life, to stupid random things, the more things stick. Your time is better spent making 3 mental connections with a term than with drilling that flashcard 10 times.
- Make your application meaningful...and STRANGE. If it applies to everyday life you are more likely to remember, but weird stuff in your everyday life is more memorable

5. Change the way you make flashcards

- If make flashcards, use the format at the end of this document. Do NOT just copy the book definition on the back of the card. If you do it right, they won't be as shareable, but they will work SO much better. When you do share, it will help you both retain by making more connections!

6. State Dependent/Mood Congruent/Context Dependent Memory

- Be aware of what you are doing, how you are feeling, etc. If you always chew gum while studying, make sure you bring a pack of gum to the test. If you wear the same watch, wear it to the AP test. Avoid situations that you cannot have during the test, like music playing

7. Serial Position Effect

- You will remember the beginning and end more easily than the middle. This includes the school year, your own readings, and even the day you studied.
 - This means:
 - Do not get overconfident about the middle of the chapter or the units in the middle of the year.
 - Create LOTS of breaks while you study so you have more beginnings and ends.

8. Hermann Ebbinghaus's Forgetting Curve and the Spacing Effect (aka distributed practice)

- Don't reread it once and think you have it. Go over it multiple times on different days, especially the ones you are having trouble with. It will keep it current in your memory. (Again, rehearsing your crazy, wild story that applies to your life can work too!)
 - And don't start your re-reading at the same place! (See Serial Position Effect)
- Don't Cram! You lose most information that is crammed. Small pieces every day is much more effective and deep understanding and long term retention than cramming (which helps you immediately, then its forgotten)

9. The Purpose of REM Sleep

- REM sleep is where your brain processes the information of the day. It processes better if you don't overload it. (See spacing effect!)
- REM Sleep happens more in the later cycles (early-mid morning for average teens). So do your best to get lots of REM sleep after studying!

10. Use your resources!

- Ask questions directly to me @VP_Harris or sharris@vp.k12.mo.us
- Check my website frequently.
 - Each unit has its own webpage with extra resources
 - There is a link to numerous resources that can help for every unit.
 - I have tons more, so just ask!

11. Do the Practice Questions!!!

- Myers textbook
 - Your textbook does not have answers. Mine does. You can see my teacher's edition at any time or take pictures of the answer key to double check yourself.
 - Yes, I actually said, in writing, that you can take pictures of answers in the teacher's edition, with the promise that you will not share with students outside of VPHS.
- All in-classroom resources
- Links on my website

12. It's all about the approaches!!!

- They claim approaches is 2-4% of the test. They lie! If you really know your approaches and the terms that usually go with them, most of the questions suddenly become easier.
- Many of the questions that don't specifically ask about approaches can be answered if you spend time thinking about the approach the questions refers to. (A great strategy for guessing if you don't know the answer!)

Flashcard format that actually works!

<p><u>DEFINE</u> this concept in your own words!</p>	<p><u>APPLY</u> this concept to your own life AND/OR <u>CREATE</u> a silly, memorable example</p>	
<p><u>RELATE</u> this concept to other terms, concepts, people, experiments</p>	<p>Which <u>APPROACH</u> is this most directly tied to?</p>	<p><u>ONE KEY WORD</u> (or phrase) AP readers would look for on an FRQ?</p>

NOTE: There are 2 templates for this on my website.
One you can print directly on 3x5 index cards.
The other prints off sheets that you can cut up.