**COURSE SYLLABUS**

Spring 2016

**Teacher:** Miss Cameron Wilson

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**Course Description**

The purpose of AP® Psychology is to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students examine some of the differing approaches adopted by psychologists, including the biological, behavioral, cognitive, humanistic, psychodynamic, and sociocultural perspectives. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology (see below). A variety of activities, demonstrations, and projects will be provided to meet this goal of instructing scientific and empirical approaches. The course teaches ethics and research methods used in psychological science and practice. Most important, students will come to an appreciation of how psychologists think (or at least an appreciation of the kind of critical analysis that psychologists espouse and hope to model in their words and actions).

This course will prepare each student for the AP Psychology exam that will be given on **May 1, 2017.** The *AP* status of the course indicates that the material in class will be covered more quickly with a strong emphasis on critical thinking, higher-level learning, and independence.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will prepare to take and pass the AP Psychology Exam.
2. Students will gain a deep grasp of the major core concepts, theories, and processes of psychology.
3. Students will be able to define key terms, use them in their everyday vocabulary, and apply those terms to other concepts and new scenarios.
4. Students will learn the basic skills of psychological research and be able to apply psychological concepts to their own lives through experiments and activities.
5. Students will develop strong critical thinking, studying, and note-taking skills.

The course provides instruction in each of the following **14 content areas** outlined in the *AP Course Description* (for full course description see link on website):

* History and Approaches
* Research Methods
* Biological Bases of Behavior
* Sensation and Perception
* States of Consciousness
* Learning
* Cognition
* Motivation and Emotion
* Developmental Psychology
* Personality
* Testing and Individual Differences
* Abnormal Psychology
* Treatment of Psychological Disorders
* Social Psychology

**Course Outline:**

**I. History and Approaches (2%–4%)**

* History of Psychology
* Approaches
* Subfields in Psychology

**II. Research Methods (8%–10%)**

* Experimental, Correlational, and Clinical Research
* Statistics
* Ethics in Research

**III. Biological Bases of Behavior (8%–10%)**

* Physiological Techniques (e.g., imaging, surgical)
* Neuroanatomy  
  Functional Organization of Nervous System
* Neural Transmission
* Neuroplasticity
* Endocrine System
* Genetics
* Evolutionary Psychology

**IV. Sensation and Perception (6%–8%)**

* Thresholds and Signal Detection Theory
* Sensory Mechanisms
* Attention
* Perceptual Processes

**V. States of Consciousness (2%–4%)**

* Sleep and Dreaming
* Hypnosis
* Psychoactive Drug Effects

**VI. Learning (7%–9%)**

* Classical Conditioning
* Operant Conditioning
* Cognitive Processes
* Biological Factors
* Social Learning

**VII. Cognition (8%–10%)**

* Memory
* Language
* Thinking
* Problem Solving and Creativity

**VIII. Motivation and Emotion (6%–8%)**

* Biological Bases
* Theories of Motivation (Hunger, Thirst, Sex, and Pain)
* Social Motives
* Theories of Emotion
* Stress

**IX. Developmental Psychology (7%–9%)**

* Life-Span Approach
* Research Methods (e.g., longitudinal, cross-sectional)
* Heredity-Environment Issues
* Developmental Theories
* Dimensions of Development
* Sex and Gender Development

**X. Personality (5%–7%)**

* Personality Theories and Approaches
* Assessment Techniques
* Growth and Adjustment

**XI. Testing and Individual Differences (5%–7%)**

* Standardization and Norms
* Reliability and Validity
* Types of Tests
* Ethics and Standards in Testing Intelligence

**XII. Abnormal Psychology (7%–9%)**

* Definitions of Abnormality
* Theories of Psychopathology
* Diagnosis of Psychopathology
* Types of Disorders

**XIII. Treatment of Psychological Disorders (5%–7%)**

* Treatment Approaches
* Modes of Therapy (e.g., individual, group)
* Community and Preventive Approaches

**XIV. Social Psychology (8%–10%)**

* Group Dynamics
* Attribution Processes
* Interpersonal Perception
* Conformity
* Compliance
* Obedience
* Attitudes and Attitude Change
* Organizational Behavior
* Aggression/Antisocial Behavior
* Cultural Influences

**Pacing Guide/Schedule:**

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| **QUARTER ONE** | **QUARTER TWO** | **POST-AP TEST** |
| **Unit 1 (Jan 4-23)** *18-24%*  History & Approaches (1)  Research & Methods (2)  Social Psychology (14)  ***Experimental Design Project*** | **Unit 4 (March 10-Apr 3)** *18-24%*  Motivation & Emotion (8)  Developmental Psychology (9)  Personality (10)  ***Child Observation Project*** | Assorted films - TBD  Assorted activities – TBD |
| **Unit 2 (Jan 24-Feb 13)** *16-22%*  Biological Bases of Behavior (3)  Sensation & Perception (4)  States of Consciousness (5)  ***Brain Project*** | **Unit 5 (Apr 4-19)** *12-16%*  Abnormal Psychology (12)  Therapy & Treatment (13)  ***Diagnose & Treat Project*** | **Psych Fair Final Project** |
| **Unit 3 (Feb 14-Mar 3)** *20-26%*  Learning (6)  Cognition (7)  Testing & Individual Differences (11)  ***Conditioning Project*** | **Review for AP Test (April 20-May 1)** |  |
| **Midterm Review & Exam** *54-72%* | **AP Test: May 2nd (PM)** |  |

\*See schedule that was distributed on 1st day of school and/or website for day-by-day calendar

**Resources that will be used:**

* *Textbook*: Myers, David G., *Psychology for AP*, 2nd ed. New York: Freeman/Worth Publishers, 2014.
* Various articles and videos from books, newspapers, magazines, Psychology Today, TED talks, NPR’s The Hidden Brain, etc.

**Student Expectations:**

1. **Responsibility –**  Have reading and/or homework assignment completed, and be prepared to be an active participant in class.
2. **Punctuality**– Be in seat ready to begin when the bell rings.
3. **Respect –** Treat everyone in the classroom, including the teacher, with respect and courtesy.
4. **Confidentiality -** From time to time, students may share personal stories dealing with some of the topics we discuss in psychology.  During those times, what is shared by a student in the room, stays in the room.

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE: This is a college level course and students will be treated as such.** With that said, should there be any problems with respect to behavior or performance, students will be handled according to the guidelines as set forth in the School Handbook.  These guidelines will be used for instances of cheating, attendance/tardies, dress code, and behavior problems.  For more information regarding these policies, please refer to the handbook.

**Grading Policy:**

* **A** (93-100%)
* **B**(85-92%)
* **C** (75-84%)
* **D**(70-74)
* **F**(below 70%)

**Supply List:**

* **One 1 or 1.5 inch binder** – keep everything (and I mean everything!)
* **5 Subject, College-Ruled Notebook (200 sheets) –** This will be your notebook for class and all notes (both personal and lecture notes), as well as assorted other assignments. This notebook will be GOLD when it comes to studying for unit quizzes/tests and reviewing for the AP test.
* At least **three highlighters**
* **Pencils** & **black ink pens**
* At least **three other colored pens** for notes
* *Optional*: Free review apps to download if you have a smart phone (Quizlet, AP Psychology, etc.), Barron’s AP Psychology Test Prep book

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| **Grade Breakdown (subject to change)** |  | |
| Tests: | **Unit Tests** - 5 @ 100 pts each | |
|  | **Midterm** - 1 @ 200 pts | |
|  | **Final MC Practice Test** - 1 @ 100 pts (during review week) |  |
|  | **Final FRQ Practice Test** - 1 @ 100 pts (during review week) | |
|  | **"Final" Psych Fair Project** - 1 @ 200 pts (post-AP test) | |
| Quizzes: | **Daily Reading Quizzes (open notes)** – will happen on almost every non-test/unit quiz day (10 points/each) | |
|  | **Unit Quizzes** – 15 @ 50 pts each | |
| Projects: | **Projects** - 5 @ 100 pts each | |
| Daily Work: | **RWC (Real World Connections) Assignment** - 5 @ 100 pts each | |
|  | **Textbook end-of-unit review ?s** (15-25 MC, 1 FRQ) - 14 @ 50 pts each | |
|  | Other class assignments/misc. activities – TBD | |
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| **Extra Credit Opportunities (50 pts)** |
| 1. Do two additional RWCs |
| 2. Watch a movie off of a provided list & write a 2 page analysis of how it relates to psychology, perspectives, terms, theories, etc. |
| 3. Read a book off of the provided list & write a 2 page analysis of how it relates to psychology, perspectives, terms, theories, etc. |
| *\*You may only do one EC opportunity per quarter (#1 requires two RWCs). Due dates for these opportunities TBA.* |

**Assignment Explanations & Expectations**

* **Reading assignments** for each day have been provided to you and are posted on the website. It is YOUR daily responsibility to complete the assigned reading and to take careful notes as you read (all bold words/names/major concepts & processes should be noted). Take notes in an organized way that will help YOU!
* Most days there will be a **Daily Reading Quiz** over the previous night’s reading. You may use your own handwritten notes on these daily quizzes – not on Unit Quizzes. If you miss a daily quiz because of a valid absence, you will be exempt; however, if you miss a unit quiz (see below), you must make that up upon your return. These quizzes will be a combo of MC questions, short answer, and/or a FRQ.
* There will be a **Unit Quiz** after each unit/chapter in the book. These quizzes will be a combo of MC questions, short answer, and/or a FRQ.
* At the end of EACH book unit, you are to complete the **Review Questions** [15-25 multiple choice questions (and list the page number you’d go to in order find that answer) and ONE of the FRQ questions (either #2 or #3)] Stay caught up with these review questions. Days are allocated for you to work on these for homework, so do NOT let them pile up. These review questions will be collected in two batches - once before midterms and once before the AP test.
* For EACH unit (5 total units), you will do the following:
  + Complete a **RWC (Real World Connection):** Choose one of the articles/TED or NPR talks I’ve posted on my website that relates to the content studied in that unit. Read/watch your chosen article/video. Then, write a two-page summary/analysis where you explain: 1) the main idea/point/findings of the article 2) why this is significant in the field of psychology 3) what psychological “school of thought” the researcher/author would fall into and why 4) how this article/video relates to at least five terms/concepts/people we’ve studied thus far 5) a question or thought sparked by the article/video. These responses should be at least two typed, double-spaced pages and address all the requisite info (see above).
  + Complete a **Unit Project:** Expectations and such will be provided at the start of the relevant chapter of the unit! Stay tuned. These will most often be more creative and/or practical projects to apply the unit content in a memorable way.
* We will have a **Test** every 2-3 units/chapters. The unit test format will be 50 MC questions (in 35 minutes) and 1 FRQ (in 25 minutes).
* The **Midterm** will be the length/time of the AP test and will cover 54-72% of the material that will be tested on the AP test. 100 MC questions (in 70 minutes) and 2 FRQs (in 50 minutes)

**Policies:**

* **NO LATE WORK** will be accepted. If you are absent for an excused/valid reason, I expect your work to be turned in promptly at the beginning of the next class you’re back. You should also be caught up on reading and be ready to take both your “absentee” unit quiz (if there was one) AND that current day’s quiz. Reading assignments will stay the same regardless of if you’re present in class or not (and regardless of snow/ice days). SNOW/ICE WILL **NOT** CHANGE OUR READING/QUIZ/TEST SCHEDULE. You are accountable for the reading assignments listed on the syllabus/website regardless of what goes down this semester.
* **NO RETAKES** will be offered. However, I will drop your lowest two daily quiz grades for each quarter because I realize that things happen. Unit Quiz and test grades stand as they are. If you do not do well on a quiz or test, you know what you need to review/study more in order to prepare well for future assessments. The ball is in YOUR court. Those concepts you struggled with/did not read about/did not thoroughly study are not going away. Every test after the first one will also have concepts from previous chapters, so consistently go back and review. Learning requires repetition and rehearsal - we’ve got to get this information into your long term memory which takes time and practice!
* I’m more than willing to offer **additional help/review sessions** as needed. Talk to me if you need to set up a time with me for additional help. You must put in the work first though - do the reading, learn the vocabulary, do the review questions, memorize what you need to, etc.
* No **cell phone use** in class unless I tell you that you may use it for an academic purpose. All technology and its function are your responsibility. Technological malfunctions will not be acceptable excuses for late work. Please refer to school and district policy for additional information on acceptable use in and out of classroom. Any misuse will be grounds for forfeiture of the right to use electronics in my classroom.
* **Turning in Assignments:** In the back of the classroom, you will see a white drawer labeled with your class period. This drawer will always be where you turn things in.
* **Participation:**I expect active participation every day! Be engaged in whatever we are doing. Always have your supplies – especially your spiral notebook. Textbooks can be left at home unless otherwise instructed.
* **Leaving class:**Don’t ask to go to the bathroom or office while I’m in the middle of teaching. You may ONLY ask to go during breaks or once we begin group/independent work time. If you leave the classroom, you must hand me initial your planner and take it with you. Only one person will be allowed out of the classroom at a time.
* **Academic Honesty:**Cheating and plagiarism will NOT be tolerated on any assignment or assessment. It will most likely result in all parties involved receiving a **zero** on the assignment/assessment and an office referral/parent phone call. If this was college, you would probably instantly fail the class and potentially even get kicked out of the university. Make good choices, folks.