*AP Psychology Syllabus*

*Mr. Caccia Room 338*

*Classical High School 2017-2018*

**Course Description**

This course will introduce students to the scientific study of human thinking and behavior. Students will learn about all of the major subfields of psychology. Throughout the school year students will learn various psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields of psychology. At various times throughout the year students will work in groups, participate in discussions, participate in guided reading activities, work on projects, and design and conduct experiments to ensure students learn both the scientific and empirical approaches to psychology. At the end of the year students will have the opportunity to sit for the AP Psychology exam and potentially earn college credits. AP Psychology is a demanding course which requires nightly reading and the completion of key psychological terms in addition to projects and other assignments. All students who choose to take this course must be committed in order to succeed.

**Course Objectives**

* Students will demonstrate an understudying of general psychological terms and principles.
* Students will examine the ways psychology has evolved over time.
* Students will analyze the various approaches to psychology that psychologists take.
* Students will conduct experiments to facilitate hands on learning.
* Students will design scoring rubrics and use peer-editing to prepare for the FRQ portion of the AP exam.
* Students will design and implement original psychology lessons at various points throughout the year.

**Required Reading**

* Myers, David G., Psychology for the AP 2nd Edition, Worth Publishers, 2014.
* Rapoport, Judith L., The Boy Who Couldn't Stop Washing: The Experience and Treatment of Excessive Compulsive Disorder, Penguin, 1990.
* Various newspaper, journal, and scholarly articles pertaining to various psychological subjects chosen by and provided by instructor.

**Suggested Reading**

* Supplemental AP Psychology Prep books such as The Princeton Review’s Cracking the AP Psychology Exam or Strive for a 5. (I strongly recommend buying a review book as they are a great preparation tool for the AP exam. Students who purchased them in previous years generally performed better in both the class and on the AP exam.)

**Classroom Expectations**

1. Always come to class prepared, on time, and ready to learn. You must have your notebook/binder, pen or pencil and textbook daily to succeed in this class.
2. Students should always respect differences in opinion. At many points throughout the course of the year we will discuss controversial topics. All students should remain civil when differences in opinion arise and conduct themselves in a mature manner.
3. Always respect others and property. Keep electronics away at all times unless directed otherwise by me for instructional use. I will take your electronic device and hold it for the period if it becomes an issue.
4. Failure to meet these expectations will result in teacher detention. Chronic infractions will result in written referral and/or phone call home.

**Grading Policy**

There are three different grading categories for this course. The first consists of tests and projects and will account for 60% of each quarterly grade. Tests are formatted similarly to the AP Exam and serve as good preparation for students. Students will be tested at the end of each unit. Projects will be assigned at different intervals and students should expect at least two each quarter. Quizzes count for 25% and will be administered at different intervals during most units. The final category is formative assessments and they make up 15% of the quarterly grade. This includes all homework, classwork, class participation, and other informal assignments. The overwhelming majority of formative assessments consist of the completion of key psychological terms. For each term in the text, students must write its meaning and application. For each key figure, students must provide two reasons why they are important to the field of psychology. Terms will be due at the end of each module. Each student’s final average will be calculated using the Social Studies Department’s formula for final grades: Q1=20%; Q2=20%; Midterm Exam=10%; Q3=20%; Q4=20%; Final Exam=10% For a total of 100%.

**NOTE**: You will have a summer reading test on The Boy Who Could Not Stop Washing within the first month of the school year. Additionally, the approaches to psychology research assignment will be due within the first month of school.

**Late Work/Makeup Policy**

Students are expected to complete and show me all missed work due to excused absences. Missed work should be turned in the day the student returns from being out of school. If work is not handed in on time I will deduct 10 points for each day it is late. If students cut class they will NOT be permitted to make up missed work including tests and quizzes and will receive a ZERO.

**Plagiarism Policy**

Any work that is submitted that is not your own will be considered plagiarized. All plagiarized work will result in a ZERO and cannot be made up. All essays/papers will be submitted to Turn It In electronically to guard against plagiarism. Copying another student’s homework also constitutes plagiarism and will not be tolerated.

**Contact Information and Office Hours**

Students may come to me for extra help or if they have any questions/concerns in the morning daily. I get to school regularly at 7:20 AM or earlier. This is the preferred time to complete makeup tests/quizzes but I will make other accommodations if necessary. I stay after school some days as well. Just check with me first to make sure I will be staying after on a particular day. My email address is [joseph.caccia@ppsd.org](mailto:joseph.caccia@ppsd.org) Please feel free to contact me with any questions at any time. Also, I have a website which students can refer to:

[www.cacciassocialstudiesclass.weebly.com](http://www.cacciassocialstudiesclass.weebly.com) The class website will be a valuable resource throughout the year to find missed information due to absence.

**Required Course Materials**

Students should bring the following to class **DAILY** unless otherwise directed:

1. Assigned Myers Text
2. 3 subject notebook or binder for notes/activities
3. Folder
4. Pen/Pencil

**AP Psychology Hall of Fame**

Students who demonstrate mastery of the course by achieving a score of a ***5*** on the AP Psychology exam will be enshrined in the AP Psychology Hall of Fame. Each year all inductees will have their names engraved on a plaque to hang in the classroom commemorating their phenomenal achievement.

**Course Outline**

**Unit 1 History and Approaches (1 week) (2-4% of AP Exam)**

1. History of Psychology
2. Approaches
3. Subfields in Psychology

**Essential Questions:**

* How do both nature and nurture influence both behavior and mental processes?
* How can biology, psychology, and social-cultural influences explain a particular behavior or mental process?

**Unit 2 Research Methods (1.5 weeks) (8-10% of AP Exam)**

1. Experimental, Correlational, and Clinical Research
2. Statistics
3. Ethics in Research

**Essential Questions:**

* Why are curiosity, skepticism, and humility important to psychologists?
* What is the value of knowing two variables are related?
* Why is it important to know how two variables influence each other?
* Should psychology studies be conducted ethically?

**Unit 3 Biological Bases of Behavior (2.5 weeks) (8-10% of AP Exam)**

1. Physiological Techniques
2. Neuroanatomy
3. Functional Organization of the Nervous System
4. Neural Transmission
5. Neuroplasticity
6. Endocrine System
7. Genetics
8. Evolutionary Psychology

**Essential Questions:**

* Why is studying biology important to understanding psychology?
* Why do we need to know about the Nervous and Endocrine systems?
* How do heredity and environment work together?

**Unit 4 Sensation and Perception (2 weeks) (6-8% of AP Exam)**

1. Thresholds and Signal Detection Theory
2. Sensory Mechanisms
3. Attention
4. Perceptual Processes

**Essential Questions:**

* What are the implications of sensory information not getting transformed and delivered to the brain properly?
* What are the most important aspects of the eye that make vision possible?
* Why do we organize visual information in particular ways?
* How does this organization help us understand the world around us?
* What aspects of the ear make hearing possible?
* How do touch, taste, and smell impact our daily lives?

**Unit 5 States of Consciousness (1.5 weeks) (2-4% of AP Exam)**

1. Sleep and Dreaming
2. Hypnosis
3. Psychoactive Drug Effects

**Essential Questions:**

* What does it mean to be conscious?
* Why do we sleep?
* Are dreams important to everyday life?
* How does the misuse of drugs affect daily life?

**Unit 6 Learning (2 weeks) (7-9% of AP Exam)**

1. Classical Conditioning- Pavlovian Dog Experiment; Watson and Rayner’s “Little Albert Experiment”
2. Operant Conditioning- B.F. Skinner’s Box Experiment
3. Cognitive Process
4. Biological Factors
5. Social Learning

**Essential Questions:**

* How are associations important to learning?
* How are consequences important to learning?
* How can you apply operand conditioning in your life?
* How do classical conditioning and operant conditioning differ?

**Unit 7 Cognition (3 weeks) (8-10% of AP Exam)**

1. Memory
2. Language
3. Thinking
4. Problem Solving and Creativity

**Essential Questions:**

* What is memory?
* How can we improve memory?
* What are the best strategies for solving problems?
* What is language and how do we develop it?
* How does our brain process language?

**Unit 8 Motivation and Emotion (2 weeks) (6-8% of AP Exam)**

1. Biological Bases
2. Theories of Motivation
3. Hunger, Thirst, Sex and Pain
4. Social Motives
5. Theories of Emotion
6. Stress

**Essential Questions:**

* How do drives and incentives motivate behavior?
* What are the benefits of belonging?
* What are the effects of being left out? How are thinking and emotions related?
* How does gender result in different emotional experiences?
* What is stress?
* How does stress affect our ability to fight disease?

**Unit 9 Developmental Psychology (3 weeks) (7-9% of AP Exam)**

1. Life-Span Approach
2. Research Methods
3. Hereditary-Environmental Issues
4. Developmental Theories
5. Dimensions of Development
6. Sex and Gender Development

**Essential Questions:**

* As we develop, do we generally stay the same or do we experience significant change?
* How does the brain develop?
* What can we learn from developmental theorists Piaget and Vygotsky?
* How do people of different genders handle situations in similar and different ways?
* How do adults change cognitively as they age?

**Midterm Exam January 2017 (Modules 1-54)**

**Unit 10 Personality (2 weeks) (5-7% of AP Exam)**

1. Personality Theories and Approaches
2. Assessment Techniques
3. Growth and Adjustment

**Essential Questions:**

* How does psychoanalysis explain personality?
* What is the unconscious mind and how do we assess it?
* What does it mean to be self-actualized?
* What are personality traits and how do we assess them?
* How do social-cognitive psychologists explain personality?

**Unit 11 Testing and Individual Differences (2 weeks) (5-7% of AP Exam)**

1. Standardization and Norms
2. Reliability and Validity
3. Types of Tests
4. Ethics and Standards in Testing
5. Intelligence

**Essential Questions:**

* What is intelligence?
* Why do we need intelligence testing?
* Can intelligence change over time?
* What makes a test biased and how can it be fixed?

**Unit 12 Abnormal Behavior (3 weeks) (7-9% of AP Exam)**

1. Definitions of Abnormality
2. Theories of Psychopathology
3. Diagnosis of Psychopathology
4. Types of Disorders

**Essential Questions:**

* How do we define psychological disorders?
* What are the roots of anxiety disorders, OCD, and PTSD in people?
* How does major depressive disorder affect people?
* How do psychological issues manifest themselves in our general physical well-being?

**Unit 13 Treatment of Abnormal Behavior (1.5 weeks) (5-7% of AP Exam)**

1. Treatment Approaches
2. Modes of Therapy
3. Community and Preventive Approaches

**Essential Questions:**

* What are the different ways mental illnesses can be treated?
* What are different methods of effective therapy for mental illnesses?
* How do we prevent mental illness?

**Unit 14 Social Psychology (3 weeks) (8-10% of AP Exam)**

1. Group Dynamics
2. Attribution Process
3. Interpersonal Perception
4. Conformity, Compliance, Obedience
5. Attitudes and Attitude Change
6. Organizational Behavior
7. Aggression/Antisocial Behavior
8. Cultural Influences

**Essential Questions:**

* How do we explain both our own and other people’s behavior?
* Why do we conform?
* Why do we obey?
* How can we avoid groupthink?
* What is aggression and why do people become aggressive?
* What are the effects of culture on our behavior?