Advanced Placement Psychology
Lin-Wood Public School

Mrs. Nelson
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Room 31

According to the AP Psychology Course Manual, this 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”.

Course Objectives:
1. Students will study the fundamental concepts and theories of psychology.
2. Students will learn the basic skills of psychological research. They should be able to devise research projects, interpret and generalize results, and evaluate the validity of research.
3. Students will develop critical thinking skills and build their reading, writing, and discussion skills.
4. Students will wrestle with the ethical issues and enduring questions addressed by psychologists.
5. Students will be able to recognize psychological principles in their own life.
6. Students develop the ability to examine their decisions and relationships and a reflective and sensitive manner.
7. Students will prepare to earn a passing score on the AP Psychology Exam.

Primary Textbook:

AP Psychology Exam & College Credit:
AP Psychology is a college level course. In fact, Introductory Psychology is a class that most college students choose to take or are required to take. The difference is, while still offered in high school, students benefit from smaller class sizes and more time for research, interactive demonstrations, presentations, and discussions. Students have the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit for the mastery of the psychology concepts taught in this course. College credit can be earned with a passing score on the AP Psychology exam, which is scheduled for Monday May 6, 2013 at 12:00 p.m.

Organization:
Students should utilize the following supplies for successful organization in this course:
- 2.5” or 3” Binder
- 16 Tab Dividers – one for each unit of study (see course outline) and one for review materials before the AP Exam
- A notebook for reading & class notes
Grading Policy:
Grades are weighted according to the following scale:

40% -- Exams
Tests are given at the conclusion of each unit and consist of 25-50 multiple choice questions and 1 free response (essay) question; timed according to AP guidelines.

2 Midterm Exams: Midterms are cumulative tests given two times throughout the course. The first covers units 1-5, the second covers units 6-10. Each midterm consists of 50 multiple choice and 2 free response (essay) questions. Midterms are timed according to AP guidelines. The purpose of these tests is to reinforce cumulative learning throughout the year.

Final Exam: The final exam (cumulative) is administered approximately 2 weeks prior to the scheduled AP Exam in May.

20% -- Reading Quizzes
Be prepared for pop quizzes on reading assignments 1-3 times per week. Quizzes serve as a “homework check” to encourage students to stay on top of the reading assignments. At the end of each marking period, I will drop the lowest quiz grade.

40% -- Projects, Papers, Essays
There’s more to learning than just test scores. You will be asked to write essays, conduct research, be creative, think critically, and do presentations. Sometimes you will work in groups, other times you will work individually. I expect high quality work from each of you no matter what the assignment.

Extra Help:
Do not wait until you are overwhelmed and stressed out to come to me for help. Please make arrangements to see me as soon as you feel concerned about material, pacing, tests, projects, etc. I am happy to help each of you and I love working with students on an individual basis. I am available before or after school or during 2nd block. I want to help you succeed, so please take advantage of any extra help! Feel free to contact me via email with questions or concerns.

Late Policy:
Absences: All students are responsible for getting missed assignments before a planned absence or immediately following an unplanned absence. All work is due immediately upon your return. If you are absent on the day of a test, you will make it up on the day you return. If you are absent the day before a test, you will still be required to take the test even though you missed the review session. If you are absent the day of a reading quiz, you must make it up the day you return (your responsibility, not mine) or else you will receive a zero. All work must be turned in on time – no late work is accepted.

Academic Integrity:
All work on individual writing assignments, projects, and tests must be written in your own words. Proper citations in APA format are required. I will not tolerate plagiarism; you will earn a zero for any assignment that is plagiarized without the opportunity to re-do it.
Outline of Course Material:

FIRST THIRD OF COURSE:

Unit 1: Introducing Psychology: History & Methods – Myers Prologue & Chapter 1
   A. Logic, Philosophy, and History of Science
   B. Approaches/Perspectives: Biological, Behavioral, Cognitive, Humanistic, Psychodynamic, Sociocultural
   C. Research Methods: Observation, Survey, Case Studies, Correlational, Experimental
   D. Statistics
   E. Ethics in Research: Human and Animal Participants
   Unit Test

Unit 2: Biological Bases of Behavior – Myers, Chapter 2
   A. Physiological Techniques (e.g., imaging, surgical)
   B. Neuroanatomy: Structure of the Neuron and the Brain
   C. Functional Organization of Nervous System
   D. Neural and Synaptic Transmission
   E. Endocrine System: Structure and Function
   F. Genetics and Hereditability
   Unit Test

Unit 3: Sensation and Perception – Myers, Chapters 5 & 6
   A. Thresholds: Absolute, Difference
   B. Sensory Organs and Transduction: Visual, Auditory, Olfactory, Gustatory, Vestibular
   C. Sensory Adaptation
   D. Perceptual Processes and Attention
   E. Gestalt Psychology
   Unit Test

Unit 4: States of Consciousness – Myers, Chapter 7
   A. Defining Consciousness
   B. Sleep and Dreaming: Cycles, Theories of Dreams, Sleep Disorders
   C. Hypnosis
   D. Meditation
   E. Drug-Altered Consciousness
   F. Psychoactive Drug Effects: Abuse, Addiction, Dependence
   Research Project

Unit 5: Social Psychology – Myers, Chapter 18
   A. Group Dynamics and Influence
   B. Attribution Processes
   C. Interpersonal Perception
   A. Conformity, Compliance, Obedience
   B. Attitudes and Attitude Change
   C. Organizational Behavior
   D. Aggression/Antisocial Behavior
   Unit Test

MIDTERM EXAM #1: Units 1 – 5
End of 1st Marking Period / Early November 2012
SECOND THIRD OF COURSE:

Unit 6: Learning – Myers, Chapter 8
A. Classical Conditioning: Pavlov’s experiments, Elements of Classical Conditioning,
B. Operant Conditioning: Thorndike, Skinner, Elements of Operant Conditioning, Reinforcement Schedules, Learned Helplessness
C. Cognitive Processes in Learning
D. Biological Factors in Learning
E. Social Learning: Observational Learning

Unit Test

Unit 7: Memory – Myers, Chapter 9
A. Sensory Registers/Biology of Memory
B. Short-Term and Long-Term Memory: Capacity, Encoding, Maintenance
C. Forgetting: Biology and Experience
D. Special Topics in Memory

Unit Test

Unit 8: Thinking and Language – Myers, Chapter 10
A. Building Blocks of Thought: Language, Structure of Language, Images, Concepts
B. Problem Solving and Creativity: Various Methods
C. Decision Making: Heuristics, Framing
D. Language, Thought, and Culture

Unit Test

Unit 9: Intelligence and Testing – Myers, Chapter 11
A. Theories of Intelligence
B. Heredity/Environment and Intelligence
C. Standardization and Norms
D. Reliability and Validity
E. Types of Tests
F. Ethics and Standards in Testing
G. Human Diversity: Issues Gender and Culture

Research Project

Unit Test

Unit 10: Motivation and Emotion – Myers, Chapters 12 & 13
A. Biological Bases
B. Perspectives on Motivation: Arousal Theory, Drive-Reduction, Intrinsic and Extrinsic
C. Hunger, Thirst, Sex, and Pain
D. Social Motives: Achievement, Aggression, Contact, Affiliation, Curiosity, Manipulation, Exploration
E. Physiology of Emotion
F. Expression of Emotion
G. Theories of Emotion

MIDTERM EXAM #2: Units 6 – 10
End of 2nd Marking Period / Mid-January 2013
FINAL THIRD OF COURSE:

Unit 11: Developmental Psychology – Myers, Chapter 4
A. Life-Span Approach
B. Research Methods (e.g., longitudinal, cross-sectional)
C. Heredity-Environment Theories
D. Dimensions of Development: Infancy, Childhood, Adolescence, and Adulthood
E. Sex, Roles, Sex Differences
F. Nature vs. Nurture

Research Project
Unit Test
Unit Test

Unit 12: Personality – Myers, Chapter 15
A. Personality Theories and Approaches: Psychodynamic, Humanistic, Trait, Cognitive-Social
B. Assessment Techniques (MMPI, Rorschach, Myers-Briggs, Objective vs. Projective Tests)
C. Self-Concept, Self-Esteem
D. Growth and Adjustment

Research Project
Unit Test
Unit Test

Unit 13: Stress and Health Psychology – Myers, Chapter 12
A. Sources of Stress
B. Coping with Stress: Direct and Defensive
C. Stress and Health: Link Between Stress and Immune System, Heart Disease
D. Extreme Stress: Sources and Effects

Unit Test

Unit 14: Psychological Disorders – Myers, Chapter 16
A. Definitions of Abnormality
B. Perspectives on Psychological Disorders
C. Diagnosis of Psychopathology: Evolution of the DSM
D. Anxiety Disorders
E. Somatoform Disorders
F. Mood Disorders
G. Schizophrenic Disorders
H. Organic Disorders
I. Personality Disorders
J. Dissociative Disorders

Research Project
Unit Test

Unit 15: Treatment of Psychological Disorders – Myers, Chapter 17
A. Treatment Approaches: Psychoanalysis, Behaviorist, Humanistic, Cognitive, Biological
B. Modes of Therapy (e.g., individual, group)
C. Community and Preventive Approaches

Unit Test

FINAL EXAM: All Units of Study – Late April 2013
Given approximately 2 weeks prior to the scheduled AP Exam in May. The Final Exam for this course is an actual AP Psychology exam from a previous year and it is scored and timed according to AP guidelines. (100 Multiple Choice; 2 Free Response)