AP Psychology Syllabus

**Brief Description of Course**:

Advanced Placement Psychology is a college level course designed to prepare the student to take the Advanced Placement examination, administered by the College Board and the Educational Testing service. For students who achieve a score of 3, 4, or 5 (depending on the university) universities grant either credit or advanced placement, or both, for taking a one semester introductory college course in Psychology. This course will attempt to help the individual understand himself and others and to examine the human organism and its mental processes. Psychology deals with the mental and emotional processes as expressed through human relations, disorders, therapies and relationship of psychology to groups (including the family) and society are covered. **[SC17]**

**Textbook**:

Myers, David G. *Psychology* 7th ed. New York: Worth Publishers, 2004.

Plotnik, Rod. *Introduction to Psychology* 6th ed. Pacific Grove, CA: Wadsworth, 2002

**Other Course Materials**:

*Discovering Psychology.* Video Series. The Annenberg/CPB Multimedia Collection

*The Brain.*  The Annenberg/CPB Multimedia Collection

Benjamin, Ludy T., Jr. and Kathleen D. Lowman eds. *Activities Handbook for the Teaching of Psychology.* Vol.1 Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association 1981.

Benjamin, Ludy T., and C. Blair-Broeker, R.M. Earnst, and B. Nodine, eds. *Activities Handbook for the Teaching of Psychology.* Vol. 4. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association 1999.

Hock, Roger. *Forty Studies That Changed Psychology* 5th ed. Pearson U.S. Imports and Phipes 2003.

McEntarffer, Robert, Wesely, Allyson. *Barron’s How To Prepare For The Advance Placement Exam Psychology 2nd ed.*  Hauppage, NY: Barron’s Educational Services, 2004.

*SparkNotes Sparkcharts for Psychology*

**Overview of Advance Placement Psychology**:

Class Schedule: This one semester class meets daily for 42 minutes over the course of 16 weeks

Course organization: This course covers the 14 major content areas outlined in the AP Psychology Course Description. The 14 content areas are organized into 6 units. Each chapter is assessed through a series of chapter quizzes and a chapter test. Each completed unit is evaluated through a Free Response essay specific to the unit theme. In addition there are internet assignments, assigned readings and research topics that contribute to the students grade.

**Course Outline**:

**Unit One – Introduction [SC1 & SC2]**

Chapter 1 Historical and Modern Approaches

Chapter 2 Research Methodologies

Objectives

Historical schools of thought

Modern approaches

Research methods

Longitudinal study

Cross section study

Correlational method

Case study method

# Unit Two – The Biology of Psychology [SC3, SC4, SC5, & SC6]

Chapter 3 The Brain and neuronal function

Chapter 4 The Central Nervous System

Chapter 5 Sensation and Perception

Chapter 7 States of Consciousness

Objectives

Neuroanatomy

Nervous system organization

Neural transmission and communication

Endocrine system – hormonal communication

The five sensory systems

The process of neurotransmission

Brain anatomy and the functions of each section

Sensation thresholds

Sensory Transduction

Perception – attention, illusions, processing

States of consciousness – sleep-dreaming-hypnosis-altered states

REM and NREM sleep states

Drug interactions and effect on consciousness

# Unit Three - Cognition [SC7]

Chapter 9 & 10 Learning – Classical and Operant Conditioning

Chapter 11 Types of Memory

Chapter 13 & 14 Intelligence, Thought and Language

Objectives

Classical vs. Operant conditioning

Schedules of reinforcement

Effects of punishment

Cognition – problem solving

Characteristics of short vs. long term memory

Memory – Information processing, storage and retrieval

Defining intelligence – aptitude testing – test bias

Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences

Sternberg’s Triarchic Theory

Binet and Weschler’s contributions to standardized testing

# Unit Four – The Individual and Psychology [SC9, SC10, SC11, & SC 16]

Chapter 17 Developmental Psychology

Chapter 15 & 16 Motivation and Emotion

Chapter 25 Social Psychology

Objectives

Nature vs. Nurture

Developmental theory

Piaget – Cognitive development theory

Erikson – Psychosocial development theory

Freud - Psychosexual development theory

Kohlberg – Moral development theory

Infancy-childhood-adolescence-adulthood

Physiology of emotion

Theories of emotion-James-Lange, Cannon-Bard, Schacter-Singer

Motivational concepts- instincts, drives, Maslow’s hierarchy

Group dynamics

Attribution theory

Conformity, compliance and obedience

Heuristics

Confirmation bias

Belief perseverance

The Milgram experiment

The Asch experiment

The Stanford Prison experiment

# Unit Five – Personality and Assessment [SC8 & SC12]

Chapter 19 Freudian and Humanistic Theories

Chapter 20 Social, Cognitive and Trait Theories

Objectives

Psychodynamic perspective – Freud, Jung, Adler

Humanistic perspective – Maslow, Rogers

Social-Cognitive perspective – Bandura

Trait perspective – Allport

# Unit Six – Disordered Behavior and Therapies [SC14 &SC15]

Chapter 22 Assessment and Anxiety Disorders

Chapter 23 Mood Disorder and Schizophrenia

Chapter 24 Therapies

Objectives

Definitions of abnormal

Classifying disorders –DSM IV

Major categories of disorders – Anxiety, Dissociative, Mood,

Personality

Schizophrenia

Treatment approaches – Psychotherapy, Psychoanalysis,

Pharmacological, Humanistic, Cognitive

**Unit Seven – Review for the AP Psychology Exam**