

Advanced Placement Psychology

Revised 8/09

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I would like to welcome you to your student's 2009-10 school year at Valley High School. I am looking forward to working with your son or daughter in AP Psychology class.

As this is an Advanced Placement course, you and your student should be aware that this is an accelerated class, essentially a college level course, that requires excellent attendance and extensive out-of-class reading. Also, it is recommended that your student plans to take the AP Psychology exam in May.

Throughout the year, your student will be studying topics including Freudian psychoanalysis, the behaviorists, humanism, brain and behavior, psychopathology, psychotherapy, sociology, drugs, human sexuality and much more. We will be using the textbook *Understanding Psychology* as well as many other sources. I encourage you to take a look at the text and the handouts your student brings home.

Some of the topics in psychology are controversial and if you envision this being a problem for you or your student, you may want to speak with me or request a transfer from a school counselor.

In order to be sure that all students have the learning environment they deserve, please review the school behavior and attendance policies, found in the student handbook, with your student. Additionally, please make certain you and your student understand the specific classroom policies and expectations for my classroom, found on the following pages.

If your student carries a cell phone, I would ask you not to call them during class (and encourage them not to accept calls from others during class time) as this will lead to the phone's confiscation. Please call the office in an emergency and they will relay the message to the student. These important communication devices are a considerable distraction in class.

Required supplies for this class (due on Friday, August 28) are as follows:

1. 3 ring binder
2. Loose-leaf paper (lots of it!)
3. Pencils/pens
4. 1 box of tissue, or paper towels

There are several ways of contacting me. The method I prefer is email at mrmattsmith@comcast.net, largely because this will be checked daily. Also, you may want to stop by my web page at <http://mrmattsmith.com> where you can find information about what your student is learning and other helpful items. Secure access to grades for each student is available so each student, parent or guardian can track their progress. If you do not have internet access, you could send a note with your student or call at 345-9021 extension 82161. I check my voice mail usually no more than twice a week so your response might be delayed.

I welcome your support and urge you to communicate with me whenever you have a question or comment.

Respectfully,

Mr. Matt Smith

Advanced Placement Psychology Syllabus 2009-2010

Teacher: Matt Smith

Room: C-25

Email: mrmattsmith@comcast.net

Web site: <http://mrmattsmith.com>

Phone: 345-9021 extension 82161

Office Hours: Wednesday 2:30-3:00 or by appointment

Exam makeups are available Thursdays during lunch or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

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 sub fields within psychology. They also learn about ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice.

Required texts: 1) Understanding Psychology-Feldman (Blue Book)

The students will have a variety of projects and papers (including learning basic A.P.A. style) throughout the year. Also, they will be assigned additional reading outside of class, beyond the scope of the textbook.

Content Outline

Following is a description of the major content areas covered by this course and the AP Psychology Examination. A full, detailed outline that meets the College Board audit requirements will be posted on the web site and given to students early in the fall semester.

- I. History and Approaches
- II. Research Methods
- III. Biological Bases of Behavior
- IV. Sensation and Perception
- V. States of Consciousness
- VI. Learning
- VII. Cognition
- VIII. Motivation and Emotion
- IX. Developmental Psychology
- X. Personality
- XI. Testing and Individual Differences
- XII. Abnormal Psychology
- XIII. Treatment of Psychological Disorders
- XIV. Social Psychology

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to both this syllabus and the rules and expectations in order to create an optimal classroom environment.

Course Schedule (time) (National Standards key)

Social Psychology (3 weeks) (VC)

Social Influence (VC-1/2/3)
Cooperation vs. Competition (VC-2.2)
Obedience (VC-3.4)
Conformity (VC-3.4)
Group processes (VC-2)
Social Cognition (VC-3)
Attitudes (VC-3)
Social Perception (VC-1.3)
Interpersonal Attraction (VC-3.7)

History/Careers/Theories (2 weeks) (1A)

Relation to other Social Sciences (1A-6.1)
Foundations of Psychology (1A-6.3)
Historical Theories of Psychology (1A-1.1)
Evolution of Psychology (1A-6.4)
Fields within Psychology (1A-2)

Research and Statistics (2 weeks) (1A)

Methods of research (Application/Advantages/Disadvantages) (1A-3)
Conducting Experiments (1A)
Descriptive and Inferential Statistics (1A-4.1/4.4)
Reliability and Validity (1A-4.1)
Ethical guidelines to conducting good research (1A-5)

Biological Bases of Behavior (3 weeks) (IIA)

Division of the nervous system (IIA-2)
Structure and communication of neurons (IIA-1)
Endocrine system (IIA-5.1)
Midbrain/Hindbrain/Forebrain (IIA-3.1)
Plasticity (IIA-3.3)
Functions of the brain (IIA-3.1)

Sensation/Perception (3 weeks) (IIB)

Structure of the eye (IIB-1.2)
Theories of color vision (IIB-1.3)
Structure of the ear (IIB-1.2)
Olfaction and Gustation (IIB-1.2)
Absolute and Difference thresholds (IIB-1.1)
Gestalt Principles (IIB-2.1)
Depth Perception (IIB-2.2)
Visual Illusions (IIB-2.1)
Bottom-Up vs. Top-Down processing (IIB-2.3)
Attention (IIB-3)

Consciousness (1 week) (IVD)

Stages of Sleep (IVA-2)
Sleep disorders (IVA-3)
Classification of drugs (IVA-4.2)
Long and short-term effects of drugs (IVA-4.1)

Learning (1.5 weeks) (IVB)

Classical Conditioning (IVB-1)
Operant Conditioning (IVB-3)
Cognitive learning (IVB-3.1)
Observational Learning (IVA-4.1)

Memory (1.5 weeks) (IVB)

Encoding/Storage/Retrieval (IVB-1)
Recall vs. Recognition (IVB-3)
Forgetting (IVB-3.1)
Sensory/Short-Term and long-term memory (IVB-2)
Retrieval cues (IVB-3)

Interference (IVB-3.3)

2nd Semester

Cognition (1.5 weeks) (IVC-2)

Heuristics vs. Algorithms (IVC-2.1/2.3)
Schemas (IVC-2.1)
Problem-Solving (IVC-2.2)
History of Intelligence testing (IVE-3.2)
Good test construction (IVE-1.2)
Theories of Intelligence (IVE-3.2)
Advantages and disadvantages of I.Q. testing (IVE-4.2)
Multiple Intelligences (IVE-3.2)

Development and Language (4 weeks) IIIA/IVC-3)

Components of Language (IVC-3.1)
Grammar and Syntax (IVC-3.2)
Acquisition of Language (IVC-4.1)
Prenatal development (IIIA-1.1)
Piaget (IIIA-3.1)
Kohlberg (IIIA-3.1)
Erikson (IIIA-3.1)
Gender Roles (IIIA-3.2)
Attachment (IIIA-3.1)
Adulthood and Aging (IIIA-2.1)

Motivation/Emotion (2.5 weeks) (IIC-1/IIC-6)

Theories of Emotion (IIC-6.1)
Hunger motivation (IIC-2)
Maslow's hierarchy (IIC-3)
Achievement motivation (IIC-4.1)
Cultural standards of emotion (IIC-4.1)
Physical attributes of emotion (IIC-4.1)

Personality and Stress (3 weeks) (IIIB)

Psychodynamic Theory (IIIB-2.2)
Trait Theory (IIIB-3.2)
Social-Cognitive Theory (IIIB-2.1)
Humanistic theory (IIIB-2.1)
Projective tests (IIIB-3.1)
Physiological stressors (IID-2.1)
Personality types (IID-1.1)
Measuring stress (IID-1.1)
Coping with stress (IID-4.1)

Disorders and Treatment (3 weeks) (VA)

Identifying illness (VA-1.1/1.4)
Anxiety Disorders (VA-3.1)
Somatoform Disorders (VA-3.1)
Mood Disorders (VA-3.1)
Personality Disorders (VA-3.1)
Dissociative Disorders (VA-3.1)
Psychotic Disorders (VA-3.1)
DSM-IV (VA1)
Psychodynamic Therapy (VB-1)
Behavioral Therapy (VB-1)
Humanistic Theory (VB-1)
Group Therapy (VB-1)
Cognitive Therapy (VB-1)
Biological Treatments (VB-1)

Rules and Expectations

1. Be prompt and prepared.
2. Students are expected to remain in their seats in class. Hall passes will be given only in accordance with school policy.
3. Treat others and our classroom with respect, fairness, and consideration.
4. No cell phones, makeup, laser pointers, music playback devices (iPods, etc.), and any other items deemed intrusive are to be seen or heard in the classroom. These items will be confiscated and turned in to the office. If you carry a cell phone, make absolutely sure the ringer is off and it is invisible.
5. Additionally, all school policies must be followed. Be sure you are familiar with those rules. You will be held responsible for them.

Attendance Policy:

To have an absence be considered excused, you must 1) have a parent or guardian call the school attendance office within 24 hours of the absence, or, 2) have a valid Viking excuse.

Unexcused absences: No makeup work will be assigned or accepted.

Excused absences: Makeup work will be assigned before class, after class or during tutorial only. I do not give makeup work during class time. You have as many days to make up the work as you were excused.

Students are encouraged to exchange phone numbers with another trustworthy student in class so they can find out what they missed in class when they are unable to attend.

Students who arrive late should report to the sweep room.

Late Work Policy

Late work for daily assignments is often accepted until a deadline announced before the grading period ends. Check with me to see if this is a possibility. Projects and group assignments generally have a penalty for late submission.

You get the work into my hands by the end of the day. I usually stay after at least a few minutes, or, you email the assignment to me by 9 P.M. that same day.

You must make up a missed test within three class meeting times.

Heading your papers:

The following must be on all assignments turned in to me in the upper right hand corner: Name, class period and the date. *No name. No grade.* Assignments are due when requested.

Grades:

I use the following percentage scale: A= 90 percent and above, B= 80-89, C= 70-79, D= 60-69, F= 59 and below. Parents will be mailed home a record of their student's progress three times each semester. Be sure Valley has your correct mailing address, and if you don't receive the report, call the school for information.

Notebooks:

You will be required to keep a notebook this semester and bring it to class daily. In the notebook you will keep any notes given during lecture (please date each day's entries) and any handouts or returned assignments. The notebook may be collected at intervals for a grade. On occasion I may collect an assignment from a previous day.

Substitute teachers:

There will be times when I am not in class and I expect you would treat the substitute with the same respect you show me. Failure to do so will result in a discipline contract and a call to your parents.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes and additions to the rules and expectations in order to create an optimal classroom environment.

AP Psychology Signature Page

Please sign below indicating that you have read and understand all four pages of the AP Psychology Parent Letter and Syllabus document. Students must keep this document in their notebook. Students must bring this signature page back to class filled out completely and signed for a grade.

Student Signature Print Student Name Date

Parent or Guardian Signature Date

Instructor Administrator

Parents and/or students: Please list any concerns, questions, or comments below-