

AP Psychology Syllabus Spring 2016

Teacher: Jay Niessner

School: Central Academy of Technology and Arts

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School Phone: 704-296-3088, Ext. 7158

Planning Period: 3rd Period 12:30 – 2:00 pm

Course Purpose (From the College Board AP Psychology 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 subfields within psychology. They also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice.

Course Description:

Students will be introduced to the various sub-fields of psychology and learn how they explain the behavior and mental processes of humans and other animals. Students will gain an understanding of how the sub-fields of psychology are linked together and how they are supported by empirical evidence.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will learn the history, concepts, methodology, and vocabulary of contemporary psychology.
2. Students will learn to read and evaluate psychological research papers and critically apply their content to broad psychological theories and every day life.
3. Students will develop advanced critical thinking skills.
4. Students will prepare for success on the AP Psychology exam.

Textbook:

Myers, David G., Myers' Psychology for AP, 8th Edition. New York: Worth Publishers/BFW, 2006.
Princeton Review – Cracking the AP Psychology Exam – 2016 Edition

Additional Readings:

Periodicals such as *Scientific American*, *Scientific American Mind*, and *Psychology Today*

Performance Tasks and Assessments:

Students will have assignments posted on the class calendar in their notebooks, in class, and on the class Canvass Page. Homework is posted on the Canvas page each night and can be found in the class calendar.

These will include, though are not limited to:

Independent reading assignments; terms, tests, and discussion; researched critical analysis essays; evaluation of psychological reviews; statistical tables; peer review of various essays and projects; minor papers; nightly reading; vocabulary/terms assignments and quizzes; group and individual PowerPoint presentations; regular class discussion of reading; practice AP tests in-class and at-home; quizzes in reading comprehension; in-class timed writing; and individual conferences with the teacher.

You will be expected to complete all of the assigned materials by the due date for which that material is assigned. **Late work will NOT be accepted and will result in a grade of zero.**

Classroom Expectations: Students will arrive on time and be in the classroom when the bell rings. They will leave all mental and physical distractions outside the classroom. The classroom atmosphere will be one of

mutual respect where we actively listen to each other and speak one at a time. This course will involve mature, college level discussions in which all students feel comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions as well as commenting on the opinions of others in a thoughtful and respectful way.

Students are expected to take notes during all discussions, presentations, lectures, movies and other activities. Anything presented in class or in the assigned readings may be on quizzes, tests or the AP Psychology exam.

Students are expected to bring their binder with paper, a spiral notebook, 3X5 index cards, pens, pencils, textbooks (unless told otherwise) and a set of colored pencils to class **EVERY** day.

Homework Expectations:

Students are expected to read and outline each chapter in Myers as well as several articles per unit. These notes must be kept organized in a notebook or binder dedicated specifically to the course. Students are also required to build a set of flashcards with important vocabulary and psychological terms. Students will use these notebooks and flashcards to study for the AP exam as well as class tests and quizzes.

Other assignments will include essays, group projects, presentations, and reviews of films and articles.

Students who are absent are responsible to get all assignments and class notes from another student in the class or from the teacher, before or after school. All work should be turned in on time and late work will not be accepted. Should a student be absent when an assignment is due, they are responsible to turn the assignment without reminder the day they are back to school.

This course is a college-level offering, and as such the expectation is that each student will act with the degree of respect that is expected of college-level students. The key to one's behavior in the course is to be respectful of the teacher and of other students.

Students are to keep track of their own grades or to use the online link to PowerSchool to check their grades. Parents are encouraged to use the parent connect to keep up with their students grades. It is the student's responsibility to turn in missed work, schedule make up tests or quizzes. If these are not done in a timely manner students will receive a zero on that assignment. This is a college level course and students will be treated as such.

Grading and Types of Work:

Quizzes: Open notes quizzes will be given periodically to insure that you have done the required reading. Failure to have your notes with you for the quiz will result in a zero for the assignment. All open note reading quizzes will be timed.

Tests: Unit Tests will be given several times in a grading period. Each test will mimic the actual AP test in format and types of questions. Tests will be timed in a similar format to the AP timing. There are nine tests during the semester. Each test date is already set and can be found on the class calendar.

Projects: Projects of various types will be given to students for each six weeks grading period. These projects will be worth approximately 15 – 20% of the six weeks grade. They will be assigned at the start of the six weeks and due at the end. Their due dates can be found on the class calendar.

Notebook: You will be required to maintain a notebook which will have outlines from each chapter, daily notes taken during class, and essays. The notebook must be maintained in a chronological order by unit. All assignments given in class, unless noted by the teacher, will be due the day of a test.

Participation: All students will be required to participate in class discussions, debates, and other activities, which are part of the course curriculum. A grade will be given based upon participation. As this is a discussion based class, failure to add to discussions will result in a **ZERO** for the participation grade. Participation will count as one test grade per each six week grading period.

Grading Policy: The Union County Grading Scale will be used in the course. The final average for the semester will be composed of grades coming from four separate areas. As this is a semester class, each six-week period and the Final Exam count for 25%. Students are also required to take the AP Exam, scheduled for **Monday, May 2nd, 2016**. At some point during the spring there will be a practice AP exam offered for all students in AP classes. **(If you do not take the AP exam you're grade will drop by one letter grade per UCPS policy)**

Cheating/Copying: Any paper, or work, copied from another person, or a web site, will result in a grade of zero. In short, cheating on any assignment will result in a zero and possible disciplinary action.

Make-Up Work: It is the student's responsibility to make-up any work missed because of any absence, (notes, quizzes, test, etc.). Individuals should refer to the make-up policy outlined in the CATA Student Handbook. All make-up tests and quizzes will be scheduled at the teacher's convenience with you having at least 24-hours notice. Assignments due to absences are to be turned in the day the student comes back to class. **All other assignments will not be accepted late and will receive a grade of zero.**

MAKEUP WORK THAT CAN ONLY BE DONE IN SCHOOL: SUCH AS TESTS AND QUIZZES NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. ALL OTHER MAKEUP WORK CAN BE COMPLETED AT HOME.

Grades will be based on points earned using the following grading scale:

Assignment Type	Possible Points
Tests	100-200 Points
Quizzes	20-50 Points
Outline Checks	50-75 Points
Projects	15-20% of Six Weeks Grade Points TBD
Class Work & Homework	20-50 Points
Study Guides	50-75 Points

Please note that the above is a sample of grades, and may not reflect the actual assignments of grades given. There are NO extra credit assignments, please **DO NOT** ask for extra credit or expect it to appear.

AP Exam:

The AP Psychology Exam includes:

- A 70-minute 100 question, multiple-choice section that accounts for two-thirds of the exam grade
 - Multiple-choice scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly. Points are not deducted for incorrect answers, and no points are awarded for unanswered questions.
 - Because points are not deducted for incorrect answers, students are encouraged to answer all multiple-choice questions.
 - On any questions students do not know the answer to, students should eliminate as many choices as they can, and then select the best answer among the remaining choices.

- A 50-minute free-response section made up of two questions that accounts for one-third of the exam grade.
 - Free-response questions are an appropriate tool for evaluating a student's mastery of scientific research principles and ability to make connections among constructs from different psychological domains (e.g., development, personality, and learning).
 - Students may be asked to analyze a general problem in psychology (e.g., depression, adaptation) using concepts from different theoretical frameworks or sub domains in the field, or to design, analyze, or critique a research study.

The AP Psychology exam will be **Monday, May 2nd, 2016**.

AP Exam Grades

The Readers' scores on the free-response questions are combined with the results of the computer-scored multiple-choice questions; the weighted raw scores are summed to give a composite score. The composite score is then converted to a grade on AP's 5-point scale:

AP GRADE QUALIFICATION

5 Extremely well qualified

4 Well qualified

3 Qualified

2 Possibly qualified

1 No recommendation

AP Exam grades of 5 are equivalent to A grades in the corresponding college course.

AP Exam grades of 4 are equivalent to grades of A-, B+, and B in college. AP Exam grades of 3 are equivalent to grades of B-, C+, and C in college.

Estimated Course Pacing Guide:

- I. Intro, History, Scientific Method, Neurobiology (Two Weeks)
- II. Developmental Psychology (One Week)
- III. Sensation and Perception and States of Consciousness (Two Weeks)
- IV. Learning and Memory (One Week)
- V. Thinking, Language and Intelligences (Two Weeks)
- VI. Motivation and Emotion (One Week)
- VII. Stress and Personality (One Week)
- VIII. Abnormal Psychology (Two Weeks)
- IX. Therapy and Social Psychology (Two Weeks)
- X. AP Exam Review (Two Weeks)

Due to this course being taught during January, February & March, there is always the possibility of inclement weather occurring. Students need to keep to their class calendar. If for some reason we are out of school for extended periods of time we will keep up with the class calendar. That means that if a test is scheduled for Friday, and we miss most of the week, we will test on Friday regardless. Students should always have their AP books and notes at home. If we are out of school, class notes will be posted on the Moodle page. If students have questions during an extended time that we are out of school they should contact Coach Niessner by email or by twitter.

Email: jay.niessner@ucps.k12.nc.us

Twitter: @catacoachjay

Learning Platform at Central Academy

Canvas: The majority of assignments will be submitted on our new "learning platform," Canvas. Assignments can be submitted a variety of ways including, uploading files, typing into text boxes, and sharing Google documents/presentations. Students not having used Canvas before should alert the teacher and they will be shown how to submit assignments on Canvas. Individual assignments will indicate which method of submission on Canvas is expected. If students need a refresher or have questions, they can access the [Canvas Student Guide](#) for specific instructions. It is the student's responsibility to ensure assignments are submitted on time and to contact the instructor if there is a problem. The Canvas Learning Platform logs every student log-in on Canvas which provides teachers with a list of when students log-in to Canvas using their user id.

Canvas is used to grade assignments as well, however, the grades in Canvas, while accurate to that assignment, are NOT the teacher's gradebook. The teacher's gradebook includes categories of assignments that may be weighted differently and may include grades for assignments that did not use the Canvas Learning Platform. Therefore, students and parents should always check their child's true average on the Parent Portal on Powerschool.

Contact Information:

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Tutoring – by appointment – Monday – Thursday before school

Planning – 3rd Period 12:30-2:00 pm