

AP® Psychology Course Info 2012-2013

Mr. Doyle, Room D229

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PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

According to the College Board (the organization that writes and oversees the AP exams):

The purpose of the AP course in Psychology is to introduce the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Included is a consideration of the psychological facts, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology and the methods psychologists use in their science and practice. Students also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice.

An introductory college course in psychology is generally one semester in length, with some variation among colleges...the aim is to provide a learning experience equivalent to that obtained in most college introductory psychology courses.

The bottom line is that I am here to prepare you to take the AP exam, which is held in May. Like it says above, it is definitely a college-level class. And if you do what I ask of you, you're going to learn a lot of psychology this year.

TEXTBOOK

We will be using the book, Psychology (8th Ed.), by Lefton & Brannon. Take a deep breath...you will be reading about 95% of it between now and the AP exam!

DAILY LESSONS

Course material will be covered in a variety of ways. The material we cover in class will include the textbook, outside readings (newspaper, magazine, and journal articles), and other things that may come up.

The classroom meetings themselves will be in a variety of formats, including lectures, group/partner work, independent work, class discussions, videos, projects, etc.

GRADING

Very straightforward:

Unit Exams	50%
Quizzes.....	25%
Homework/Classwork.....	25%

Both the mid-year and final exams will be worth 20% of the grade for their respective terms.

EXAMS

Our exams will be based on whatever we cover during a particular unit. This includes, but is not limited to the textbook, class notes, outside readings, etc.

Exams are generally at the end of each chapter. As you'll see on your reading guide, we'll have roughly four exams per quarter.

If you miss an exam, you must make it up within 5 school days or you will get a zero. If you are a no show at your make-up exam, you will get a zero.

FINAL EXAMS

All seniors will take a final exam on a date to be announced in May.

Similar to the actual AP Exam, our final exam is a cumulative exam, covering the material for the whole year.

QUIZZES

We will have lots of quizzes. For the most part, whenever there is a reading assignment from the textbook, expect a quiz on the date the reading is due. In AP Psych, it is absolutely essential that you keep up on the reading assignments.

Whenever you do the textbook reading, do yourself a favor and take notes on the material. This is not required, but you'll be allowed to use your notes on the quizzes (unless otherwise stated). They will have a major impact on your grades each quarter. If you do homework, the quizzes should help your grade.

I will drop your lowest quiz each term, and a missed quiz can be the one that gets dropped.

HOMEWORK

Homework must be submitted in a timely manner. Once an exam has been give for a unit, no homework from that unit will be accepted.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS/SNOW DAYS

In the event of a **snow day** (or any other school cancellation), it is important to keep to the schedule. This means that on the day we return to school, any assignment from the day(s) off will also be due. If we have a snow day on the day a **test** is scheduled, the test will be given on the day we return.

VERY IMPORTANT

Any student who misses a class, excused or otherwise, is responsible for getting any notes you missed for the class(es) in question!

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TOPICS WE'LL BE COVERING

This list is drawn straight from the College Board's AP Psychology curriculum. We'll be covering all of it in same shape or form, pretty much in this order.

- A. Methods, Approaches, History
- B. Biological Bases of Behavior
- C. Sensation and Perception
- D. States of Consciousness
- E. Learning
- F. Cognition
- G. Motivation and Emotion
- H. Developmental Psychology
- I. Personality
- J. Psychological Testing
- K. Abnormal Psychology
- L. Treatment of Psychological Disorders
- M. Social Psychology

THE AP® PSYCHOLOGY EXAM

Depending on the college or university, your qualifying AP score can earn you college credit. What score that actually is depends on the school you are planning to attend. AP exam scores range from 1 to 5, with 5 being the best. The more competitive the school, the higher your score would have to be. Schools like Harvard and MIT typically require 5s. Other schools may accept as low as a 3. You will need to check with the school to make sure of what their policies are. I have a link on the website where you can check schools' AP credit policies.

No one is going to force you to take the test. But I always encourage students who are doing really well in AP Psychology to seriously consider taking the test. But the final decision is your own.

In my experience, nothing is a better predictor for AP success than the exams we take at the end of each chapter. Among my students who have achieved qualifying scores of 3 or better on the AP test, the vast majority have been the students who regularly got 80 and above on my exams.

Something to keep in mind: taking a course for AP credit, only to skip taking the exam does not look good on your transcript.

INTERNET

The website for this course is: doyleqhs.com

Look for the the AP Psychology link when you get there. You'll find vocabulary reviews, notes, handouts, links to useful websites, and lots more.

Also, everyone must fill out the "Student Info Form" that is on the site. Just click the link that's at the top of every page. This is counted as a quiz grade for the first term.

Also, my Twitter handle is [@doyleqhs](https://twitter.com/doyleqhs). As this account is only intended for this class, the tweets are protected, and the followers must be AP Psychology students. I'll be tweeting info about the class, psychology-related stuff, and occasionally you might even find an extra credit opportunity. So get a Twitter account if you don't already have one!

THINGS YOU WILL NEED TO BRING TO CLASS EVERY DAY

- A notebook.
- A pen or pencil. **DO NOT ASK ME FOR SOMETHING TO WRITE WITH!**
- Your textbook.

OTHER STUFF

Just some technical details/rules:

- If you going to be late for class, get a pass!
- There are no drinks and no food to be consumed during class. You may, however, drink water.
- You need to bring a notebook, something to write with, and your textbook everyday. I have pens that I will sell to you for 25¢, if you are desperate.
- Unless you are a surgeon on call, the President, or work for the CIA, **KEEP YOUR CELL PHONE TURNED OFF AND OUT OF SIGHT.**
- Obviously, no music players or other electronic devices are allowed during class, either.

NOTE

Changes may be made to this set of guidelines during the year. You will be told about any changes or additions.

VERY IMPORTANT

Any student who misses a class, excused or otherwise, is responsible for getting any notes you missed for the class(es) in question!