

Advanced Placement Psychology

Course description from the College Board:

The AP Psychology course introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. While considering the studies that have shaped the field, students explore and apply psychological theories, key concepts, and phenomena associated with major units of study, including biological bases of behavior, cognition, development, learning, social psychology, personality, and mental and physical health. Throughout the course, students apply psychological concepts and employ psychological research methods and data interpretation to evaluate claims, consider evidence, and effectively communicate ideas.

This is a year-long class, open to juniors and seniors, that prepares students for success on the national AP Exam in May, but also provides an opportunity to acquire critical thinking skills, to participate in class discussions and hands-on learning experiences, and to analyze research about mental processes and behavior. This class is considered an academic elective, and the grade earned will be calculated into the cumulative GPA. Students do not need to have taken a previous social studies AP class to be eligible for this class.

Successful AP Psychology students have the following characteristics.

- Students should be interested in and curious about Psychology.
- Students should be organized and prepared to meet deadlines.
- Have effective time management skills and the ability to prioritize assignments.
 - Have class materials every day, keep up with unit calendars, making up work quickly when absent.
- Students should be willing to participate in class discussions, debates, presentations, and other active learning.
- Students should have strong reading comprehension skills.
 - Textbook reading will be done outside of class.
 - Class time and assessments will require analyzing and evaluating psychological research and concepts.
- Students should have strong writing skills.
- Students should be able to move beyond memorized material and answer a variety of stimulus-based multiple-choice questions, interpreting reading passages, graphs, tables, maps, and charts.

Homework Expectations:

- Students are expected to read 30-40 pages per week (equivalent to 1-2 textbook chapters).
- The reading needs to be thorough, with an emphasis on taking notes and applying concepts.
- Students are expected to learn psychological vocabulary going beyond a simple definition.

Assessments:

- Minor assessments could include reading quizzes, vocabulary quizzes, reading guides, vocabulary guides, research evaluation, experiments, and minor projects.
- Major assessments could include unit exams, AAQ and EBQ writing, and major projects.
 - There will be about 5 units in the fall semester and 4 units in the spring semester.
 - Each major assessment test will mimic parts of the national AP exam.
 - Unit exams will consist of multiple-choice questions and AAQ/EBQ writing questions.

**AAQ: Article Analysis Questions

EBQ: Evidence Based Questions