

# AP PSYCHOLOGY

## 2023-2024

This syllabus represents an overview for a full year, **college-level**, course that will assist the students in preparing for the AP® Psychology exam and for more advanced work in college. Students will learn about the ever-changing field of psychology through: in-depth study, class discussions, video clips & assigned videos, *both* individual & group presentations, simulated experiments, independent reading options, extension research projects, special guests (when possible), and through independent study. The student products that are created in this course will be quite varied, in order to explore the many facets of the field.

### Primary Course Objectives

1. Students will prepare throughout the year to be successful on the Advanced Placement examination in Psychology.
2. Students will study the major core concepts and theories of psychology. And, they will be able to use the key terms in their everyday applications and vocabulary.
3. Students will learn the essential skills of psychological research. They will be able to devise research projects, interpret and generalize results and be able to evaluate the validity of research reports.
4. Students will be able to identify, investigate & apply psychological concepts within controlled applications. And, students will also be able to consider how these concepts apply to their own lives. Additionally, they will be able to actively recognize psychological principles when they are encountered in everyday situations.
5. Students will refine their enhanced critical thinking skills. They will become aware of the inherent danger of blindly accepting or rejecting any potential psychological theory without careful & objective evaluation.
6. Students will use cross-curricular applications to further develop their reading, writing, listening and discussion skills.

### TEXTBOOK and RESOURCES FOR AP® PSYCHOLOGY

#### (\*) Additional Textbook (recommended):

Fineburg, Amy C. and Myers, David G. **Meyer's Psychology for AP**, New York: Worth, 2011. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)

#### Classroom E-Textbook (provided by the district):

Ciccarelli & White, **Psychology, AP® Edition 4e** ©2015 (with access to MyPsychLab): Pearson Publications.

---

### Course Expectations:

Although our class time will often allow students to openly discuss & participate in labs or activities to apply the concepts and theories that we will discuss, the foundation of their knowledge will come from their own outside readings, study group sessions, and research-based projects. **Students will be required to do all of their textbook reading outside of class.**

There are 2 textbooks that are used in this course. One (e-text) has been provided by the district. The other text, that is recommended/preferred by the instructor, & it would be great if students are able to locate a PDF of this text online.

There is a substantial amount of vocabulary that accompanies this course and it is the student's responsibility to be caught up with the reading and terminology **prior** to our in-class discussions and activities.

In addition, students will be expected to maintain their course materials (class notes/digital files/activity results, etc.) throughout the year for continuous reference.

### **\*IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS\***

The nature of this course requires ample student involvement. Students will be required to do **many** individual and group presentations each semester.

### **\*Extra Credit\***

Students are encouraged to complete vocabulary flashcards (using Quizlet) as we go through the content units in order to create study resources for themselves, while also earning extra credit. (*Students: As we cover each unit, you will see a CANVAS assignment that corresponds with the unit name. If you complete a quizlet study list of at least 25 vocabulary terms for that unit by the day that you take the unit exam, you will get an additional 100 for a “minor” grade. If you elect not to complete it, your grade will say “excused” in the gradebook and it will not count against you.*)

### **\*Independent Reading Assignment\***

Each semester, students will select 1 **independent reading** text (from a provided list) to help supplement their opportunity for enriched personal experiences in AP Psych. When this is assigned, I will encourage the students to select a book that is of personal interest to them.

**It is absolutely paramount that students keep up with the content of the course.** If students keep up with the reading & vocabulary (throughout the course) and are “present” for class discussions/activities, they will have no problem succeeding in the course (& on the AP exam).

### **\* Course Activities and Resources that may be used in class:**

- Student-conducted observation/research/experimentation (in both: individual & group projects)
- Collegeboard materials (released exams, essay prompts, scored essays, AP-designed materials, etc.)
- Classroom lectures/Films/Documentaries/Crash Course videos/TED Talks
- Academic Journal Articles and Current Event News Articles (*such as Psychology Today, Scientific America’s Mind, and Science, and also frequent publications from the American Psychological Association and other scholarly journals/periodicals*)
- Local Experts in a psychological career field (Guest Speakers) – whenever possible
- Independent reading assignment (students will select a full non-fiction text to read each semester)

---

### **Regarding student assignments:**

**Students, please be advised that communication and participation are absolutely paramount for you to get the full content & appreciation for this course.** It is your responsibility to plan accordingly to be successful in this course.

You are all juniors & seniors; and, as such, keep in mind that I will not track you down to bring assignments to your attention. **It is your responsibility to make-up work (in the case of an absence) or to submit a “late” assignment (as per the 1-day “late work” policy of the campus).** If at any time you have additional struggles or concerns, it is extremely important that you reach out to me as soon as you notice that you are struggling. You need to be your best advocate. And, together, we can make sure that you have a successful year!

**Recommendation for Student Success:** *Please refer to page 31 in your student handbook.*

*Additional advice: As small as a grade may seem, I highly encourage all of my students to take advantage of the vocabulary (extra credit) opportunity. It is a great help to your cycle grade and at the end of the course you will have an invaluable study resource ready-to-go as you prepare for the AP EXAM. And, although, I am always available (via email, or a scheduled 1-on-1 conference, etc.), you should keep in mind that there are other ways to help you to stay on track. SUCH AS: using your own technology (or other techniques) to create incremental reminders (for extended assignments) and to create deadline reminders for all due dates, and -- I would like to highly encourage all of my students to have at least one “classroom buddy” that can help them keep up with the reading/studying/general assignments.*

**Please maintain & monitor the “health” of your computer.  
You will need it in class for the bulk of our coursework.**

---

### ***AP Psychology: Course Content (by unit)***

Each unit topic is listed, along with the predicted percentage for how each category will be represented on the AP Psychology exam. (\*percentages provided by Collegeboard, <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-psychology/course>)

### **CollegeBoard: Content Units & Exam Weighting:**

**Unit 1: Scientific Foundations of Psychology 10–14%**

**Unit 2: Biological Bases of Behavior 8–10%**

**Unit 3: Sensation and Perception 6–8%**

**Unit 4: Learning 7–9%**

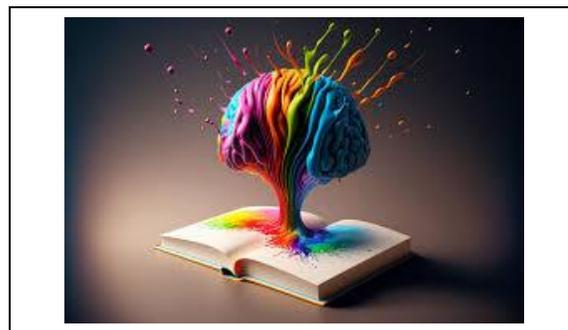
**Unit 5: Cognitive Psychology 13–17%**

**Unit 6: Developmental Psychology 7–9%**

**Unit 7: Motivation, Emotion, and Personality 11–15%**

**Unit 8: Clinical Psychology 12–16%**

**Unit 9: Social Psychology 8–10%**



---

***Focus of AP PSYCHOLOGY Course Skills:*** (provided by CollegeBoard, <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-psychology/course>)

*The AP Psychology framework included in the course and exam description outlines distinct skills that students should practice throughout the year—skills that will help them learn to think and act like psychologists.*

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Exam Weighting (Multiple-Choice Section)</b>
1. Concept Understanding	Define, explain, and apply concepts, behavior, theories, and perspectives.	75%–80%
2. Data Analysis	Analyze and interpret quantitative data.	8%–12%
3. Scientific Investigation	Analyze psychological research studies.	12%–16%

---

**Course Grading:** Students will be evaluated on their mastery and competence in a myriad of ways. And, to best support the flexibility that is needed for this year’s unprecedented uncertainties, the course will only have two grading categories.

- **60% Major Grades:** presentations (individual & group), multiple-choice tests, major research papers or writing projects, class notebook checks, etc.
- **40% Minor Grades:** AP MC quizzes (via CollegeBoard classroom), CANVAS activities and assignments, \*optional\* vocab activities (via Quizlet), personal inventories/surveys, lab activities, reflection activities, DOLs, etc.

In order for your assignments to retain the potential to receive full credit, they must be submitted prior to **date and time** of the assigned deadline.

**Campus Late Work Policy:** All late work must be submitted within 1 school day of the assigned due date (& time) in order to receive a maximum grade of 70. (Assignments that are beyond this 1-day window, will receive a zero.)

**Campus Retake Policy:** 2 retakes are available on the major tests, per cycle.

**Semester Final Exams:** At the end of each semester, a final exam will be given consisting of multiple-choice questions.

**2024 AP Psychology Exam Date:**

The AP Exam will be on **THURSDAY, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at noon.**

---

\* THIS CLASSROOM IS A SAFE SPACE AND RESPECT MUST BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES\*

- **~ PROTECTING OUR CLASSROOM CULTURE ~** Due to the candid discussions that we will be having in class, you are expected to be fully **considerate** and **respectful** of your peers' opinions – at all times. Aspects of Psychology often touch each family differently, so students are expected to be **open-minded and considerate** of the varying perspectives that might arise as we discuss all of the facets that we examine.
- Students are always highly encouraged to learn from the perspectives of others.
- And, above all, students will maintain a positive and supportive classroom for all students so that they may feel safe & comfortable in sharing their views. **No bullying or belittling will be tolerated.** Students are expected to be mature enough to uplift each other and exercise empathy to understand multiple perspectives.
- You have all read & acknowledged the Student Honor Code and you have also agreed to uphold the Academic Honor Code. Students are expected to embody a positive and supportive role while they are in my classroom.
- Any violations of our classroom trust will immediately be referred to the administration.

---

**ADDITIONALLY : ALL STUDENT WORK SUBMITTED MUST BE ORIGINAL AND MUST BE YOUR OWN!**  
**Academic Honesty is expected at all times.**

In accordance with our campus policy, **all cases of academic dishonesty** will be reported & receive a zero and an office referral.

***\* RE: Originality vs. Plagiarism \****

Any assignment that demonstrates **academic dishonesty** (which is the giving or receiving of any unauthorized aid, both student-to-student, using AI generated content, or through the use of other technological means) or **plagiarism** (which is the failure to properly use, document, or cite another individual's ideas or work) will immediately receive a conference, a disciplinary referral to the Vice-Principal, and a zero in the gradebook.

***Be advised: any documented instances of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will also be reported to the grade-level team and any honors societies that you belong to on campus.***

***\* All written work for this course must be original to the student that is submitting it for credit.\****

Absolutely no unapproved collaborations or inaccurate (or insufficient) efforts to apply proper source citations from any quoted/paraphrased materials will be accepted or excused. All student submissions must meet the CVHS student handbook's criteria for plagiarism.

**For additional clarification and reference:**

- o Students may refer to <http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism/> --OR-- [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/using\\_research/avoiding\\_plagiarism/is\\_it\\_plagiarism.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/avoiding_plagiarism/is_it_plagiarism.html)
- o **OR**, students may (& should) ask me for any assignment-specific clarifications that might be needed.
- → **NOTE: the failure to ask for clarification on an assignment is not a valid justification for the use of academic dishonesty or plagiarism.**



**Ms. Kris Casperson**  
Carnegie Vanguard High School  
1501 Taft St.  
Houston, TX. 77019  
[acaspers@houstonisd.org](mailto:acaspers@houstonisd.org)

---

**Teacher's Note:** I am so excited to have this course, and I hope that you are too! This year will be a lot of work, but I hope that it will become a labor of love for you. I am also hoping that – no matter what you plan to study in college – this course broadens your personal perspective and helps you learn about the amazing power of the human mind. Thank you for joining me on this journey!

*~ Ms. Casperson*

---