

Brief Description of Course

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 animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. This course is designed to present an experience equivalent to that obtained in an undergraduate introductory psychology course. In doing so, the students will complete material that most colleges require in order to take upper level courses in psychology. The students will also be prepared for the Advanced Placement examination in Psychology administered in May by the College Board.

Resources for Teaching Psychology

1. Text: David Myers, *Psychology For AP* (New York: Worth, 2011), with support materials; study guide, resource manual and test bank. ISBN-13: 1-4292-4436-7
2. Supplemental Reading: Roger Hock, *Forty Studies that Changed Psychology - Fifth Edition* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall 2005) ISBN 0-13-114729-3
3. APA Monitor in Psychology, selected current readings

Unit Information

Unit Name or Timeframe:

History:

2-4% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

The History and Scope of Psychology

1. Functionalism and Structuralism
2. How psychology has changed the study of human and animal behavior
3. Significant figures in the evolution of psychology as a science

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format.

Sample Quiz Question:

Who would be most likely to agree with this statement? "Psychology is the science of mental life"

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| A. Wilhelm Wundt | c. Ivan Pavlov |
| B. John Watson | d. Virtually an American psychologist during the 1960's |

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials.

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Methods and Approaches:

6-8% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

Introduction to Methods and Approaches used in Psychology

1. Modern approaches include Psychodynamic, Behaviorist, Cognitive, Humanistic, Evolutionary, Neuroscience and Sociocultural.
2. Nature of scientific inquiry including sources of bias and error and comparison of correlation studies with experimental studies in which variables are controlled
3. Statistics: central tendency, variance, significance, correlation
4. Ethics in research: Human participants, animal subjects

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes.

Sample Test Question:

Correlation research is most useful for purposes of:

- A. explanation c. control
B. prediction d. replication

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials.

They are scheduled one per unit:

Free Response for Methods and Approaches Unit from 2003 AP Psychology Exam:

Statistics are often used to describe and interpret the results of intelligence testing.

Describe three measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode)

Describe a skewed Distribution

Relate the three measures of central tendency to a normal distribution

Relate the three measures of central tendency to a positively skewed distribution

An intelligence test for which the scores are normally distributed has a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. Use this information to describe how the scores are distributed.

In two normal distributions, the means are 100 for group I and 115 for group II. Can an individual in group 1 have a higher score than the mean score for group II? Explain.

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Biological Bases of Behavior

8-10% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

1. The Neuron: Neural and synaptic transmission
2. Neural and hormonal systems
3. Psychopharmacology and drug abuse
4. The Brain: Neuroanatomy, brain development and aging, hemispheric specialization, genetics and heredity, research, evolution, plasticity, and neurotransmitters, brain imaging techniques and application
5. The Endocrine System
6. The Nervous System

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format.

Sample Quiz Question:

Damage to the _____ will usually cause a person to lose the ability to comprehend language.

- a. The angular gyrus c. Wernicke's area
b. Broca's area d. frontal lobe association areas

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking

resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,
They are scheduled one per unit

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected reading: "The split brain in man", M.S. Gazzaniga from *Forty Studies in Psychology*

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Sensation and perception

7-9% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

The 5 senses:

1. Receiving and translating signals to the brain for processing
2. The effect each of the senses has on behavior

Sensation vs. perception

1. Perceptual organization and interpretation
2. Brain processing of sensory signals: accurate vs. inaccurate

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes

Sample Test Question:

In the absence of perceptual constancy

- a. Objects would appear to change size as their distance from us changed
- b. Depth perception would be based exclusively on monocular cues.
- c. Depth perception would be based exclusively on binocular clues.
- d. Depth perception would be impossible.

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,

They are scheduled one per unit

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit. Sample Selected Reading: "Some observations regarding the experiences and behavior of the BaMbuti Pygmies", C.M. Turnbull from *Forty Studies in Psychology*

Unit Name or Timeframe:

States of Consciousness

2-4% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

States of Consciousness: waking, sleeping, hypnosis, altered states

Waking and Sleeping Rhythms

1. The sleep cycle
2. Role of REM and NREM in behavior
3. Lack of sleep and behavior

Hypnosis

1. Real or psychological phenomenon
2. Hypnosis and pain

Drugs and Consciousness

1. Psychoactive drugs and the effect on behavior
2. Dependence and addiction
3. Influences on drug use: biological, psychological and social-cultural

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format.

Sample Quiz Question

Sleep spindles predominate during which stage of sleep?

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| a. Stage 2 | c. Stage 4 |
| B. Stage 3 | d. REM sleep |

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials, they are scheduled one per unit.

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected Reading: "Hypnotic Behavior", N.P.Spanos, from *Forty Studies in Psychology*

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Learning

7-9% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

Classical Conditioning

1. Pavlov, Watson, applications
2. Cognitive processes
3. Biological predisposition

Operant Conditioning

1. Thorndike, Skinner
2. Behavior modification

Comparing and Contrasting Classical and Operant Conditioning

Observational Learning

1. Bandura
2. Applications of observational learning

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes.

Sample Test Question:

Operant conditioning is to _____ as classical conditioning is to _____.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| a. Pavlov; Watson | c. Pavlov; Skinner |
| b. Skinner; Bandura | d. Skinner; Pavlov |

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials, They are scheduled one per unit

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected Reading: "Conditioned reflexes." I.P.Pavlov from *Forty Studies in Psychology*

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Memory and Cognition

8-10% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

Memory

1. STM. LTM. encoding, storage and retrieval
2. memory construction, enhancement and improvement

Cognition

1. problem solving and heuristics
- 2 language acquisition: Skinner and Chomsky
- 3 .language structure and thought

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format.

Sample Quiz Question:

Repression is an example of:

- a. encoding failure c. motivated forgetting
- b. memory decay d. all of the above

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,

They are scheduled one per unit

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected Reading: "Leading questions and the eyewitness report" E.F. Loftus, from *Forty Studies in Psychology*

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Intelligence, Psychological Testing and Individual Differences

5-7% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

Intelligence and Psychological Testing

1. defining intelligence, history of intelligence and aptitude testing
2. nature-nurture issues: genetic and environmental issues
3. origins of intelligence testing: Binet and Terman
4. multiple intelligences and emotional intelligence

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes.

Sample Test Question:

Binet and Terman would have been most likely to disagree about the:

- a. extent to which intelligence is determined by heredity
- b. need to standardize intelligence tests
- c. possibility of predicting people's academic success from intelligence test scores
- d. extent to which individuals differ in their intellectual abilities

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,

They are scheduled one per unit

Sample Free Response:

Apply Knowledge of psychological research in answering the following questions about intelligence scores:

Explain why norms for standardized intelligence tests are periodically updated

Describe how to determine whether an intelligence test is biased.

Related Readings:

These are selected from the Forty Studies in Psychology by Hock and from the APA Monitor in Psychology periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Motivation and Emotion

7-9% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

Introduction to Motivation

1. Instincts, drives, arousal
2. Maslow's hierarchy
3. hunger and eating disorders
4. Achievement motivation

Sexuality

1. Sexual motivation
2. Physiology and psychology of sexuality
3. Sexual orientation

Introduction to Emotion

1. Theories: James-Lange, Cannon-Bard, And And And Schacter-Singer

Expressed Emotion

Physiology of Emotion: Fear, Anger, Happiness

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format.

Sample Quiz Question:

Electrical stimulation of which brain region can produce terror or rage in cats?

- a. limbic system
- b. hypothalamus
- c. cortex
- d. cerebellum

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,
They are scheduled one per unit

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected Reading: "Human Sexual Response", Masters & Johnson, From *Forty Studies that Changed Psychology*

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Developmental Psychology

7-9% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

Developmental Psychology

1. Physical development of infants of children from conception to puberty
2. Cognitive development of infants and children
3. Influential theories: Piaget (cognitive development), Kohlberg (moral development), Freud (psychosocial development)
4. Methodology: longitudinal and cross-sectional studies
5. Nature vs. Nurture: genetics, heredity, evolution and environment
6. Adolescence: physical, cognitive, social development and reasoning ability
7. Adulthood: physical, cognitive and social development and aging

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes.

Sample Test Question:

To Piaget, cognitive development involves

- a. stages that are characterized by fundamentally different thought processes
- b. increases in the quantity, but not the quality of knowledge with age
- c. passive reception of environmental stimuli
- d. age-related changes in attention and memory

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking

resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,
They are scheduled one per unit.

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected Reading: "The development of object concept: The construction of reality in the child", Jean Piaget from *Forty Studies that Changed Psychology*

Sample selected reading: "That teenage feeling", E.Packard. *APA Monitor on Psychology*; April 2007

Unit Name or Timeframe:

Personality

6-8% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught:

1. Psychodynamic Perspective: Freud, Adler, Jung
2. Trait Perspective: Allport and assessment (MMPI, Myers-Briggs), factor-analysis, five-factor model
3. Humanistic Perspective: Maslow and Rogers
4. Social-Cognitive Perspective: Bandura

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format...

Sample Quiz Question:

Which perspective on personality emphasizes the interaction between the individual and the environment in shaping personality?

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| a. psychoanalytic | c. humanistic |
| b. trait | d. social-cognitive |

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,
They are scheduled one per unit

Related Readings:

These are selected from the Forty Studies in Psychology by Hock and from the APA Monitor in Psychology periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected Reading: "Association of specific overt behavior pattern with blood and cardiovascular findings" M. Friedman & R.H Rosenman, from *Forty Studies that Changed Psychology*

Unit Name or Timeframe

Psychological Disorders (Abnormal Psychology)
7-9% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught

1. Understanding and defining psychological disorders
-The medical model, the bio-physiological approach
2. Classifying and Labeling Disorders-DSM-IV-TR
4. Categories of Disorders: Anxiety disorders, dissociative disorders, personality disorders, mood disorders, schizophrenia

Major Assignments and/or Assessments

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes.

Sample Test Question

Julia's psychologist believes that Julia's fear of heights can be traced to a conditioned fear she developed after falling from a ladder. This explanation reflects a _____ perspective

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| a. medical | c. social -cognitive |
| b. psychoanalytic | d. learning |

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,

They are scheduled one per unit

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected Reading: "On being sane in insane places" D.L. Rosenhan, from *Forty Studies in Psychology*

Unit Name or Time Frame

Treatment of Psychological Disorders
5-7% of AP Exam

Content and/or Skills Taught

1. Major approaches to psychotherapy-psychoanalysis, humanistic, behaviorist, group, pharmacological and biomedical therapies
2. Evaluating therapies
 - Effectiveness of therapy
 - Culture and values in psychotherapy

Major Assessments and /or Assignments

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format.

Sample Quiz Question:

Antidepressant drugs are believed to work by affecting serotonin or:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| a. dopamine | c. norepinephrine |
| c. lithium | d. acetylcholine |

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,
They are scheduled one per unit.

Sample Free Response Question from the 2001 AP Exam:

Discuss the cause of anxiety from each of the following perspectives.

Behavioral, Psychoanalytic/psychodynamic, biological and cognitive

Discuss a specific treatment technique for reducing anxiety used by professionals representing EACH of the four perspectives

Related Readings:

These are selected from the Forty Studies in Psychology by Hock and from the APA Monitor in Psychology periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit for credit.

Sample Selected Reading: "Empty bottles: Easing clients of meds-what to know about discontinuation of psychotropic medications" L. Meyers. *APA Monitor on Psychology*. March 2007

Unit Name or Time Frame

Social Psychology

7-9% of Exam

Content or Skills Taught

1. Attitudes and behavior

-Attribution theory

-Cognitive dissonance

2. Social Influence

-Conformity and obedience: Asch and Milgram studies

-Facilitation, social loafing and deindividuation

3. Antisocial relations

-Prejudice, aggression and conflict

4. Prosocial relations

-Attraction and altruism

Major assessments/and or assignments

Quizzes:

These are scheduled once per unit and are multiple-choice in format

Tests:

These are modeled on the AP exam with 50 multiple choice questions to be answered in 40 minutes.

Sample Test Question:

Which of the following is most likely to promote groupthink?

- a. The group leader fails to take a firm stance on an issue
- b. A minority faction holds to its position
- c. The group consults with various experts
- d. Group polarization is evident

Essays:

These are developed from free-response AP questions and Critical Thinking resources provided with the text and supplemental materials,

They are scheduled one per unit

Related Readings:

These are selected from the *Forty Studies in Psychology* by Hock and from the *APA Monitor in Psychology* periodical. One to three readings per unit are assigned. Students prepare a summary/analysis for each and submit.

Sample Selected Reading: "Behavioral Study of obedience" S. Milgram, from *Forty Studies That Changed Psychology*

Alternate Approaches

Methods and approaches:

Students develop an experiment involving human observation. For example they go to our cafeteria and observe rude behaviors and do a comparison of genders and ages. This provides data for statistical analysis along with an opportunity for discussion of ethical concerns of humans in research studies.

Biological Basis of Behavior:

Students design a 3-dimensional model of a neuron or brain. This design is color coded and labeled

States of Consciousness

Students complete a sleep journal over the course of one week and two weekends. They record hours of sleep, time of day sleep occurred, dreams remembered and level of alertness experienced the next day. This journal assignment precedes the discussion on REM sleep and effects of sleep on behavior and is used as a basis for further understanding.