

Advanced Placement Psychology Course Guidelines

Mr. Rader- Room 105

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Welcome to AP Psychology! This advanced course offers an in-depth exploration of human behavior and mental processes through the lens of scientific inquiry. We'll delve into the contributions of history's most influential psychologists and examine groundbreaking research, applying theories and concepts to gain insights into ourselves and the world around us. Covering topics from biological bases of behavior to social psychology, you will engage with the scientific method and embrace an ethical approach to research. Our goal is to develop your skills in critical thinking and mature academic discourse, unraveling the complexities of the mind. This course is designed to be equivalent to an introductory college psychology course, providing the opportunity to earn college credit while building a strong foundation in psychology. I look forward to guiding you on this academic journey and watching you reach new heights!

Content Outline:

These are the major content areas covered by the AP Psychology Exam, as well as the approximate percentages of the multiple-choice section that are devoted to each area:

Content Area	Percentage Goals for Exam Content Area
Unit 0: Introduction to Psychological Science Practices -----	Evenly Split
Unit 1: Biological Bases of Behavior -----	15-25%
Unit 2: Cognition -----	15-25%
Unit 3: Development and Learning -----	15-25%
Unit 4: Social Psychology and Personality -----	15-25%
Unit 5: Mental and Physical Health -----	15-25%

Resources:

Textbook: Myers, David G. *Psychology for the AP Course*, 4th Edition. New York: Worth Publishers, 2024.

AP Classroom: Be sure to log in to your College Board account and ensure you are on the AP Psychology roster.

Required Supplies:

- Binder for Reading/Lecture Notes
- It is *recommended* **but not required** to get one of the following:
 - *Barron's AP Psychology Premium*, 2024 Edition
 - *Barron's AP Psychology Flashcards*
 - *AP Psychology Crash Course*, 2024 Edition (Larry Krieger)
 - *Princeton Review AP Psychology Premium Prep*, 2025 Edition
 - *5 Steps to a 5: AP Psychology* 2024 Edition

Grading:

Your grade in this course will depend heavily on unit exams and quizzes. Homework assignments and in-class activities are intentionally chosen to deepen your understanding of topics and build on previous lessons. If I assign a specific reading for homework, you can generally expect a short reading check quiz the next day.

Tests = 60%

Vocabulary/Reading Quizzes = 25%

Class Participation (Discussion, In-class work, Out of Class Work, AP Classroom Progress Checks)= 15%

Test Correction Policy:

For each unit test, you may complete test corrections for the questions you missed. This will show me you have reviewed your mistakes. All corrections must be completed outside of normal class meeting times. You will have five school days from the date I return the tests to complete the corrections sheet. All corrections will be worth $\frac{1}{4}$ credit added back to your grade for each corrected question. Corrections must be completed in ink or pencil on the sheet provided. No typed corrections will be accepted. No corrections are allowed on vocabulary or reading quizzes.

AP Exam -- Tuesday, May 12 @ 12:00

Section I — Multiple Choice | 75 Questions | 90 minutes | 67% of Exam Score

You'll be asked to:

- Apply psychological perspectives, theories, concepts, and research findings.
- Evaluate qualitative and quantitative research methods and study designs.
- Evaluate representations of psychological concepts depicted in quantitative research (tables, graphs, charts, and diagrams) and described in qualitative research.

Section II — Free Response | 2 Questions | 70 minutes | 33% of Exam Score

In the free-response section, you'll respond to two questions with written answers. The first question will be the Article Analysis Question (AAQ), and the second question will be the Evidence-Based Question (EBQ). You'll be asked to:

- Apply psychological perspectives, theories, concepts, and research findings.
- Evaluate qualitative and quantitative research methods and study designs.
- Evaluate representations of psychological concepts depicted in quantitative research (tables, graphs, charts, and diagrams) and described in qualitative research.
- Develop and justify psychological arguments using evidence.

Classroom Expectations:

1. Be in your seat when the bell rings and come prepared (this means paper, pencil/pen, book, and Chromebook with charger in the classroom - not in your locker!).
2. Do not be late! If you are late you will receive a referral.
3. Never line up at the door before the bell rings. Major pet peeve of mine.
4. Be aware of your surroundings. I take the safety and security of my classroom very seriously. You will learn and know your role in the event of a fire, tornado, or ALICE emergency.
5. It is your responsibility to take the initiative if you are absent. You should check Google Classroom first and ask me any further questions after doing so. Per the code of conduct, you have one day for each day of an excused absence to make up work.
6. For the first semester, late work will be accepted for full credit until the assessment for the relevant section. Beginning in the second semester, late work will be accepted at half credit until the assessment for the relevant section. Late is defined as after 2:15 pm on the due date of the assignment if turned into the bin in class, or after 11:59 pm if turned in on Google Classroom (unless otherwise instructed). No work will be accepted after the unit assessment. Accommodations will be provided for those with pre-approved plans requiring extended time.
7. Step outside your comfort zone. Volunteer to contribute during discussions. Have an opinion and be prepared to support it.
8. Respect your learning. Respect each other. Respect me. I will treat you like an adult until you give me a reason not to. Respect is a must at all times. Any disrespect towards your peers, the school, or me will not be tolerated, ever.
9. Take responsibility for your actions! Integrity is one of the most important values as an adult. You are all adults now and I expect you to act as such. You should treat school as your full-time job. Be honest - if you messed up, admit it and we'll work through the issue. Lack of integrity will not be tolerated.
10. Take care of your textbook, put your name in it, and be accountable for it. These books cost \$159 and if you lose yours you will be required to purchase a new copy.
11. Electronics: Notes are expected to be taken with traditional pen or pencil on paper, and cell phones are not permitted in my classroom at any time in accordance with state law. If a phone is visible or being used, it will be collected until the end of the period, and repeated violations will result in administrative action. Unless specifically pre-approved, you may not keep your phone with you during class. Earbuds or headphones are not allowed at any time. Chromebooks will be used regularly, but only when directed by the teacher.

Attendance:

1. As required by law, attendance will be taken every day and every period.
2. If you are late to class, you need to let me know when you arrive. Obviously, I will likely see you come in, but you should still make a point to let me know you were late so I can update Infinite Campus attendance accordingly. You must have a pass in hand when you come to class. I will not admit you to class without a pass once the bell rings.
3. If you make the decision to cut class, I am required to inform the administration. You will be required to explain your absence.

4. If you plan to leave school early, you must get a “leave early” pass from the attendance office prior to class starting. I will not let you leave class to leave the school if you do not have this green pass.

Content Descriptions per the College Board: The course content outlined below is organized into commonly taught units of study that provide one possible sequence for the course. Your teacher may choose to organize the course content differently based on local priorities and preferences. **Disclaimer:** The course may be taught with more or less emphasis on the areas mentioned below, depending on the instructor's discretion and educational objectives.

Unit 0: An Introduction to Psychology Science Practices - You'll study the scientific methods and practices used in psychological research, emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and ethical considerations in the field.

Topics may include:

- The scientific attitude and critical thinking
- The need for psychological science
- The scientific method and description
- Correlation and experimentation
- Research design and ethics
- Statistical reasoning in everyday life

Unit 1: Biological Bases of Behavior - You'll study behaviors and mental processes from a biological perspective and explore the effects of the interaction between human biology and our environment.

Topics may include:

- The interaction of inherited traits, environment, and evolution in shaping behavior
- Structures and functions of nervous systems
- Neural firing and the influence of psychoactive substances
- The study of the brain, including its structures and functions
- Sleep
- Sensation and the senses

Unit 2: Cognition - You'll examine the complex nature of how memory, intelligence, and other mental processes impact human behavior.

Topics may include:

- Perception
- Biases and errors in thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving strategies
- The cognitive and physiological processes that make up memory
- Forgetting and typical memory errors
- Defining and measuring intelligence and achievement

Unit 3: Development and Learning - You'll study how physical and social changes over humans' lifespans can influence behavior and mental processes from a variety of perspectives and how learning works.

Topics may include:

- Research methods used in developmental psychology
- Physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development across the lifespan
- Gender and sexual orientation

Unit 4: Social Psychology and Personality - You'll study how the social experience influences behavior of individuals and groups and how personality is studied and develops.

Topics may include:

- Attribution theory and person perception
- Attitude formation and change
- The psychology of social situations
- Psychodynamic, humanistic, social cognitive, and trait theories of personality
- Motivation
- Emotion

Unit 5: Mental and Physical Health - You'll learn how psychologists promote mental and physical health and evaluate, study, and treat a range of psychological disorders.

Topics may include:

- An introduction to health and positive psychology
- Standards for diagnosing and approaches to explaining psychological disorders
- Neurodevelopmental and schizophrenic spectrum disorders
- Bipolar, depressive, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorders
- Dissociative and trauma- and stress-related disorders
- Eating disorders and personality disorders

- Historical developments in psychological treatment
- Modern treatment options and methods

AP Psychology Commitment: It is worth it!

Taking AP Psychology requires significant commitment, but the payoff is immense. While 70% of high school grads attend college, under 30% earn a degree. Why? Colleges agree students often lack preparation for academic rigor.

There is one proven way to get ready for college-level work: take challenging high school courses. Research shows students who've taken just two AP classes double their graduation odds! However, in the words of psychologist William James: "The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another." Hard work and dedication lead to true learning.

Key Questions to Consider moving forward with the course:

1. Why take this course? Are you eager to study psychology more deeply? Are you ready for the demands of a college-level class? Do you plan to take the AP Exam in May? If not, this may not be the right fit.
2. What are your priorities? Is academics high on the list? If not, this course may not align.
3. Can you devote 6-9 hours outside class weekly? College courses expect ~3 hours out-of-class per in-class hour. Since we meet daily, estimate 6-9 hours of studying/reading a week. If not feasible, this may not work.
4. Are you a strong reader? Reading and studying the text will be crucial. Research shows reading skill strongly predicts AP success. If reading is a challenge, know that extra time and effort will be essential.

Motivation and **study skills** matter more than innate talent.

With **determination** and **discipline**, I **WILL** help you thrive in this course!

Like most experiences, what you get out of this class will depend on what you put in. Invest time, effort, attention, and energy and I believe you will find it to be quite valuable as you continue your education. Whether you love the material or not, I hope you will appreciate the value of studying it and acquire useful skills in the process.

Join the Google Classroom!!!

(Check your email for an invite)

Find my Website

<https://sites.google.com/westg.org/mr-raders-class>

Join the AP Classroom

(Log into your collegeboard account)

Chris Rader

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AP Psychology Syllabus Contract

Parents/Guardians and Students:

Please review this syllabus together. If you have any questions now or later, contact me sooner rather than later. I can respond fastest to emails, but you can also call and leave a voicemail. If you want to join Google Classroom as a guardian, email me.

Please sign below indicating you have read and understand the syllabus and agree to the following:

- I/my student understand expectations for this course as they pertain to workload, rules, procedures, and behavior.
- I/my student understand the West Geauga High School Cell Phone Policy and will abide by the policy as described in this syllabus.
- I/my student understand this is a mature, college-level course covering sensitive topics including mental illness, psychoactive drugs, gender, neurodevelopmental disorders, trauma, abuse, criminal psychology, research ethics, and human sexuality.
- I/my student further understand that should I have concerns about any of the topics being discussed, I will speak directly to my teacher regarding my concerns when they arise.
- I/my student agree to not openly discuss course materials, test/quiz questions, projects, or experiments with other students until all students have experienced those items.
- I/my student agree to comply with West Geauga High School attendance and plagiarism policies, knowing that violation of said policies will result in disciplinary action and potential loss of credit, depending on the offense.
- I/my student understand that I will be responsible for completing all coursework preparing me for the AP Psychology Exam on **May 12, 2026.**

Parent/Guardian name: (printed): _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Phone: _____ Email: _____

Student name: (printed): _____

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

****Please remove this last page from the syllabus and return to Mr. Rader no later than 28 August 2025****