Course Description
The purpose of AP Psychology is to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology.
Scroll down for the rest of the syllabus.
Course Objectives
1. Students will prepare to do acceptable work on the AP Psychology Examination.
2. Students will study the major core concepts and theories of psychology. They will be able to define key terms and use them in their everyday vocabulary.
3. Students will learn the basic skills of psychological research and be able to apply psychological concepts to their own lives.
4. Students will develop critical thinking skills.
5. Students will develop essay writing skills that will satisfy the writing requirements for the AP exam.
6. Students will write an APA style research paper using APA guidelines.

Textbook

Teacher Resources

Grading
Students will be taking an AP format exam for each chapter of the text. The test will include 50 multiple choice questions and one free response question. Each test is valued at 150 points. Students will also earn grades for chapter outlines and note cards, each valued at 20 points. These activities will occur in each chapter. Each section will also include a paper or project that will relate to the subject, worth 40 points. This includes watching a video and writing an essay, research papers and compare/contrast assignments. Students will be taking an AP Psychology released exam as their final. Formative assessments (assignments, homework…etc) will be 40% of the student’s grade. Summative assessments (tests and major projects) will be 60%.
Students will have one opportunity per 9 weeks to retake a test in which they did not score an A the first time. The re-take can be scheduled ONLY after remediation has occurred with the teacher. Remediation could include extra work and assignments related to the concepts they are trying to master.

**IMPORTANT**
Students who take an Advanced Placement course are required to sit for the A.P. Exam in May for that course. If for any reason you do not take the A.P. Exam, you will be assessed a charge from DeLand High School and the name of your course will be changed to an “honors” or “regular” designation rather than “A.P.” This will also result in a change of weighting for the course from a 5.0 to either a 4.5 or a 4.0, which could affect your class rank and weighted grade point average.

Course Schedule –
Unit I: History, Approaches and Research Methods

A. Logic, Philosophy, and History of Science
B. Approaches/Perspectives
C. Experimental, Correlation, and Clinical Research
D. Statistics
E. Research Methods and Ethics

Objectives

• Define psychology and trace its historical development.
• Compare and contrast the psychological perspectives.
• Identify basic and applied research subfields of psychology.
• Identify basic elements of an experiment (variables, groups, sampling, population, etc.).
• Compare and contrast research methods (case, survey, naturalistic observation).
• Explain correlational studies.
• Describe the three measures of central tendency and measures of variation.
• Discuss the ethics of animal and human research.

Activities and Assessment
- Read – Prologue – The Story of Psychology and chapter 1 – Thinking Critically with Psychological Science
- Fact Falsehood - Prologue and chapter 1
- Lecture - Prologue and chapter 1
- Note cards and Outline
- Worksheet - Scientific Method
- Test Prologue and chapter 1

Unit II: Biological Basis of Behavior

A. Physiological Techniques (e.g., imagining, surgical)
B. Neuroanatomy
C. Functional Organization of Nervous System
D. Neural Transmission
E. Endocrine System
F. Genetics

Objectives

• Describe the structure of a neuron and explain neural impulses.
• Describe neuron communication and discuss the impact of neurotransmitters.
• Classify and explain major divisions of the nervous system.
• Describe the functions of the brain structures (thalamus, cerebellum, limbic system, etc.).
• Identify the four lobes of the cerebral cortex and their functions.
• Discuss the association areas.
• Explain the split-brain studies.
• Describe the nature of the endocrine system and its interaction with the nervous system.

Activities and Assessment
- Read - chapter 2 – Neuroscience and Behavior
Objectives
• Discuss the course of prenatal development.
• Illustrate development changes in physical, social, and cognitive areas.
• Discuss the effect of body contact, familiarity, and responsive parenting on attachments.
• Describe the benefits of a secure attachment and the impact of parental neglect and separation as well as day care on childhood development.
• Describe the theories of Piaget, Erikson, and Kohlberg.
• Describe the early development of a self-concept.
• Distinguish between longitudinal and cross-sectional studies.

Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 3 – The Nature and Nurture of Behavior and 4 – The Developing Person
- Fact Falsehood – chapter 3 and 4
- Lecture – chapter 3 and 4
- Note cards and Outline
- Video – The Miracle of Life
- Essay on Fetal development
- Self Analysis using Piaget and Kohlberg
- Test Chapter 3 and 4

Unit IV: States of Consciousness
A. Sleep and Dreaming
B. Hypnosis
C. Psychoactive Drug Effects

Objectives
• Describe the cyclical nature and possible functions of sleep.
• Identify the major sleep disorders.
• Discuss the content and possible functions of dreams.
• Discuss hypnosis, noting the behavior of hypnotized people and claims regarding its uses.
• Discuss the nature of drug dependence.
• Chart names and effects of depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogenic drugs.
• Compare differences between NREM and REM.
• Describe the physiological and psychological effects of depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens.

Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 7 – States of Consciousness
- Fact Falsehood – chapter 7
- Lecture – chapter 7
- Note cards and Outline
- Video Hypnosis
- Quiz – Video
- Test Chapter 7

Unit V: Sensation & Perception
A. Thresholds
B. Sensory Mechanisms
C. Sensory Adaptation
D. Attention
E. Perceptual Processes

Objectives
• Contrast the processes of sensation and perception.
• Distinguish between absolute and difference thresholds.
• Label a diagram of the parts of the eye and ear.
• Describe the operation of the sensory systems (five senses).
• Explain the Young-Helmholtz and opponent-process theories of color vision.
• Explain the place and frequency theories of pitch perception.
• Discuss Gestalt psychology’s contribution to our understanding of perception.
• Discuss research on depth perception and cues.

Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 5 – Sensation and chapter 6 – Perception
- Fact Falsehood chapter 5 and 6
- Lecture – chapter 5 and 6
- Note cards and Outline
- Create drawings using all monocular cues and specific items
- Test Chapter 5 and 6

Unit VI: Learning
A. Classical Conditioning
B. Operant Conditioning
C. Cognitive Processes in Learning
D. Biological Factors
E. Social Learning (Observational Learning)

Objectives
- Describe the process of classical conditioning (Pavlov’s experiments).
- Explain the processes of acquisition, extinction, spontaneous recovery, generalization, and discrimination.
- Describe the process of operant conditioning, including the procedure of shaping, as demonstrated by Skinner’s experiments.
- Identify the different types of reinforcers and describe the schedules of reinforcement.
- Discuss the importance of cognitive processes and biological predispositions in conditioning.
- Discuss the effects of punishment on behavior.
- Describe the process of observational learning (Bandura’s experiments).

Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 8 – Learning
- Fact Falsehood chapter 8
- Lecture – chapter 8
- Note cards and Outline
- Group Activity – Create 5 original examples of classical conditioning with N, UCS, UCR, CS, CR
- Test Chapter 8

Unit VII: Memory
A. Memory

Objectives
- Describe memory in terms of information processing, and distinguish among sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory.
- Distinguish between automatic and effortful processing.
- Explain the encoding process (including imagery, organization, etc.).
- Describe the capacity and duration of long-term memory.
- Distinguish between implicit and explicit memory.
- Describe the importance of retrieval cues.
- Discuss the effects of interference and motivated forgetting on retrieval.
- Describe the evidence for the constructive nature of memory.

Activities and Assessment
- Read – Chapter 9 - Memory
- Fact Falsehood chapter 9
- Lecture – Chapter 9
- Note cards and Outline
- Video – Components of Memory
- Quiz on Memory Video
Unit VIII: Thinking and Language
   A. Language
   B. Thinking
   C. Problem Solving and Creativity

Objectives
   - Describe the nature of concepts and the role of prototypes in concept formation.
   - Discuss how we use trial and error, algorithms, heuristics, and insight to solve problems.
   - Explain how the representativeness and availability heuristics influence our judgments.
   - Describe the structure of language (phonemes, morphemes, grammar).
   - Identify language developmental stages (babbling, one word, etc.).
   - Explain how the nature-nurture debate is illustrated in the theories of language development.
   - Discuss Whorf’s linguistic relativity hypothesis.
   - Describe the research on animal cognition and communication.

Activities and Assessment
   - Read – Chapter 10 – Thinking and Language
   - Fact Falsehood chapter 10
   - Lecture - chapter 10
   - Note cards and Outline
   - Video – Genie the Wild Child
   - Discussion on Feral Children
   - Essay on Nature and Nurture of Language Acquisition
   - Test Chapter 10

Unit IX: Motivation and Emotion
   A. Biological Bases
   B. Theories of Motivation
   C. Hunger, Thirst, Sex, and Pain
   D. Social Motives
   E. Theories of Emotion
   F. Stress and Health

Objectives
   - Define motivation and identify motivational theories.
   - Describe the physiological determinants of hunger.
   - Discuss psychological and cultural influences on hunger.
   - Define achievement motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
   - Identify the three theories of emotion (James-Lange, Cannon-Bard, Schachter’s Two-Factor Theory).
   - Describe the physiological changes that occur during emotional arousal.
   - Discuss the catharsis hypothesis.
   - Describe the biological response to stress.
Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 12 – Motivation and Work and chapter 13 – Emotion
- Fact Falsehood – chapter 12 and 13
- Lecture – chapter 12 and 13
- Note cards and Outline
- Video – In the Driver’s Seat: Motivation and Video – Emotions
- Self analysis on personal motivating forces
- Test Chapter 12 and 13

Unit X: Testing and Individual Differences - Intelligence
A. Standardization and Norms
B. Reliability and Validity
C. Types of Tests
D. Ethics and Standards in Testing
E. Intelligence
F. Heredity/Environment and Intelligence
G. Human Diversity

Objectives
• Trace the origins of intelligence testing.
• Describe the nature of intelligence.
• Identify the factors associated with creativity.
• Distinguish between aptitude and achievement tests.
• Describe test standardization.
• Distinguish between the reliability and validity of intelligence tests.
• Describe the two extremes of the normal distribution of intelligence.
• Discuss evidence for both genetic and environmental influences on intelligence.
• Discuss whether intelligence tests are culturally biased.

Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 11 – Intelligence
- Fact Falsehood - chapter 11
- Lecture – chapter 11
- Note cards and Outline
- Group work - Create biased free IQ questions
- Test Chapter 11

Unit XI: Personality
A. Personality Theories and Approaches
B. Assessment Techniques
C. Self-concept/Self-esteem
D. Growth and Adjustment

Objectives
• Describe personality structure in terms of the interactions of the id, ego, and superego.
• Explain how defense mechanisms protect the individual from anxiety.
• Describe the contributions of the neo-Freudians.
• Explain how personality inventories are used to assess traits.
• Describe the humanistic perspective on personality in terms of Maslow’s focus on self-actualization and Rogers’ emphasis on people’s potential for growth.
• Describe the impact of individualism and collectivism on self-identity.
• Describe the social-cognitive perspective on personality.
• Discuss the consequences of personal control, learned helplessness, and optimism.

Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 15 – Personality
- Fact Falsehood – chapter 15
- Lecture – chapter 15
- Note cards and Outline
- Self Analysis using psychological perspectives in explaining personality
- Test Chapter 15

Unit XII: Abnormal Psychology
A. Definitions of Abnormality
B. Theories of Psychopathology
C. Diagnosis of Psychopathology
D. Anxiety Disorders
E. Somatoform Disorders
F. Mood Disorders
G. Schizophrenic Disorders
H. Personality Disorders
I. Dissociative Disorders

Objectives
• Identify the criteria for judging whether behavior is psychologically disordered.
• Describe the medical model of psychological disorders.
• Describe the aims of DSM-IV, and discuss the potential dangers of diagnostic labels.
• Describe the symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder.
• Describe and explain the development of somatoform and mood disorders.
• Describe the various symptoms and types of schizophrenia.
• Describe the characteristics and possible causes of dissociative disorders.

Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 16 – Psychological Disorders
- Fact Falsehood – chapter 16
- Lecture – chapter 16
- Note cards and Outline
- Video – Going to Extremes: Mood Disorders and Schizophrenia
- Quiz on Video
Unit XIII: Treatment of Psychological Disorders
   A. Treatment Approaches
   B. Modes of Therapy (e.g., individual, group)
   C. Community and Preventive Approaches

Objectives
   • Discuss the aims and methods of psychoanalysis.
   • Identify the basic characteristics of the humanistic therapies.
   • Identify the basic assumptions of behavior therapy.
   • Describe the assumptions and goals of the cognitive therapies.
   • Discuss the benefits of group therapy and family therapy.
   • Discuss the findings regarding the effectiveness of the psychotherapies.
   • Discuss the role of values and cultural differences in the therapeutic process.
   • Identify the common forms of drug therapy and the use of electroconvulsive therapy.

Activities and Assessment
   - Read – chapter 17 – Therapy
   - Fact Falsehood chapter 17
   - Lecture – chapter 17
   - Note cards and Outline
   - Skits – On different therapies
   - Test Chapter 17

Unit XIV: Social Psychology
   A. Group Dynamics
   B. Attribution Process
   C. Interpersonal Perception
   D. Conformity, Compliance, Obedience
   E. Attitudes and Attitude Change
   F. Organizational Behavior
   G. Aggression/Antisocial Behavior

Objectives
   • Describe the importance of attribution in social behavior.
   • Explain the effect of role-playing on attitudes in terms of cognitive dissonance theory.
   • Discuss the results of Asch’s experiment on conformity.
   • Describe Milgram’s controversial experiments on obedience.
   • Discuss how group interaction can facilitate group polarization and groupthink.
   • Describe the social, emotional, and cognitive factors that contribute to the persistence of cultural, ethnic, and gender prejudice and discrimination.
   • Discuss the issues related to aggression and attraction.
   • Explain altruistic behavior in terms of social exchange theory and social norms.
Activities and Assessment
- Read – chapter 18 – Social Psychology
- Fact Falsehood chapter 18
- Lecture – chapter 18
- Note cards and Outline
- Video – Power of the Situation Milgram’s and Zimbardo’s experiments
- Essay – Compare and Contrast the power of the situation had on the two experiments
- Test Chapter 18