**Welcome to AP Psychology (4445/4446)**

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# Course Content:

The major goals of this course are to better understand psychology, or the scientific study of mental processes and behavior. More importantly, to realize the power that such knowledge brings. To encourage an interest in psychology that will lead one to a better understanding of self and others. In doing so, one will become a better student and citizen, able to see people, behaviors, and disabilities/disorders in a new light and thus reframe who one is. This knowledge will hopefully enable the learner the opportunity to live a fuller life and better engage friends, family, coworkers, classmates, etc. Students can expect to develop these skills through a combination of class work, homework, independent study and group centered activities; in addition, to building on their organizational, reading, writing, discussion, presentation, and test taking skills. The course description, core ideas, and main objectives have been approved by the College Board® AP Psychology Audit Committee.

**Core Idea for Semester One:** *Our focus for this semester will be on Cognition, History and Approaches, Scientific Inquiry, Biopsychology, Sensation and Perception, States of Consciousness, Learning, Motivation & Emotion, and Stress & Health.*

*By the end of the semester, students will be able (but not limited) to:*

1. Evaluate and provide examples of how we can remember as well as how we can improve memory *(Cognition ~ Memory)*
2. Provide an overview of the role of language, problem-solving skills, creativity, multilingualism, and intelligence testing as primary interests of researchers *(Cognition ~ Thinking and Language)*
3. List, describe, and define major psychological theories, theorists, principles, and concepts; and use the terms in everyday vocabulary *(History and Approaches)*
4. Identify and give examples of representing statistical information in graphs and charts *(Research Methods)*
5. Describe and compare research methods commonly used in psychology, along with identifying the ethical and legal guidelines that given the work of psychologists and how they protect research participants and promote sound ethical standards *(Research Methods)*
6. List, describe, and locate the major structures of the brain, in addition to examining how the brain processes information, how neuroplasticity plays a role in brain adaptation, and how the body adapts to the demands of its environment *(Biological Bases of Psychology)*
7. Identify and distinguish how the brain makes meaning out of the physical sensations generated by the environment *(Sensation and Perception)*
8. List and describe the varying stages of awareness, including an examination of the sleep cycle, dreams, hypnosis, circadian rhythms, and the effects of psychoactive drugs *(States of Consciousness)*
9. List and describe how we make changes in our behavior through experience with the environment, exploring different kinds of learning, including classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning *(Learning)*
10. Evaluate and provide examples of biological and social factors that motivate behavior and biological and cultural factors that influence emotion *(Motivation and Emotion)*

**Core Idea:** *Our focus for this semester will be on Development, Personality, Testing & Individual Differences, Abnormal Behavior, Sociocultural Context, and the application of Psychological Science*

*By the end of the semester, students will be able (but not limited) to:*

1. Explain the behavior of organisms from conception to death and examine the processes that contribute to behavioral changes throughout life span, with a major emphasis on prenatal development, motor development, socialization, cognitive development, adolescence, and adulthood *(Developmental Psychology)*
2. Compare and contrast the major theories of how humans develop enduring patterns of behavior and personal characteristics that influence how others relate to them *(Personality)*
3. List and explain how psychologists measure and compare individual abilities and characteristics, along with examining issues related to test construction and fair use *(Testing and Individual Differences)*
4. Describe contemporary and historical conceptions of what constitutes psychological disorders, along with identifying the major diagnostic categories and their corresponding symptoms *(Abnormal Behavior)*
5. Recognize the use of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) published by the American Psychiatric Association as the primary reference for making diagnostic judgments, along with understanding the changes made to the most current edition of the DSM-5 *(Abnormal Behavior)*
6. Compare and contrast the empirically based treatments of psychological disorders, including a variety of treatment modalities based on various orientations in psychology *(Treatment of Abnormal Behavior)*
7. Explore how individuals relate to one another in social situations; and how social and cultural contexts influence behavior *(Social Psychology)*

**Overall:**

*By the end of the academic year, students will be able (but not limited) to:*

1. Apply topics learned in class to case studies, in addition to better understand themselves, others, and situations and events in their lives.
2. Develop critical thinking skills by becoming aware of the danger of blindly accepting or rejecting any psychological theory without a careful, objective evaluation.
3. Explore social and cultural diversity, individual differences and similarities using case studies, journal articles, and class discussions.
4. Prepare to pass the national College Board AP Psychology Exam on Monday, May 7, 2018.

**Text\*:** David Myers, *Psychology 9th Ed., in Modules* (New York, 2011), along with supplementary materials to connect with the newly release DSM-5.

\*Please note, students will be issued a textbook at the beginning of the academic year and will asked to bring it home, where it will be available for homework assignments, The textbook is heavy and there is no need to carry it in a backpack…Ms. Carey will have classroom copies for students to borrow. If a student does not return the book in May, then they will be expected to pay a replacement fee.

# Classroom Expectations:

*It is suggested that students bring the following materials to class each day:*

* Agenda book, calendar, or digital calendar (i.e.: phone app) ~ you will use it more this year than any other year!
* Pen or pencil ~ on quizzes and tests you will only be allowed to use blue or black inked pens or a pencil
* Highlighters and/or post-it notes~ if you like to use them when taking notes or reading articles
* Notebook or binder for the course ~ your choice
* Notes from assigned readings that are assigned prior to the class discussion
* Assignments due on the particular class day
* Folder for handouts ~ unless you are using a binder
* Cell phones ~ make sure they are silenced before class, however, there will be opportunities to use them in the class throughout the school year

**Please note:** Each student **EARNS** his or her own grade…grades are not **GIVEN** to students. Expectations will always be clearly outlined and discussed in advance of an assignment’s due date. The following is a breakdown of how you will be graded.

**Formative Classwork (20%):**

Formative classwork ranges from group activities, reflections, worksheets, FRQs, and quick writes. The activities completed may connect to the previous night’s homework or an extension to a topic being explored. Please take the initiative and stay focused as you complete in-class assignments.

**Formative Homework (20%):**

Formative homework ranges from reading articles, taking notes on a module from your textbook, completing a PsychSim5 assignment, watching a TED Talk or a Crash Course video, or a worksheet. The homework assigned acts as a preview for the most part for the next class period; however, sometimes it is used to review a more challenging concept from class.

* You will be given ample notice for assignments through a unit syllabus that will be distributed in class and posted on the course Google Classroom page. It is very important that you familiarize yourself with all parts of Google Classroom as it contains the information you need to be successful in this course.
* Students who are in school on the day that homework is due and will be missing the class, MUST stop by and turn in their work prior to leaving the school building or attending housemaster, guidance, nurse, mediation, TRIO/GEAR UP, or any other appointments which cause you to be absent from class; otherwise, the work will be considered late.
* If you are absent, please see me at the start of the next scheduled class to show me your completed work.
* It is tempting to “borrow” someone else’s work to “get it done.” Remember, you are only robbing yourself of an education. Homework will be checked on a regular basis, not necessarily in all AP classes on the same day, and not necessarily on a daily basis! You chose to be in this AP-level course; therefore, it is expected that you will choose to complete your homework on a daily basis.
* Please note: all missed homework MUST be made up, unless otherwise directed by Ms. Carey. You will not be able to just write it off as “not done” you will be expected to make up the work and show it to Ms. Carey.

**Formative Quizzes (20%):**

* Announced and unannounced quizzes may be given at any time during the year.
* Usually announced quizzes are based on the activities of the previous day or the assigned reading for the current day’s class; however, there may be times that we revisit material from previous classes.
* There may be opportunities to have a “second chance” on some quizzes; however, this will be written on the quiz if it is eligible for a “second chance.”
* Cheat sheets will be due prior to each unit test (due dates will be announced prior to the due date) and will fall under this grading category…more information can be found on Google Classroom.

**Summative Assessments (totaling 40%):**

**~Unit Tests/Projects (25%)**

**~Common Assessments (15%)**

Summative assessments range from unit tests, projects, papers, quarterly exams, and common assessments. At the conclusion of each unit, a multiple choice and/or free-response test will be given to model the College Board® Exam. Tests are announced well in advance, therefore, only those absent the day of the test should need to take a make-up. Please refer to the *AP* *Strategies for Success* and the *AP Pacing Guide* in Google Classroom for further information on the course curriculum.

* **If you have a field trip on the day of a scheduled assessment, you will be required to arrange a make-up time with Ms. Carey. Please discuss this when you ask for your permission slip to be signed.**
* If a student is absent the day before a test and is only missing a review, they are expected to take the test with the class.
* If a student is absent on the test date, they will take the test on the first day they return to school…please email Ms. Carey when you are absent to arrange a make-up time.
* Students missing a number of days of the class prior to the test date must arrange a make-up schedule with Ms. Carey.

**About the AP® Program**

# *The following information was taken directly from the College Board® AP Psychology Course Description (Fall 2013)*

AP® enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Taking AP courses also demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought out the most rigorous course work available to them. Each AP course concludes with a college-level assessment developed and scored by college and university faculty as well as experienced AP teachers. AP Exams are an essential part of the AP experience, enabling students to demonstrate their mastery of college-level course work. More than 90 percent of four-year colleges and universities in the United States grant students credit, placement, or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores. Universities in more than 60 countries recognize AP Exam scores in the admission process and/or award credit and placement for qualifying scores. Visit [www.collegeboard.org/ap/creditpolicy](http://www.collegeboard.org/ap/creditpolicy) to view AP credit and placement policies at more than 1,000 colleges and universities.

**How AP Courses and Exams are Developed and Scored**

The exam scoring process, like the course and exam development process, relies on the expertise of both AP teachers and college faculty. While multiple-choice questions are scored by machine, the free-response questions are scored by thousands of college faculty and expert AP teachers at the annual AP reading. Scores on the free-response questions are weighted and combined with the weighted results of the computer-scored multiple-choice questions. These composite, weighted raw scores are converted into the reported AP Exam scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. An AP Exam score of 5 is equivalent to the average score among college students earning grades of an A in the college course. Similarly, AP Exam scores of 4 are equivalent to college grades of A-, B+, and B. AP Exam scores of 3 are equivalent to college grades of B-, C+, and C.

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| **AP Score** | **Qualification** |
| 5 | Extremely well qualified |
| 4 | Well qualified |
| 3 | Qualified |
| 2 | Possibly qualified |
| 1 | No recommendation |

**Final Note**

The rules and regulations outlined in the *Lowell High School Parent and Student Handbook* are taken very seriously in the school. Trying to follow all the rules and regulations outlined by the handbook could become overwhelming. I am hoping by the third and fourth years at LHS, you are familiar with the rules and regulations to the point that they are just understood vs. having to take time out of our learning to correct behaviors that are expected of all LHS students. To help you out, please pay particular attention to the following while you are in this classroom:

* Your ID badge must be visible as you enter and leave the classroom
* If you need to use the restroom, please make sure you sign out when you leave, take the hall pass, and sign in when you return when you return the pass.
* Cell phones and other electronic devices should be silenced while in the classroom. There will be opportunities throughout the year to use your smartphones, tablets, laptops, iPods, and/or school-provided laptops and iPads. You are expected to act responsible and abide by the school social media policies outlined in the handbook. If we are not utilizing the extra technology, it is expected that technology is not being used for your personal entertainment (i.e.: Facebook, Twitter, Vine, Vimeo, Messaging, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.) while class is in session.

# “Everyone learns in a different way. Let’s keep trying to find the way that works for you.”

(*Mindset* by Carol Dweck, 2008, p. 209)

Please do not be afraid to seek help if you do not understand something. The ultimate responsibility to learn psychology is yours, but I am willing to help you in any way. To get help, you can:

1. Ask questions before, during, and/or after class.
2. Review your notes nightly…study every night (*the spacing effect*/*distributed practice)* vs. the night before (*the cramming effect*) a scheduled test
3. Meet with me before school. On most days, I am in the school building by 7:20 AM. If possible, try to coordinate a time with me so I can make sure I am available.
4. If you have access to email, you can email me: jcarey@lowell.k12.ma.us
5. If you have access to twitter, you can check out current tweets on @MCCpsychLHS…sometimes I will post articles, review questions, resources, etc.
6. Visit the LHS Google Classroom account that is linked to this class for PowerPoint presentations, assignments, a course calendar, video resources and so much more!
7. Access the textbook companion website, which includes module summaries, practice quizzes, flashcards, and more
8. Explore some of the resources I have introduced in class that may help extend your understanding and learning on most topics.

I am looking forward to working with you this school year. It is my hope that we both learn from each other through class discussions, readings we share, activities, and the struggles we work through. To enjoy the class to its fullest, “put yourself in a growth mindset. Picture your brain forming new connections as you meet the challenges and learn. Keep on going!” (*Mindset* by Carol Dweck, 2008, p. 66)

~Ms. Jennifer Paige Carey