

**Syllabus AP Psychology**  
**Teacher: Dr. Christine Veilleux, PsyD**  
**Classroom: G309**

**Course Objectives**

At the end of the course, students will have a better understanding of the History of Psychology and its various perspectives. Students will also comprehend the many stages and aspects of the developing person, and his/her biology and behavior. This includes acquiring knowledge on the brain, senses, state of consciousness, process of memory, learning, thinking, language, intelligence, motivation, stress, emotions and health. Students will better understand many psychological disorders and associated therapies. This course brings students to have an increase in their critical thinking.

**Course Outline**

***Unit 1: History, Approaches and Research Methods and Statistics***

*Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Logic, Philosophy and History: Roots and Contemporary Psychology
- 2) How Psychologists ask and answer questions. Critical Thinking
- 3) Approaches and Perspectives
- 4) Experimental, Correlation and Clinical Research
- 5) Statistics

***Unit 2: Biology and Behavior***

*Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Neural and Hormonal System
- 2) The Brain
- 3) The Nature of Behavior
- 4) The Nurture of Behavior and the Interplay of Nature and Nurture

***Unit 3: The Developing Person***

*Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Development Issues, Prenatal Development and the Newborn
- 2) Conception
- 3) Infancy and Childhood
- 4) Adolescence
- 5) Adulthood
- 6) Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development
- 7) Erickson's Stages of Psychological Development
- 8) The Early Development of a Self-Concept
- 9) Longitudinal and Cross-Sectional studies and their differences

***Unit 4: Sensation and Perception***

*Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) The Five Senses / the Sensory System and its Operation
- 2) The Opponent Theories of Color Vision / Young-Helmholtz
- 3) Gestalt Psychologists' organizational principles
- 4) Threshold
- 5) Bottom-up and Top-down Processing
- 6) Perceptions: Form, Depth, Perceptual
- 7) Sensory Perception and Restored Vision
- 8) Perceptual Set
- 9) Perception and the Human Factor
- 10) Place and Frequency Theories of Pitch Perception
- 11) Discussion of Depth Perception and Cues

## **Unit 5: States of Consciousness**

### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) What is Selective Attention?
- 2) Circadian Rhythm and the negative effect of lack of sleep
- 3) REM rebound
- 4) Comparison and understanding Brain Waves and Sleep Stages
- 5) Comparison between Nightmares and Night Terrors
- 6) Insomnia and Sleep Disorders (sleep apnea, narcolepsy, etc.)
- 7) Dreams and Interpretation
- 8) Freud and Dreams' content (Manifest, Latent)
- 9) Was it a Dream or a Hallucination?
- 10) How does Hypnosis work? A discussion of "Does it work?"
- 11) Posthypnotic Suggestions
- 12) Drugs and Consciousness. Addiction, Tolerance, Dependence (Psychological and Physical) Withdrawal.
- 13) Barbiturates, Opiates, Stimulants and Amphetamines
- 14) Drugs today: Meth, Cocaine, THC, LSD, Ecstasy. Discussion
- 15) Discussion on how drugs and alcohol damage the brain.

## **Unit 6: Learning**

### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Classical Conditioning: Pavlov's Experiments
- 2) Operant Conditioning: Skinner's Experiments
- 3) Comparison between Classical and Operant Conditioning
- 4) Modeling / Learning by Observation: Bandura's Experiments
- 5) Understanding: Acquisition, Extinction, Discrimination, Generalization and Spontaneous Recovery
- 6) Determine what is Conditioned Stimulus and Response, Unconditioned Stimulus, and Response and Neutral Stimulus.
- 7) With examples on Handout, determine the Reinforcement, Continuous or Partial, and determine if it is a positive reinforcement, a negative reinforcement or a punishment. Determine also the schedules: Fixed-Interval, Fixed-Ratio, Variable-Interval and Variable-Ratio.
- 8) Is this Intrinsic Motivation or Extrinsic Motivation?

## **Unit 7: Memory**

### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Information Processing
- 2) The Phenomena of Memory
- 3) Encoding, Storage and Retrieval
- 4) Forgetting, Memory Construction and Improving Memory
- 5) What is the difference between Iconic and Echoic Memory?
- 6) Comparison between Implicit and Explicit Memory
- 7) Comparing Proactive Interference and Retroactive Interference
- 8) Forgetting information? What are the causes?
- 9) Tips for a Better Memory

## **Unit 8: Thinking, Language and Intelligence**

### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Concepts in Thinking
- 2) Solving Problems
- 3) Making Decisions and Forming Judgements
- 4) Thinking Critically!
- 5) Language Development
- 6) Thinking and Language
- 7) Animal Thinking and Language
- 8) The Origin of Intelligence Testing
- 9) What is Intelligence?
- 10) Assessing Intelligence

- 11) Genetic and Environmental Intelligence
- 12) Intelligence Tests
- 13) How to Calculate, Score and Interpret Intelligence Tests Results

### ***Unit 9: Motivation***

#### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Motivational Concepts
- 2) Physiology of Hunger
- 3) Psychology of Hunger
- 4) Obesity and Weight Control
- 5) Eating Disorders
- 6) Sexual Behavior
- 7) Physiology of Sex
- 8) Psychology of Sex
- 9) Adolescent Sexuality
- 10) Sexual Orientation
- 11) Sex and Human Values
- 12) The Need to Belong
- 13) Motivation at Work
- 14) Psychology at Work
- 15) Personnel Psychology
- 16) Organizational

### ***Unit 10: Emotion, Stress, and Health***

#### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Theories and Physiology of Emotion / James-Lange and Cannon-Bard
- 2) Cognition and Emotion / Lazarus
- 3) Expressed and Experienced Emotion
- 4) Stress and Stressors
- 5) Stress and Illness: Heart Diseases
- 6) Promoting Health with Exercise, Relaxation and Support
- 7) Thinking Critically about Alternative Medicine, Spirituality and Faith Communities

### ***Unit 11: Personality***

#### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Historic Perspective on Personality: Psychoanalytic and Humanistic
- 2) Contemporary Perspective: Traits and Social Cognitive
- 3) The Self and the Modern Unconscious Mind. Self-Concept/Self-Esteem
- 4) Defense Mechanisms

### ***Unit 12: Psychological Disorders***

#### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) What is a Psychological Disorder?
- 2) Understanding Psychological Disorders
- 3) What is the DSM?
- 4) Classification of Psychological Disorders
- 5) Labeling Psychological Disorders
- 6) Thinking Critically about Psychological Disorders and Responsibilities
- 7) Rates of Psychological Disorders
- 8) Anxiety, Dissociative and Personality Disorders
- 9) A closer look at Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders
- 10) What is a Mood Disorder? Major Depressive Disorder? Bipolar Disorder?
- 11) What is Schizophrenia and its symptoms?
- 12) Subtypes of Schizophrenia

### **Unit 13: Therapy**

#### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Psychoanalysis Therapy
- 2) Humanistic Therapy
- 3) Behavior Therapy
- 4) Cognitive Therapy
- 5) Group and Family Therapy
- 6) Evaluating Psychotherapies: Is Psychotherapy effective?
- 7) Commonalities among Psychotherapies
- 8) Drug Therapy
- 9) Electroconvulsive Therapy
- 10) Psychosurgery

### **Unit 14: Social Psychology**

#### *Content and/or Skills Taught:*

- 1) Social Thinking: Attributing Behavior to Persons or Situations, Attitudes and Actions
- 2) Social Influence: Conformity and Obedience, Group Influence
- 3) Altruism, Prosocial Action
- 4) Social Relations: Prejudice and Aggression/Antisocial Behavior

## **19. Texts & Supplemental Instructional Materials**

#### **Main Textbook:**

Exploring Psychology, Sixth Edition in Modules and Study Guide

Publisher: Worth Publishers

Published Date: 20 December, 2004

Author: David G. Myers

#### **Supplemental Instructional Materials:**

Benjamin, Ludy T. Activities Handbook for the Teaching of Psychology, Volume IV, Washington: APA 2005

Bolt, Martin. Instructor's Resource Manual. New York: Worth Publishers, 2005 (includes Handouts)  
American Psychiatric Association. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition. Washington DC, 1994

Spitzer, Robert L, Gibbon, M. et al. DSM IV Case Book, Washington DC, 1994

APA, American Psychological Association Quarterly Journal

APA, American Psychologist, Journal of the American Psychological Association

ACA, Journal of Counseling and Development

ACA Publication, Counseling Today

Video Series: CPB. Discovering Psychology, updated edition. Annenberg, 2004

DVD: Ludwig, Thomas E. PsychSim 5. New York: Worth Publishers, 2004

DVD: Ludwig, Thomas E. PsychInquiry, Sixth Edition. New York: Worth Publishers, 2005

DVD: DSM-IV Personality Disorders. New York: Insight Media, 1999

DVD: DSM-IV Personality Disorders: Subtype 1. New York: Insight Media, 1999

DVD: DSM-IV Personality Disorders: Subtype 2. New York: Insight Media, 1999

DVD: DSM-IV Personality Disorders: Subtype 3. New York: Insight Media, 1999

DVD: Comer, Ronald J. Abnormal Psychology 3.0. Plymouth: Freeman and Sumanas, 1998

Website: The Zimbardo Prison Experiment. <http://Zimbardo.com/prison>

Released AP exams

## **20. Key Assignments**

Vocabulary quizzes after each chapter.

Quiz on each concept after each chapter.

Tests and essays on each module.

Projects and presentations after each module.

Classroom experiments on each module

Released AP exams.

Released AP essays.

## **21. Instructional Methods and/or Strategies**

Readings

CD-Rom

DVD

Video

Internet search

Interview

Project-based learning

Group work

Lecture

This course is very demanding. Students not only need to know and understand all concepts, but also need to apply critical thinking.

Students **must** take the AP exam.