

# AP Psychology

2024-2025

Torah High School of San Diego

Mr. Barger

[mbarger@sandi.net](mailto:mbarger@sandi.net)

**Course objective:** To provide students with an in-depth study in the field of Psychology. Topics covered will include but are not limited to; the History of Psychology, Brain and Behavior, Perception, Reality, Dreams, Conditioning and Learning, Memory, Social Behavior, Emotion, Psychological Disorders, Treatment and Applied Psychology. Students will be provided with the tools to succeed in this rigorous, year long course through in class discussions, debates, essay writing, Close Readings, argumentation, text analysis and application. In addition, students will be given ample time to fully prepare for their AP examination for college credit. Common Core State Standards will be implemented in this class as students will strive to adapt to higher levels of thinking and learning.

**Required Text:** Coon, Dennis. *Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior*. Fourteenth Edition. Boston, CA. Cengage Learning. 2016.

**Supplemental Materials:** Barron's AP Psychology Study Guide (newest edition)

**Required Classroom Materials:** Pencil/Pens

Spiral notebook(Dedicated solely to AP Psychology)

Three-ring binder with slot for AP Psychology

Positive Attitude and an Open Mind

This is a rigorous course that will rely on class discussions, lectures, text reading and document analysis, much of which takes place in class so attendance is highly important. Academic and citizenship grades will be adversely affected with poor attendance. Any more than 4 absences per semester will result in a call home and possible Parent/Teacher conference.

This class is not to be taken lightly as it is being taken for College credit. Students must be prepared to work hard, study diligently and participate in classroom activities.

Text reading in this class is imperative. Reading the text will reinforce material covered in class. Students will be expected to read up to a chapter a week.

**Grading Policy:** The breakdown for grades is:

<b>Exams</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Projects</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Quizzes</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Homework/Classwork</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Exams:** Exams will encompass all material covered in class and assigned for homework. Exams will not present any surprises as long as students complete all in class work and homework. Exams will cover materials from lectures, the textbook, additional documents analyzed in class, videos/films shown and any other class material worked on. Review sessions will be held before each exam. Study guides may be made available at the discretion on the teacher. Exams will take place at the end of units. Exams will consists of multiple choice questions, fill in the blank, short answer, free response and questions in which students will need to analyze material and provide practical applications to the field of Psychology.

**Projects:** Throughout the year, students will work on research projects both individually and in groups. Projects may range from videos, essays, posters, etc.

**Quizzes:** Periodic quizzes of 3-5 questions will be given at the beginning of class periods frequently to hold students accountable for the previous class's content. Quizzes are a large reason as to why attendance is so important. If students are actively engaged in classroom content, they will be well prepared for quizzes.

**Homework:** Homework is to be completed by the assigned due date. Any late homework will certainly be accepted but for partial credit. Classwork must also be completed in a timely manner. In some instances, classwork not finished in class due to time constraints may be assigned to be finished for homework.

**Notes:** Students will be responsible for taking class notes, as well notes on their reading of the text chapters which will be assigned for homework. Students will be responsible for reading the current chapter and taking notes on their reading. Notes should include vocabulary/key terms and ideas, overviews, thoughts, opinions, summaries and questions. Students will have class time to discuss questions in groups to assist each other in areas that they require further assistance. Students will also read through internet articles pertaining to the field of Psychology and provide a summary of what they read along with opinions, analysis and application to class material.

**Content:** The classroom content will be broken up into 13 Units, each one covering a specific section of the AP Psychology Exam. Both the class text and the Barron's AP Psychology study guide will be used to formulate class content. If possible, students are recommended to use the Barron's AP study guide as much as possible.

## **Unit 1: History and Approaches/Methods**

**Barron's CH 1 pp. 45-54**

**Barron's CH 2 pp. 55-74**

**Barron's Appendix: Behavioral Statistics pp. 598-607**

**Coon CH 1 Psychology, Critical Thinking, and Science pp. 14-50**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. Introduction to Psychology
- B. Historical Schools of Thought
- C. Modern Approaches/Perspectives
- D. Psychology as a Profession
- E. Research Methods
- F. Problems/Solutions
- G. Statistics
- H. Ethics in Psychological Research

### **Questions:**

1. When and how did psychological science begin?
2. How did psychology continue to develop from the 1920's through today?
3. What is psychology's historic big issue?
4. What are psychology's levels of analysis and related perspectives?
5. What are psychology's main subfields?
6. How can psychological principles help you as a student?
7. Why are the answers that flow from the scientific approach more reliable than those based on intuition and common sense?
8. What are three main components of the scientific attitude?
9. How do theories advance psychological science?
10. How do psychologists observe and describe behavior?
11. Can laboratory experiments illuminate everyday life?
12. Why do psychologists study animals, and is it ethical to experiment on animals?
13. Is it ethical to experiment on people?
14. Is psychology free of value judgments?

## **Unit 2: Biological Basis of Behavior**

**Barron's CH 3 pp. 75-95**

**Coon CH 2 Brain and Behavior pp. 53-82**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. Neuroanatomy
- B. Neurological Processes
- C. Nervous System
- D. Neural Transmission
- E. Endocrine System
- F. The Brain
- G. Genetics

### **Questions:**

1. What are neurons, and how do they transmit information?
2. How do nerve cells communicate with other nerve cells?
3. How do neurotransmitters influence behavior, and how do drugs and other chemicals affect neurotransmission?
4. What are the functions of the nervous system's main divisions?
5. How does the endocrine system – the body's slower information system – transmit its messages?
6. How do neuroscientists study the brain's connections to behavior and mind?
7. What are the functions of important lower-level brain structures?
8. What functions are served by the various cerebral cortex regions?
9. What do split brains reveal about the functions of our two brain hemispheres?

## **Unit 3: Sensation and Perception**

**Barron's CH 4 pp. 97-117**

**Coon CH 4 Sensation and Perception pp. 123-161**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. Sensation
- B. Sensory Processes
- C. Sensory Adaptation
- D. Psychophysics
- E. Perception

**Questions:**

1. What are sensation and perception? What do we mean by bottom-up processing and top-down processing?
2. What are the absolute and difference thresholds, and do stimuli below the absolute threshold have any influence?
3. What is the function of sensory adaptation?
4. What is the energy that we see as visual light?
5. What are the characteristics of air pressure waves that we hear as sound?
6. How do the eye and ear transform light and sound energy into neural messages?
7. How do we experience each of the body's senses?
8. How do Gestalt psychologists understand perceptual organization?
9. How adaptable is our ability to perceive?
10. How do our expectations, contexts, and emotions influence our perceptions?

**Unit 4: States of Consciousness**

**Barron's CH 5 pp. 119-132**

**Coon CH 5 State of Consciousness pp. 163-196**

**Topics of Study:**

- A. Consciousness
- B. Sleep
- C. Dreaming
- D. Hypnosis and Meditation
- E. Drugs and Consciousness

**Questions:**

1. What is consciousness?
2. How much information do we consciously attend to at once?
3. How do our biological rhythms influence our daily functioning and our sleep and dreams?
4. What is the biological rhythm of our sleep?
5. What is sleep's function?
6. How does loss of sleep affect us?
7. What are the major sleep disorders?
8. What is the function of dreams?
9. What are the functions of hypnosis and meditation?
10. What are tolerance, dependence, and addiction?

## **Unit 5: Learning**

**Barron's CH 6 pp. 133-149**

**Coon CH 6 Conditioning and Learning pp. 199-229**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. Classical Conditioning
- B. Operant Conditioning
- C. Social Learning
- D. Factors of Learning (Biological, Cognitive)
- E. Punishment

### **Questions:**

1. What are some basic forms of learning?
2. What is classical conditioning, and how did Pavlov's work influence behaviorism?
3. In classical conditioning, what are the processes of acquisition, extinction, spontaneous recovery, generalization, and discrimination?
4. Why is Pavlov's work important?
5. What is operant conditioning, and how does it differ from classical conditioning?
6. What are the basic types of reinforcers?
7. How do different reinforcement schedules affect behavior?
8. How does punishment affect behavior?
9. Do cognitive processes and biological constraints affect operant conditioning?
10. What is observational learning, and how is it enabled by mirror neurons?

## **Unit 6: Cognition**

**Barron's CH 7 pp. 151-168**

**Coon CH 7 Memory pp. 230-261**

**Coon CH 8 Cognition, Language & Creativity pp. 262-287**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. Processes of Memory (Encoding, Storage, Retrieval)
- B. Stages of Memory (Sensory, Short-term, Long-term)
- C. Forgetting
- D. Language
- E. Problem Solving

**Questions:**

1. How do psychologists describe the human memory system?
2. What information do we encode automatically? What information do we encode effortfully, and how does the distribution of practice influence retention?
3. What is sensory memory?
4. What are the duration and capacity of short-term and long-term memory?
5. How does the brain store our memories?
6. How do we get information out of memory?
7. Why do we forget?
8. How do misinformation, imagination, and source amnesia influence our memory construction? How real-seeming are false memories?
9. How can an understanding of memory contribute to more effective study techniques?

**Unit 7: Motivation and Emotion**

**Barron's CH 8 pp. 169-185**

**Coon CH 10 Motivation and Emotion pp. 314-347**

**Coon CH 13 Health, Stress and Coping 418-449**

**Topics of Study:**

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

**Questions:**

1. From what perspectives do psychologists view motivated behavior?
2. What physiological factors produce hunger?
3. What psychological and cultural factors influence hunger?
4. How do anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge-eating disorder demonstrate the influence of psychological forces on physiologically motivated behaviors?
5. What stages mark the human sexual response cycle?
6. How do internal and external stimuli influence sexual behavior?
7. What has research taught us about sexual orientation?
8. What is the role of organizational psychologists?
9. What are the components of an emotion?
10. How do we communicate nonverbally? Are nonverbal expressions universally understood?
11. What is stress, and what types of events provoke stress responses?
12. What factors affect our ability to cope with stress?

## **Unit 8: Developmental Psychology**

**Barron's CH 9 pp. 187-206**

**Coon CH 3 Human Development pp. 84-120**

**Coon CH 11 Sex, Gender and Sexuality pp. 348-380**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. The Life Span
- B. Prenatal Development and the Newborn
- C. Infancy and Childhood
- D. Adolescence
- E. Adulthood
- F. Old Age

### **Questions:**

1. How does life develop before birth?
2. What are some newborn abilities, and how do researchers explore infants' mental abilities?
3. During infancy and childhood, how do the brain and motor skills develop?
4. From the perspective of Piaget and today's researchers, how does a child's mind develop?
5. How do parent-infant attachment bonds form?
6. What physical changes mark adolescence?
7. How did Piaget, Kohlberg, and later researchers describe adolescent cognitive and moral development?
8. What are the social tasks and challenges of adolescence?
9. What is emerging adulthood?
10. What physical changes occur during middle and late adulthood?
11. How do memory and intelligence change with age?
12. What themes and influences mark our social journey from early adulthood to death?

## **Unit 9: Personality**

**Barron's CH 10 pp. 207-222**

**Coon CH 12 Personality pp. 382-416**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. Theories of Personality
- B. Assessment Techniques
- C. Self-Concept/Self-Esteem
- D. Growth and Adjustment



**Questions:**

1. What was Freud's view of personality and its development?
2. How did Freud think people defended themselves against anxiety?
3. What are projective tests, and how are they used?
4. How do contemporary psychologists view Freud and the unconscious?
5. How did humanistic psychologists view personality, and what was their goal in studying personality?
6. How did humanistic psychologists assess a person's sense of self?
7. How do psychologists use traits to describe personality?
8. What are personality inventories, and what are their strengths and weaknesses as trait-assessment tools?
9. In the view of the social-cognitive psychologists, what mutual influences shape an individual's personality?
10. Are we helped or hindered by high self-esteem?

**Unit 10: Testing and Individual Differences**

**Barron's CH 11 pp. 223-237**

**Coon CH 9 Intelligence pp. 288-312**

**Topics of Study:**

- 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

**Questions:**

1. What argues for and against considering intelligence as one general mental ability?
2. How do Gardner's and Sternberg's theories of multiple intelligences differ?
3. What makes up emotional intelligence?
4. When and why were intelligence tests created?
5. What is the difference between aptitude and achievement tests, and how can we develop and evaluate them?
6. How stable are intelligence scores over the lifespan?
7. What are the traits of those at the low and high intelligence extremes?
8. What does evidence reveal about hereditary and environmental influences on intelligence?
9. How and why do gender and racial groups differ in mental ability scores?

10. Are intelligence tests inappropriately biased?

## **Unit 11: Abnormal Psychology**

**Barron's CH 12 pp. 239-256**

**Coon CH 14 Psychological Disorders pp. 450-483**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. Definitions of Abnormality
- B. Classification and the DSM
- C. Anxiety Disorders
- D. Dissociative Disorders
- E. Somatoform Disorders
- F. Mood Disorders
- G. Schizophrenic Disorders
- H. Personality Disorders

### **Questions:**

1. How should we draw the line between normality and disorder?
2. What perspectives can help us understand psychological disorders?
3. How and why do clinicians classify psychological disorders?
4. What are anxiety disorders, and how do they differ from ordinary worries and fears?
5. What produces the thoughts and feelings that mark anxiety disorders?
6. What are somatoform disorders?
7. What are dissociative disorders, and why are they controversial?
8. What are mood disorders, and what forms do they take?
9. What patterns of thinking, perceiving, feeling, and behaving characterize schizophrenia?
10. What causes schizophrenia?
11. What characteristics are typical of personality disorders?
12. How many people suffer, or have suffered, from a psychological disorder?

## **Unit 12: Treatment of Psychological Disorders**

**Barron's CH 13 pp. 257-272**

**Coon CH 15 Therapies pp. 484-516**

### **Topics of Study:**

- A. Treatment Approaches
- B. Types of Therapy
- C. Preventative Approaches

**Questions:**

1. What are the aims and methods of psychoanalysis, and how have they been adapted in psychodynamic therapy?
2. What are the basic themes of humanistic therapy, such as Rogers' client-centered approach?
3. What are the assumptions and techniques of the behavior therapies?
4. What are the goals and techniques of the cognitive therapies?
5. What are the aims and benefits of group and family therapy?
6. Are some therapies more effective than others?
7. How do culture and values influence the therapist-client relationship?
8. What are the drug therapies? What criticisms have been leveled against drug therapies?
9. How, by caring for their bodies with a healthy life-style, might people find some relief from depression?
10. What is the rationale for preventive mental health programs?

**Unit 13: Social Psychology**

**Barron's CH 14 pp. 273-290**

**Coon CH 16 Social Thinking and Social Influence pp. 518-543**

**Coon CH 17 Prosocial and Antisocial Behavior pp. 544-569**

**Topics of Study:**

- A. Group Dynamics
- B. Social Thinking
- C. Social Influence
- D. Conformity, Compliance, and Obedience
- E. Social Relations

**Questions:**

1. How do we tend to explain others' behavior and our own?
2. Does what we think affect what we do, Or does what we do affect what we think?
3. What do experiments on conformity and compliance reveal about the power of social influence?
4. How is our behavior affected by the presence of others or by being part of a group?
5. What is prejudice? What are its social, emotional, and cognitive roots?
6. What psychological factors may trigger aggressive behavior?
7. Why do we befriend or fall in love with some people but not with others?
8. How do social traps and mirror-image perceptions fuel social conflict?

9. How can we transform feelings of prejudice, aggression, and conflict into attitudes that promote peace?