Instructor: Mr. Scott

Course Schedule:

Student Presentation Schedule: (update to come)

Books List:

Field Trips: (update to come)

Expectations: This course is a college-level course intended to prepare you for exceeding on the AP Psychology Exam this spring. Contrary to popular belief, the best way to prepare you for such a test is NOT to cover all the information that might be on that test. First of all, it is impossible to do so. By definition, one can NEVER know exactly what questions will be asked on a test. Therefore, to memorize what MAY be on it, will always leave one unprepared for some aspect of it. Secondly, it is not effective. The most effective way to prepare for a test that is ultimately unpredictable is to master the skills that were used to create it. In other words, the best way to exceed on a test about psychology, is to THINK like a psychologist. Lastly, I teach students, NOT content. The expectation that all the content will be “covered” takes the most important variable out of the equation. . . YOU! In other words, how is it possible for you to think like a psychologist, when all you are doing is memorizing what your teacher thinks? Or worse, what your textbook “thinks?” When a robot is programmed to do A, B, & C, they have not learned to think like a computer programmer, they have simply been programmed. This is what happens when you memorize what is “covered” in a course. You are like a robot being programmed. Of course, to truly learn to think like the computer programmer (or the psychologist), you can't simply be programmed, instead (and this is obvious) you need to study programming. That is, you need to become a student. According to the Oxford Dictionary, to “study” means to “investigate and analyze a subject or situation.” In other words, you need to ACTIVELY engage in the learning process. A robot is passively taking in the commands that are given, but a programmer is actively being inquisitive, creative, & reflective. This is the key to exceeding on the AP Exam. This is the key to true learning.

As you know, this is a weighted course, so expectations of academic work is greater than ordinary course standards. Also, if you are enrolled to simply pad your GPA, please take another class. If you have a sincere desire to learn, to grow/evolve as an individual, debate, explore, challenge, and cooperatively develop your intellect and emotional quality (as both a responsible citizen and a member of our community of learners)...welcome!

Particulars of Conduct: Come to class prepared, with questions. I am fond of the cliché, “never trust an individual with more answers than questions.” Do not ask silly questions, such as, “Can I go to the bathroom?” or “May I have a glass of water?” Ask me tough, challenging, and thoughtful questions, such as, “Why do you believe that…?” “Why is a liberal arts education necessary in the 21st Century?,” or “Is human nature quantifiable?” Use your common sense and good judgment. Do not use your cell phone. Excuse yourself when necessary, quietly & considerately. Be prepared.

Course Structure:
1st Semester
1. Obedience & Education: An Introduction to Psychology
2. Research Methods (Unit 2)
3. History & Approaches (Unit 1)
4. Personality (Unit 10)
5. Testing & Individual Differences (Unit 11)
6. Learning (Unit 6)
7. Motivation & Emotion (Unit 8)
8. Abnormal & Treatment (Units 12 & 13)

2nd Semester
1. Biological Bases of Behavior (Unit 3)
2. Sensation & Perception (Unit 4)
3. States of Consciousness (Unit 5)
4. Cognition (Unit 7)
5. Developmental (Unit 9)
6. Social Psychology (Unit 14)
7. Final Project

1st Semester Grades:
1) 5 Textbook Unit Presentations
   a) Introductory Lab & Research Summary
   b) Classroom Teaching Activity
   c) Group & Individual Vocab Activity
   d) Crash Course Video
   e) Primary Source Discussion & Critical Analysis of Textbook.
2) 1 Debate
3) 1 Book Critical Analysis & Discussion
4) 1 Research Article & 1 Current Event Presentation
5) Goals, Progress Logs, & Reflections
6) 6-7 Unit Exams
7) Final Project & Final Exam

2nd Semester Grades:
1) Mid-term Assessment
   a) Mid-term Exam
      OR
   b) Individualized Project
2) Final Project

Requirements:
Many of the above assignments include prerequisite requirements. That is, there may be work that is necessary to complete before the assignment can be turned in. For instance, all students must complete the unit study guide before presenting their Unit Presentations.
1) Unit Study Guide
2) Annotated Bibliography & Debate Outline
3) Chapter Summaries, Outside Research, & Discussion Log
4) N/A
5) Class readings, labs, & self-inventories
6) Assignments, labs, & projects for that unit
Late Policy:
Most late assignments are half-credit (larger projects are 1 letter grade for each day that it is late). However, extensions are often granted for students who ask a few days before the day an assignment is due. Also, if an assignment is late, please take the extra time to make it YOUR BEST rather than just submitting something just to submit it.

Standards:
1. Drawing meaning from artifacts
   a. Identify compelling questions addressed by an artifact (inquiry)
   b. Cite specific details as evidence to support analysis of artifacts (understanding fact & opinion)
   c. Analyze how a key terms are used and refined over the course of an artifact (understanding vocabulary)
   d. Determine main ideas (summarizing)
   e. Evaluate artifacts to determine strength of evidence (evaluating bias)
   f. Identify connections between concepts (inference)
   g. Evaluate possible explanations for evidence (divergent thinking)

2. Using the scientific method
   a. Evaluate the hypotheses, data, analysis, and conclusions in a science or technical text, verifying the data when possible and corroborating or challenging conclusions with other sources of information (critical thinking)
   b. Follow precisely a complex multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks (scientific method)
   c. Analyze the specific results (correlation)

3. Reading, writing, & speaking grounded in evidence from artifacts
   a. Craft knowledgeable claims that are increasingly Concise, Logical, Argumentative, Interpretive, & that Map Reasons (claim writing)
   b. Distinguish claim from alternate or opposing claims (compare & contrast)
   c. Create an organization that logically sequences the claim, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence (organization)
   d. Develop claims and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claims and counterclaims (significance)
   e. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to clarify the relationships between claims, reasons, evidence, and counterclaims (grammar)
   f. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing (formal style)

4. Making appropriate conclusions
   a. Integrate claims presented by diverse artifacts (synthesis)
   b. Apply claims to individual, group, cultural, & human behavior in general (application)
   c. Analyze & comprehend claims of artifacts independently and proficiently (evaluation)