Law, Business & Government Academy – Abraham Lincoln High School
BETH B. KENNEDY – B-15 Email: bbk2989@lausd.net Tel: 323) 441-4600

To: Students, Parents and Guardians of Ms. Kennedy's AP Psychology class
Re: AP PSYCHOLOGY SYLLABUS 2009-10

Course Description: The Advanced Placement Psychology course is a one year course which is equivalent to an introductory college course in psychology. According to the AP Psychology Course Description, "It is designed 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. They also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice." (College Board, May 2008/May, 2009).

The Course Description and Syllabus has been developed in accordance with the most recent AP Psychology curricular and resource requirements, specified by the College Board, and this course and teacher have been authorized. All students will write the AP Psychology exam. A Mock AP exam in early April will count as the course's final exam, along with the AP Psychology exam, and will serve as preparation for the actual exam, scheduled for May 11, 2010. Students will be required to complete a significant research paper and deliver a report on it orally, and to submit a Portfolio of work, which includes representative assignments, tests, quizzes and essay given during each semester. The course requires students to complete diverse, challenging and wide ranging assignments.

GOAL: To learn about the field of psychology through in-depth study, discussion and hands-on activities. Students will study the major core concepts and theories of psychology, will be able to define key terms and use them in everyday vocabulary. Students will learn the basic skills of psychological research and be able to apply psychological concepts to their own lives and develop critical thinking and writing skills. Students will take the AP Psychology examination in May, 2010.

Grading Policy: Grades are determined by the accumulation of coursework assignments as follows:

Tests/ Quizzes/ Essays	70%
Classwork (includes Participation)	20%
Homework / Portfolio /Journal	10%

Grades are based primarily on quizzes and tests, completion of individual assignments, group collaborative work and classroom attitude and participation. The class is highly interactive, so students must come to class prepared (i.e., having read the assignment in advance), able to discuss the material with colleagues. Attendance does affect academics, including group collaborative projects and other assignments which will be performed and completed in class. Assignments will have individual rubrics, expectations and grades, and points will be deducted for lack of preparation, response and/or engagement in the activities. The course is cumulative, culminating in the AP Psychology exam, scheduled for Tuesday, May 11, 2010. The Grading Scale, which is:

90-100% of possible points	A (Excellent)
80-89%	B (Good)
70-79%	C (Average)
60-69%	D (Below Average)
Below 60%	F (Failing)

MATERIALS & SUPPLIES: Students need the following every day in class:
- 2 blue or black ink pens
- Index cards (vocabulary)
- 2 sharpened pencils or mechanical pencils with lead, large eraser
- 1 3-ring hard cover binder and 5 pocket dividers
- 250 sheets of lined paper
- 1 COMPOSITION JOURNAL (100 sheets; 200 pages)
- Colored pencils and/or Highlighters (at least 4 different colors of each)

Make-up Policy: Make-up is only available for excused absences. Please be sure to communicate about sickness or extended leaves. Make up work is the student's responsibility, NOT the instructors.

Homework Policy: Assignments are due according to the assignment schedule. This course demands a lot of reading and note taking. Assignments are due on the due date. Late assignments will reduce your grade.

Extra Credit Policy: Extra credit is available on request for special circumstances. We encourage individual reading of both fiction and non-fiction books and magazine articles within the broad topic of psychology. A book list is available and extra credit is given for written book reports. Please note: extra credit does not replace normal assignments. They help the student who may be bordering between grades (a B+ and an A or C+ and a B) to achieve the higher grade.

Textbook: : Weiten, Wayne, *Psychology: Themes & Variations 7th Edition*. California: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2007

Goals: Through the development of critical thinking, and upon the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. define and explain at least the major approaches to psychology
2. perform scientific research and apply the scientific method to that research
3. define and explain the biological basis of behavior
4. explain the relationship between sensation and perception and the processes within each relationship
5. define and explain the various states of consciousness
6. define and explain at least four learning theories
7. explain cognition and how memory, language, and thinking are related
8. define and explain at least four theories of motivation and emotion
9. explain the developmental process from birth through death
10. define personality and discuss its various theories and assessment techniques
11. identify at least five common disorders and discuss possible causes and treatments
12. define standardization and norms and graph the results
13. define social psychology and group dynamics

Course Scope and Sequence: The course provides instruction in each of the following content areas outlined in the *AP Psychology Course Description*:

Chapter 1: The Evolution of Psychology – History and Approaches
Objectives

- Trace the historical and philosophical development of psychology as a science.
- Describe how the different perspectives explore and explain human behavior (Biological, Behavioral, Cognitive, Humanistic, Psychodynamic, Sociocultural, Evolutionary).
- Identify famous psychologists and describe their contributions to the discipline.
- Explore career options in the field of psychology.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- o Searching for alternative explanations for findings and events.
- o Look for contradictory evidence

Chapter 2: Research Methods: The Research Enterprise in Psychology
Objectives

- Identify the elements of an experiment.
- Compare and contrast advantages and disadvantages of the different research methods (case studies, surveys, naturalistic observations).
- Explain descriptive correlational studies and its advantages and disadvantage.
- Identify problematic areas resulting in flawed research.
- Describe the role of statistics in research (Descriptive, Inferential).
- Understand the ethical issues involved in using humans and animals in research.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- o Recognize the limitations of anecdotal evidence.
- o Use evidence-based decision making.

Chapter 3: Biology and Behavior: The Biological Bases of Behavior
Objectives

- Identify the basic components of the nervous system and describe how they function.
- Describe the relationship between brain chemistry and behavior.
- Identify specific neurotransmitters and other brain chemistry with particular behaviors.
- Identify probable causes of disorders in terms of nervous system malfunctions.
- Identify probable location of specified brain damage or the probable disturbance of neurotransmitter activity.
- Recognize hereditary influences on specific behavioral traits.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand the limits of extrapolation.
- Search for and identify contradictory evidence.

Chapter 4: Sensation and Perception
Objectives

- Describe the differences between the trichromatic and opponent process theories of color vision.
- Recognize pictorial depth cues.
- Compare key aspects of sensation and perception in vision and hearing.
- Compare the dimensions of stimulus, receptors, location of receptors, and basic elements of perception for taste, smell, and touch.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand how contrast effects can influence judgments and decisions.
- Recognize when extreme comparators are being used.

Chapter 5: Variations and Consciousness
Objectives

- Compare REM and NREM sleep.
- Relate EEG activity to variations in consciousness.
- Recognize the characteristics of commonly abused drugs.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand the way definitions shape how people think about issues.
- Identify the source of definitions.
- Avoid the nominal fallacy in working with definitions and labels.

Chapter 6: Learning
Objectives

- Identify elements in classical conditioning.
- Recognize basic processes in classical conditioning.
- Compare basic processes in classical and operant conditioning.
- Recognizing and understanding schedules of reinforcement in operant conditioning.
- Recognize various types of consequences that can occur in operant conditioning.
- Distinguish between classical conditioning and operant conditioning.
- Review cognitive processes, biological factors and social learning

- Understand how language skills develop.
- Describe barriers to effective problem solving.
- Describe effective strategies to problem solving.
- Describe effective and ineffective mental shortcuts to learning.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand the way language can influence thought.
- Recognize semantic slanting.

- Recognize name calling and anticipatory name calling.
- Understand how Pavlovian conditioning can be used to manipulate emotions.
- Develop the ability to detect conditioning procedures used in the media.

Chapter 7: Cognition and Memory
Objectives

- Compare the three types of memory storage.
- Identify and understand probable causes of forgetting.
- Recognize and define the various types of memory.
- Problem solving and creativity

Chapter 7 Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand the limitations and fallibility of human memory.
- Recognize the bias in hindsight analysis.
- Recognizing overconfidence in human cognition.
- Understand the need to seek disconfirming evidence.

Chapter 8: Motivation and Emotion
Objectives

- Understand the effects of the various factors that influence hunger.
- Understand the six determinants of achievement behavior.
- Understand the four common theories of emotional behavior.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand the elements of an argument.
- Recognize and avoid common fallacies, such as irrelevant reasons, circular reasoning, slippery slope reasoning, weak analogies, and false dichotomies.
- Evaluate arguments systematically.

Chapter 9: Developmental Psychology: Human Development Across the Life Span
Objectives

- Understand and describe the three stages of prenatal development.
- Describe Piaget's theory and stages of cognitive development.
- Describe and understand Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development.
- Describe and understand the physical changes and related transitions in emotional and personality development in adolescence.
- Describe some of the major developmental transitions in adult life.

Chapter 11 Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand the limitations of correlational evidence.
- Look for alternative explanations for findings and events
- Recognize and avoid common fallacies, such as irrelevant reasons, circular reasoning, slippery slope reasoning, weak analogies, and false dichotomies.

Chapter 10: Personality: Theory, Research, and Assessment
Objectives

- Identify specific defense mechanisms.
- Describe and understand the theoretical systems of Freud, Jung and Adler.
- Identify the psychodynamic, behavioral, and humanistic personality theories and their proponents.
- Understand and describe the implications of the various personality theories.

Critical Thinking Skill Objective: Recognize the bias in hindsight analysis.

Chapter 11: Intelligence and Psychological Testing
Objectives

- Recognize basic concepts in testing.
- Identify and understand key ideas of pioneers in intelligence testing.
- Understand how correlational evidence on the heredity-environment question relates to the "nature versus nurture." issue.
- Identify the people who developed the various theories on the nature of intelligence.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Recognize and avoid appeals to ignorance.
- Recognize and avoid reification.
- Look for alternative explanations for findings and events.
- Look for contradictory evidence.

Chapter 13: Stress, Coping, and Health
Objectives

- Recognize and understand the three basic types of conflict.
- Recognize and understand the major sources of stress.
- Describe the two major pathways along which the brain sends signals to the endocrine system in the event of stress.
- Describe common "coping" behavior.
- Describe and understand the effects of stress on physical health.
- Describe and understand why some people indulge in health-impairing behavior.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand the limitations of correlational evidence.
- Understand the limitations of statistical significance.
- Utilize base rates in making predictions and evaluating probabilities.
- Seek information to reduce uncertainty.
- Making risk-benefit assessments.
- Generate and evaluate alternative courses of action.

Chapter 14: Abnormal Psychology: Psychological Disorders
Objectives

- Understand and describe the criteria of abnormal behavior.
- Distinguish and understand the nature of anxiety and somatoform disorders.
- Understand the etiological factors that appear to play a role in anxiety, mood, and schizophrenic disorders.

Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Understand the limitations of the representativeness heuristic.
- Understand cumulative probabilities.
- Understand conjunctive probabilities.
- Understand the limitations of the availability heuristic.

Chapter 13: Treatment of Psychological Disorders
Objectives

- Understand the approaches of psychoanalysis, client-centered therapy, and cognitive therapy as explanations for psychological disorders.
- Understand and describe systematic desensitization, social skills training, and aversion behavior therapies.
- Understand and describe the goals of therapists and their respective therapeutic approaches (psychoanalysis, client-centered therapy, cognitive therapy, behavior therapy).
- Describe the chief use of the various biomedical therapies.

Chapter 13 Critical Thinking Skills Objectives

- Recognize situations in which placebo effects might occur.
- Recognize situations in which regression toward the mean may occur.
- Recognize the limitations of anecdotal evidence.

Chapter 14: Social Psychology and Behavior

- Identify the various types of bias in social cognition.
- Understand and identify the components of attitudes and the elements of persuasion.
- Identify common sense assertions that have or have not been supported by research in social psychology.

Critical Thinking Skills

- Judge the credibility of an information source.
- Recognize social influence strategies.

SCORING GUIDELINES
AP RUBRIC SCORES CONVERTED TO ESSAY GRADES

AP Revision Policy: For most assignments, except final or exam grades, students will have an opportunity to revise their essays after peer editing and/or scoring, before submission to teacher for final grading. After teacher grading and feedback, students will have opportunities to re-submit a revised essay, with the original essay attached, accompanied by a reflection which indicates student's self assessment of their performance, what they've changed (and why) in the revision, what they're unhappy with, and what goals they are setting for the next essay.

Each essay will have a possible point total which is determined by the call of the questions (identified in the prompt). The essay will be scored according to the AP Rubric for that specific exam essay. The score will be converted to a number out of 100; and the scale will be adjusted to a more rigorous scale as the year progresses so students can demonstrate their mastery of skills and proficiency in preparation for the AP exam. .

AP RUBRIC	Points	Essay Score (out of 100)		
Score	Earned	Pre Exam	2nd Semester	1st Semester
9	18/18	100	100	100
8	17/18	94	95	97
7	16/18	88	90	93
6	15/18	80	83	85
5	14/18	75	78	80
4	13/18	70	73	75
3	12/18	63	65	68
2	11/18	60	64	66
1	10/18	50	55	55
0 (submitted)	**9/18**	**50**	**50**	**50**

I have discussed the Classroom rules, procedures, guidelines and routines with the students. I have also discussed the appropriate behavior for the classroom. I will follow constructive disciplinary policies which will result should they fail to abide by either the District, school or classroom rules. I will use my best efforts to be fair and consistent in administering them. I will be available for any questions or problems and please feel free contact me by telephone through the school (323-441-4600) or by email (bbk2989@lausd.net). Please review these with your child, then sign and return only the bottom of the form to indicate that you have received and read it. The students are to keep the rules in their notebooks for reference. Thank you for your support.

Please sign and return the attached Acknowledgement to Ms. Beth Kennedy:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: _____ (Print Name) _____ (Period)

STUDENTS: I have read these Classroom Rules, Procedures, Guidelines and Routines and I understand and will abide by them.

Period: ____

_____ _____
Print Student Name Student Signature

FAMILY MEMBER: My child has reviewed the Classroom Rules, Procedures, Guidelines and Routines with me. I understand and will encourage my student to abide by them.

_____ _____
Print Parent/Guardian Name Parent/Guardian Signature

_____ _____
Phone: day/evening E-mail address (list all that apply)

***** IMPORTANT: PLEASE RETURN THESE SIGNATURES TO:**
Ms. Beth Kennedy by _____ (Date)