# 2014-15 AP Psychology Syllabus (210-1)

# R. Alexander Luhtjarv, M.Ed.

## Course Description

Psychology is the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. This course includes an equal balance of theory and practical application of the major themes and topics in the field. All aspects of the human experience are of interest to psychologists; consequently the expertise and vision of each member of our community of learners will vary according to his or her life and beliefs. The core content areas include the history of and different approaches to the practice of psychology, research methods, the biological basis of behavior, human development, sensation and perception, states of consciousness, learning, cognition, motivation, emotion, personality, intelligence, abnormal psychology, therapy, and social psychology. The critical thinking skills and emotional maturity of each student will be challenged and developed in this fast-paced, thorough, yet lively classroom experience designed to mimic the rigor of an introductory college course. Classroom discussion and active participation are vital and serve as a means of gauging your level of understanding. This course also prepares students to take the AP Psychology exam, administered annually in the spring, which may result in you receiving college credit at the institution you choose to attend.

## Course Reading

Myers, David G. (2012). Exploring Psychology in Modules (9th ed.), Holland, MI: Worth Publishing.

*(A large number and wide variety of primary source documents and secondary source readings are also used throughout the course to supplement the textbook.)*

## Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate proficiency of the two skills-based competencies in this course.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the content knowledge from the three content area competencies for this course.
3. Be prepared to pass the AP Psychology exam with a score of 3 or higher.
4. Apply knowledge from psychology to real world scenarios in your own life and in applications in other academic disciplines.
5. Practice some of the methods used by psychologists in helping clients.

## Course Competencies

*These competencies were designed using the Common Core Standards for Learning, the National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula and the 21st Century Learning Skills.*

**AP PSYCHOLOGY COMPETENCY 1 of 5: Acquiring Information**

**Competency Description:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in gathering information, establishing its meaning and determining its importance from a variety of primary and secondary sources in psychology.

**AP PSYCHOLOGY COMPETENCY 2 of 5: Analyzing Information**

**Competency Description:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in analyzing a variety of sources, evaluating for tone, purpose, significance and historical context, as well as identifying and correcting errors.

**AP PSYCHOLOGY COMPETENCY 3 of 5: Communicating Information**

**Competency Description:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in communicating

information in visually, orally and in writing, within the context of an

argument using relevant supporting evidence**.**

**AP PSYCHOLOGY COMPETENCY 4 of 5: Connecting Information**

**Competency Description:** Students will be able to take information and content knowledge and make connections to overarching themes and in their applications using multiple formats**.**

**AP PSYCHOLOGY COMPETENCY 5 of 5: Content Knowledge**

**Competency Description:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in the content knowledge of the significant terms, theories and methods in AP Psychology.

## Significant Dates

October 30, 2014 End of Quarter One

January 23, 2015 End of Quarter Two

April 6, 2015 End of Quarter Three

**May 4, 2015 AP Psychology Exam**

June 16, 2015 End of Quarter Four

### A Word About the AP Exam…

*While not required for credit, it is strongly recommended that all students enrolled in AP Psychology should take the College Board’s AP Psychology Exam. Students who receive a score of 3 (out of 5) or better on the exam have the opportunity to qualify for college credit at their future school and are able to bypass an introductory social science requirement. Scores are also communicated to colleges during the admissions process and can be a positive indication to school of a student’s potential for success in the college environment. Last year, 88% of students who took the AP Psychology Exam at H-DHS passed the exam, well above the national average. There is a fee to take the exam, but financial aid is available through Guidance. Regardless of whether a student elects to take the exam, all students must partake in all preparatory activities and assessments as part of the course.*

## Instructional Guidelines

In addition to the National Standards and course competencies, instruction is also shaped by guidelines issued by the College Board for all AP Psychology courses. These parameters include a detailed course outline of topics to be covered throughout the year, as well as a set of learning objectives. Both are used to shape my daily lesson plans and content coverage, as well as unit objectives. They can be found at the following link: <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/repository/ap-psychology-course-description>. pdf. Generally speaking, my lesson plans also incorporate a variety of the multiple intelligences on a daily basis.

## Assessment Policies

A variety of different assessment tools will be used to measure student performance that will include participation. Each assessment tool is designed to measure one of the course competencies, and my gradebook is structured accordingly. A mixture of formative and summative assessments will be used throughout the year to measure proficiency inside of each competency. Specifically, each assessment is given a weight expressed in points, with summative assessments weighed heavier than formative ones. At the end of each quarter, the total number of points earned inside of each competency will be divided by the total number of points assigned inside of each competency, with the five competencies being averaged together to produce the final quarter grade. All students are encouraged to complete course requirements in a timely and responsible manner. Late assignments are accepted, but penalized proportionally, maintaining the ability of the student to still earn proficient level credit.

## Materials Needed

• Students will be issued a textbook and lecture notes binder on the first day of class. Students may leave their textbook at home, but should plan on bringing their notes binder to every class period.

• Students should provide their own writing utensils, including a highlighter, if desired, for use in their notes binder. An addition 1”-1.5” binder is recommended for handouts and assignments.

• It is highly recommended for students to have regular access to a computer with at least word processing capability and an internet connection. Assignments may be emailed, but will only be accepted in Microsoft Word format.

## Extra Help and Communication

• Extra help is available before school every morning from 6:45-7:30 and most days after school 2:20-3:00 or longer, depending upon need. Further time is available by appointment, given 24-hours notice. Help is also available during class, my planning period, in Academic Support during and after school, as well as during appropriately scheduled PREP days.

• The best way to reach me is by email. My policy is to reply to all emails within 24 hours of their receipt, unless due to extenuating circumstances. My work email address is aluhtjarv@ hdsd.k12.nh.us and my home email address is [pavlov999206@hotmail.com](mailto:pavlov999206@hotmail.com). Additional information, documents and an assignment calendar are available on the website for this class accessible through the district’s site at [www.hdsd.org](http://www.hdsd.org). I can also be reached by leaving a message on my voice mail at 603-464-1177.

# 2014-15 AP Psychology

# Syllabus Signature Page

## Student Signature

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(Print Student Name)

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(Student Signature) (Date)

## Parent/Guardian Signature

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(Parent/Guardian Signature) (Date)

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Parent/Guardian Email Address

*Additional Questions or Comments?*