

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

PSYCHOLOGY

Ms. Swigert

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on individual behavior and why an individual thinks, feels, and reacts to certain stimuli. Major emphases will be placed on research methods, stages in childhood and adolescence, how the brain works, altered states of consciousness, psychological testing, and psychological disorders.

Note: This is a college prep course and requires advanced reading and critical thinking skills.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- ✓ Identify major contributors to the field of Psychology.
- ✓ Explain basic methods of psychological research.
- ✓ Apply major theories and stages of development (from infancy through adulthood) to their own lives as well as those around them.
- ✓ State, label, and describe basic parts and functions of the human brain.
- ✓ Compare and contrast functions of the brain's hemispheres
- ✓ Describe the research related to sleep and dreams.
- ✓ Outline the principles involved in sensation and perception.
- ✓ Break down and illustrate the principles and techniques surrounding classical and operant conditioning.
- ✓ Recall and explain the cognitive theorists' approach to the study of emotions.
- ✓ Identify ways of measuring test standardization, reliability, and validity.
- ✓ Explain the various views of intelligence.
- ✓ Describe and evaluate the major schools of personality theory.
- ✓ Summarize the major causes, symptoms, treatment, and prognoses of various psychological disorders including, but not limited to, anxiety, somatoform, dissociative, personality, and mood, as well as schizophrenia.
- ✓ Explain and differentiate between the various forms of psychotherapy ranging from psychoanalysis to cutting edge biological approaches to treatment.
- ✓ Demonstrate a mastery of the various theories pertaining to Social Psychology.

**Required Class Materials:**

- ✓ Textbook
- ✓ Notes
- ✓ Pen or pencil
- ✓ Notebook Paper
- ✓ Student Tracker
- ✓ Empty Shoe Box (with lid)

**Text:**

Understanding Psychology (Publisher: Glencoe: McGraw-Hill)

[www.psychology.glencoe.com](http://www.psychology.glencoe.com)

Reading excerpts and chapters from:

Reviving Ophelia (Mary Pipher)

The Psychology of the Simpsons (Ben Bella Books; Edited by Alan Brown)

### **Course Outline:**

(Subject to change due to time constraints, class size, and individual preference)

- ✓ Approaches to Psychology (including Research Methods and Statistics)
- ✓ The Life Span (Infancy, Childhood, Adolescence, Adulthood)
- ✓ The Workings of the Mind and Body (Altered States of Consciousness, Sensation, and Perception)
- ✓ Learning and Cognitive Processes
- ✓ Personality and Individuality
- ✓ Adjustment and Breakdown (Psychological Disorders and Therapy)
- ✓ Social Psychology (Social Influence and Sports Psychology)

### **Major Assignments:**

- ✓ Grade School Observations and Write-Ups (Chapters 2-4) (Sept/Oct)
- ✓ Videos of Life (outline your own life from infancy through adolescence via pictures and slides that are set to your own music) (Chapters 3-4) (Oct/Nov)
- ✓ Brain Models & Portfolio (Chapter 6) (Nov/Dec)
- ✓ Visit Neurobiology Lab at University of Illinois and/or Northwestern Hospital (if funding is available) (Chapter 2, 6) (Nov/Dec)
- ✓ Fractured Fairy Tales (Chapters 16-17) (Jan/Feb)
- ✓ Visit National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum (if funding is available) (museum focuses on Art Therapy for war veterans dealing with PTSD) (Chapters 16-17) (March)
- ✓ Defense Mechanisms Log & Position Paper (Chapter 14) (March)
- ✓ Trait Project (Chapter 14) (April)
- ✓ Goals Boxes (Ongoing throughout the year – students will need to bring a shoebox to class within the first week of school)
- ✓ Final Project – Research a famous person of your choice (actor, singer, pro-athlete, author, etc.) Research includes the reading of at least one biography, autobiography, and four other sources. Analyze the person's life by applying ALL psychological concepts covered in class. Final projects are presented on the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester Review Day and Final Exam Day. All students are REQUIRED to complete the final project, even if they are exempt from finals. However, any senior who qualifies for the exemption will be allowed to present on the Review Day. (May)

### **Grading:**

- ✓ Psychology grades are based on an accumulation of points throughout the semester.
- ✓ The point value for assignments will vary.
- ✓ Psychology is a “regular course,” and is considered a college-prep course.
- ✓ Grading Scale – as stated in the Handbook: 92-100 A, 85-91 B, 77-84 C, 70-76 D, below 70 F.
- ✓ The semester breakdown is that 85% of your final grade is your quarter grade and 15% of your final grade is your exam grade. Out of the quarter grade, about 60% of the points are from major assignments with the remainder coming from homework assignments and quizzes. The major assignments replace the traditional “test” in several of the units.
- ✓ Grades are updated at least once a week. Parents and students can monitor their grades via Skyward.

**Class Policies & Procedures:** It is up to the students to monitor their grades on a routine basis.

- ✓ It is up to the students to take care of any missing or late homework. The CHS late work and absent work policies (as stated in the Handbook) will be enforced. IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE CARE OF LATE WORK AND ABSENT WORK.
- ✓ Pre-arranged absences can be tricky. Please be aware of the guidelines stated in the Handbook regarding pre-arranged absences, as they will be followed in this course. Unless it is an emergency situation, students are expected to turn in any work they will be missing AHEAD of time. If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to contact me.
- ✓ The best way to alleviate any of these absence issues regarding homework and missing grades is to simply come to school! Attendance is especially important in Psychology class as most of the concepts are new and are much easier to understand through *classroom* demonstrations, discussions, etc.
- ✓ The class policies and procedures are best stated with three simple rules:
  - Please do not "pack up" when I am still teaching and/or other students are discussing. It is rude and distracting to all.
  - Please do not leave trash in the room (i.e. empty water bottles and gum wrappers).
  - Please be respectful to your classmates, your teacher, and yourself at all times.

### **Miscellaneous:**

Psychology is a great course to take if the student is college-bound. Nearly every higher level institution, whether it is a community college or university, requires every student to take an *Introduction to Psychology* course, regardless of their major. The Psychology course at CHS is a great tool to prepare students for college. Demonstrations and hands-on learning make the course a very unique and rewarding experience.

Psychology Club has evolved out of this course. Several students got together and organized the club in 2007. Being a Psychology Club member improves the student's chances of being able to attend field trips, lab visits, and other opportunities even if the student is no longer in the course. (For example, if the student takes Psychology his/her junior year, he/she can still attend trips and labs, as a senior, due to their club status.) There are no club dues; however, students are expected to participate in fundraisers when necessary.

### **Instructor Contact:**

- ✓ The best way to get a hold of me is through email ([rswigert@cusd4.org](mailto:rswigert@cusd4.org)) as I check it multiple times throughout the day.
- ✓ I am also available before school (7:45am – 8:05am) and during my prep periods (see below) by appointment or a phone call (815-694-2321).
  - Prep Period on A Days (1<sup>st</sup> semester): 9:50 – 11:15am
  - Prep Period on A Days (2<sup>nd</sup> semester): 8:15 – 9:45am
  - Prep Period on B Days (both semesters): 11:20am – 12:55pm