

Fall Semester 2011  
E Period  
Room 204  
Office Hours TBA

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## Advanced Social Studies: Psychology

Prepare to be involved, talkative and to read constantly for this class.

This class covers a variety of subjects that are important, relevant and interesting to high school students. It is not intended to cover all the aspects of psychology that a college survey course would cover. The material for the class comes in the form of lectures and discussions, presentations, films and reading

We will look at perception, memory and learning theory. We will examine the psychological problem of evil and discuss the social psychology that might help us to understand such behavior. We will spend a lot of time on memory: how it functions and how it can be developed.

In the second half of the class, we'll look at basic neuro-anatomy and discuss new developments in psychology related to our current greater understanding of the brain. We'll have classes focusing on emotion, child development and attachment, gender and sexuality, abnormal psychology, and the complexity of post-traumatic stress disorder, head trauma and epidemiology as it pertains to our returning war veteran population.

In addition to a class reader that I have assembled, we will be reading from the following books:

Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard

by Chip Heath and Dan Heath

The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil

by Philip G. Zimbardo

Phantoms in the Brain: Probing the Mysteries of the Human Mind

by V. S. Ramachandran , Sandra Blakeslee

The Philosophical Baby: What Children's Minds Tell Us About Truth,  
Love and the Meaning of Life  
by Alison Gopnik

Over the course of the semester, each student will present a lecture to the class on various topics in psychology and also participate in a group project looking at ways to motivate personal and institutional change.

The class is graded by the following rubric:

Reading completion will be tested with at least 3 quizzes and other written questions throughout the semester worth 30% of the grade

1 midterm essay exam, worth 20%

1 final essay exam, worth 20%

1 in class presentation by each student, worth 20%

Participation in a group project related to the reading in Switch, worth 10%

Class participation moves any grade up and interest and involvement count a lot.

This is a reading intensive class especially at the beginning of the semester.

The material presented is detailed, specific and complex. I expect most students to take in the big issues and I have told them that this is a fast helicopter ride over the vast territory of psychology. Hopefully some part of the course draws each student in and sets him or her to wanting more.