

PSYCHOLOGY

Welcome to Psychology ! I am looking forward to a new and exciting semester. Psychology, as you may know, is the study of behavior and mental activity. This opens up to us various areas of study, many of which apply to our everyday lives. In order to get the most out of this course, you will need to apply the information to yourself and your life. Each and everyone of us is a unique individual, therefore our personal applications are all different. The more you personalize the information, the closer you will get to achieving the goals of the course. You will have the opportunity to do this in your reflective journals and contract work. As juniors and seniors in an elective course, I will be asking you to assume responsibility for your own learning.

The following are the goals, expectations and grading policy for the course.

GOALS

1. Understanding Yourself

Why you act the way you do

Recognize nature and consequences of personal difficulties

Understand lifelong learning process and your boundless potential

Discover new interests and abilities

Only one person can be responsible for your life - YOU

2. Understanding Others

Recognize emotional responses that keep people apart

Understand what makes friends "tick"

Better equipped to cope with different values and crises common to others

3. Understanding Society

Appreciate freedom of choice

Work for self-fulfillment

Understand why the increase in hostility and crime

Informed citizens make better solutions

Students and parents should feel free to contact me with questions or concerns at any time. Parents can contact me by calling the school (447-7511) and leaving a message with a convenient time to call back or by e-mailing me at pmears@svsu.org. I will return your call/e-mail as soon as possible. Students can usually find me in Room 239 most of the day or in the Humanities office. Thank you.

Patti Mears
Psychology

CLASS EXPECTATIONS

- **RESPECT.** Students will show *respect* for **themselves, others**, and the **environment**. Inappropriate language and/or disruptive behavior will **not** be tolerated. A good class happens when people feel free to share their thoughts and ideas without being put down by others.
- **RESPONSIBILITY.** Students need to assume responsibility for their own learning and behavior. This includes regular attendance, getting to class on time, responsible behavior, completing assignments in a timely manner, and making up work missed from absences. Much of what we do in class will be based on discussion and reflection. Regular attendance will be extremely important to the student as well as to the class as a whole.
- **READINESS** Students will come to class prepared and on time. This includes bringing one's textbook, notebook, writing utensil, completed homework assignments, and most importantly, a positive attitude toward learning. Students must also be prepared to listen and actively participate.

GRADING - Grading will involve a variety of techniques including self assessment.

- 1/3 of your grade will be based on unit exams, quizzes, and alternative assessments
- 1/3 of your grade will be based on homework, journals, cooperative group work and class readiness and participation.
- 1/3 of your grade will be based on individual contract work

Final Exam - The students' final exam will be worth 20% of their final grade. This will include a final project/presentation (10%) and a written exam (10%).

DISCIPLINE AND ATTENDANCE

Discipline and attendance policies follow the guidelines in the student handbook.

REFLECTIVE JOURNALS

Each student will be required to keep a *reflective* journal. The journal will include various types of entries but should always be the student's *personal reflections* on the information/issue. Entries may include the following:

- Daily reflections on information/activities in class.
- Opinions/thoughts on controversial issues.
- Personalizing information from the text. (minimum of 15 terms)
- Free writes on topics of their choice.

You will often need to include factual material but the *emphasis should be on your own reflections/opinions*. I encourage you to be as creative as possible and use a variety of forms to express yourself. Some possibilities are poetry, storytelling, diary entries, letter writing etc.

CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Contract work is a series of independent projects that a student selects to do to increase his/her understanding of psychology. The goal is to encourage each student to create projects that correspond with their *individual learning styles* as well as their particular *interests*. I strongly encourage students to select projects/topics that are of interest to them personally. It makes learning easier and much more meaningful.

Each project is worth a certain number of points. The points accumulate to form one third of their grade. The final contract grade is based on the 100 point system that follows.

- A = 90 - 100 points with all work to be of *excellent quality* (no more than 1 late/make up assignment per quarter)
- B = 80 - 89 points with all work to be of *good quality* (no more than 2 late/make up assignments per quarter)
- C = 70 - 79 points with all work to be of *good quality* (no more than 3 late/make up assignments per quarter)
- D = 65 - 69 points with all work to meet *minimum standards* (no more than 4 late/make up assignments per quarter)
- F = Any student not meeting minimum standards and/or earning less than 64 points

*** Points will be determined by the quality of the work as well as the difficulty of the material.

Breakdown of Points per Grading Period

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
A =	23-25	45-50	68-75	90 -100
B =	20-22	40-44	60-67	80-89
C =	18-19	35-39	53-59	70-79
D =	16-17	32-34	48-52	65-69
F =	Less than 16	32	48	65

Contract Guidelines

1. **A minimum of one assignment is due each week until all points are acquired.** If absent, it should be turned in the day you return to class. You may hand in contract work early.
2. Points must be earned in a variety of categories. Each student is encouraged to do at least **one oral presentation**. Community service and interdisciplinary work is also strongly encouraged. Use the many resources available to you.
3. All work must be retained in your folder for the full semester. This is for your own protection.
4. Please contact me with any questions you may have before starting a project for the first time. I am also open to new suggestions and will negotiate their point value.

Due Dates

Block 3 - Friday

CATEGORIES	Point Value
Guest Speaker (maximum - 2/semester)	0 - 5
Observations (maximum - 2/semester)	0 - 5
Abstracts (magazine articles)	0 - 5
Media (TV documentaries, movies)	0 - 5
Music/Poem Interpretations	0 - 5
Posters (maximum - 2/semester)	0 - 5
Interviews	0 - 5
Report (minimum of 3 sources)	0 - 5
Book Report	0 - 10
Teach Class	0 - 10
Project (example - video)	0 - 10
Community Service (10 hours minimum)	0 - 10
Other projects - see attached page	

Point Value

5 = excellent 4 = very good 3 = acceptable 2 = fair 1 = poor

I feel, as a teacher and a parent, that keeping the lines of communication open between home and school is important. Therefore, I ask that you share this information with your parent(s) or guardian so that there are no surprises later on. Thanks! Have a great year!