

To the Student

You are about to begin a course that is one of the most popular on campus. The introductory psychology course is so popular because it discusses so many aspects of your life. It discusses how your brain functions, what happens when you sleep, how you learned to be anxious during exams, what an IQ score means, why you develop psychosomatic symptoms, how your personality changes, what are abnormal behaviors, why your social perception of others is probably inaccurate, and many more questions that affect your life. This course also discusses many of the techniques that help you overcome such common problems as how to reduce stress, stay on a diet, overcome insomnia, relieve mild depression, improve your memory, and reduce anger. As you can see, you will learn a lot about yourself in this course.

What am I in for?

Many people think that psychology is just common sense. We'll guarantee that if you used just common sense, you would never pass this course. That's because much of our common sense about human behavior is either inaccurate or just wrong. For example, using just your common sense, decide whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F).

Is this course going to be hard?

- T F You only use about 50 percent of your brain.
- T F IQ tests measure natural intelligence.
- T F The first five years of your life are critical for the development of your personality.
- T F Eyewitness testimony is always accurate.
- T F You can learn a foreign language by listening to a recording during sleep.
- T F Psychosomatic problems are imaginary.
- T F The best way to get over an intense fear is to always avoid the feared thing.

Based on common sense, you may decide that some of these statements are true. Based on what psychologists have discovered, all of these statements are false. Psychologists were able to discover the falsity of these statements by analyzing and studying behavior systematically. This course will not only introduce you to this system of discovery, but also tell you about all the things that psychologists have discovered. Learning all the terms, concepts, and theories will be hard, but it will also be challenging, interesting, and rewarding. Learning all these things will also improve your common sense.

What's different about this textbook?

As you begin reading this text, you will immediately notice that it is unlike any other. Every chapter is divided into 3 or 4 **Modules** that are only about 10 pages long. This means that the material is broken down into small, manageable units. You will notice that each module begins with a real-life example and that each page has questions in the margins. The examples and **Marginal Questions** will spark your interest and introduce you to the material. As you continue reading, you will discover that there are short tests after major theories and concepts. These brief tests, called **Major Concept** exercises, signal the important concepts and test your

memory and understanding of them. Each module ends with an interesting and challenging test, the **Review**. By completing the review, you can determine how well you remember and understand the material as well as discover which material needs extra studying. You will notice that upon completing a Review you will also have a list of important terms, which are also defined in the **Glossary** at the end of the book. We suggest that you work on a module until you have mastered the Review. Only then should you go on to read and master a new module. If you would like additional help in mastering a module, you can use the separate *Student Organizer and Self-Testing Book*, which gives you step-by-step help in how to study as well as a chance to test your mastery by answering multiple-choice questions.

Now that we've told you about the course and the textbook, you're ready to begin. Here's your chance to use 100 percent of your brain.