Welcome to AP Psychology, Semesters 1 & 2

This course is meticulously designed to align with state standards and targeted learning objectives, ensuring comprehensive coverage of essential knowledge and skills required for student success.

Course Description:
Delve into the fascinating realm of human behavior and the mind in this advanced, self-paced course. Explore the intricacies of psychological theories, research methods, and mental processes. Analyze human cognition, emotions, and behaviors to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of the human psyche.

Throughout the course, students will engage with foundational and contemporary psychological concepts, preparing them for the AP Psychology exam while fostering critical thinking skills applicable to real-world situations.

Units and Learning Outcomes

Semester 1:
Unit 1: Introduction to Psychology and Research Methods
- Understand the definition of psychology and its various fields of study.
- Explore key psychological approaches, including behaviorism, cognitive psychology, humanism, and psychodynamic theory.
- Analyze research methods, including experimental, correlational, and observational studies, and understand ethical considerations in psychological research.

Unit 2: Biological Bases of Behavior
- Examine the structure and function of the brain, nervous system, and endocrine system.
- Explore how neurotransmitters and hormones influence behavior, mood, and cognition.
- Understand the concept of brain plasticity and the role of genetics in psychological traits.

Unit 3: Sensation and Perception
- Study the process of sensation, how sensory information is received, and how the brain interprets it.
- Explore the factors that influence perception, including attention, context, and individual differences.
- Analyze the processes of depth perception, color vision, and sensory adaptation.

Unit 4: States of Consciousness
- Understand the various states of consciousness, including sleep, dreaming, hypnosis, and altered states.
- Analyze the stages of sleep and the impact of sleep deprivation on behavior and cognition.
- Study psychoactive drugs and their effects on the brain and behavior.

Semester 2:
Unit 5: Learning and Memory
- Explore the theories of classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning.
- Examine the processes involved in memory, including encoding, storage, and retrieval.
- Analyze the various types of memory, such as sensory, short-term, and long-term memory, and understand factors that affect memory retention.

Unit 6: Cognition and Intelligence
- Investigate the processes of problem-solving, decision-making, and language development.
- Study theories of intelligence, including the theories of Spearman, Gardner, and Sternberg.
- Analyze intelligence testing, including its history, cultural implications, and the concept of emotional intelligence.

Unit 7: Motivation and Emotion

- Understand the biological and psychological factors that influence motivation.
- Explore major theories of motivation, including drive theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and self-determination theory.
- Study the physiological, cognitive, and social components of emotion, as well as the physiological responses to stress.

Unit 8: Developmental Psychology

- Explore the major theories of human development, including cognitive, social, and emotional growth.
- Study stages of development from infancy to late adulthood, examining physical, cognitive, and emotional milestones.
- Understand the impact of genetics and environment on development, as well as major theories of attachment and parenting styles.

Unit 9: Psychological Disorders and Treatment

- Examine common psychological disorders, including anxiety, mood, personality, and psychotic disorders.
- Study the diagnostic criteria and classification systems used in psychology, such as the DSM-5.
- Explore therapeutic techniques, including psychotherapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and biomedical treatments.

Unit 10: Social Psychology

- Investigate how individuals behave in groups and the influence of social factors on behavior.
- Study topics such as conformity, obedience, group dynamics, and interpersonal relationships.
- Explore the psychological basis of prejudice, aggression, and attraction, and understand the role of social perception and cognition.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of major psychological theories, research methods, and concepts.
- Analyze the biological, psychological, and social factors that influence human behavior and mental processes.
- Apply psychological principles to understand real-life situations, including motivation, learning, cognition, and emotion.
- Critically evaluate psychological research and its applications to everyday life.
- Prepare for the AP Psychology exam by demonstrating mastery of key topics, theories, and practices in the field.

Conclusion:

This self-paced AP Psychology course offers an in-depth exploration of human behavior and mental processes, equipping students with the knowledge and critical thinking skills needed to succeed in both the AP exam and in understanding the complexities of the human mind.

From the biological foundations of behavior to the intricacies of psychological disorders, students will gain a holistic understanding of psychology's core concepts, preparing them for future studies in the field. Upon completion, students will have a strong foundation in psychology that extends beyond the classroom and into real-world applications.