

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Division of Social Science
SOSC1960 Discovering Mind and Behavior
Course Syllabus
Fall Semester 2020

Lecture Time: Tuesday, Thursday 10:30AM - 11:50AM

Venue:

Teaching Team:

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Course Description

This course aims to provide a broad overview of the scientific studies of human thought and behavior. It explores questions such as: Do we inherit intelligence from our mothers? How do babies learn how to talk? How do we treat depression? and many more. The course is suitable for students who want to acquire basic understanding of psychology and is a prerequisite for those who want to study psychology further.

Intended Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Appreciate the scientific basis of psychology and describe how psychology research is conducted
2. Describe key fundamental knowledge about human thinking and behavior processes
3. Analyze human thought and behavior with reference to psychological concepts

Communication platform

<http://canvas.ust.hk>

Learning activities

1. *Lectures.* The lectures introduce the science of human mind and behavior through a variety of activities. They form the foundation of your learning in this course. Lecture slides will be available on Canvas one day before each lecture. Note that some contents (mainly examples) will be removed from the uploaded version; this is to encourage you to take your own notes and generate your own examples.
2. *Readings.* Required and recommended reading lists are provided for those who are interested to learn more deeply about a topic.
3. *Research experience (5% x 2).* The science of human mind and behavior advances through empirical research. There are opportunities for you to observe how such research is conducted. You will complete two tasks:

- Research study: Complete a real research study online as a participant and learn firsthand how it is conducted. Write a thought piece (within 100 to 300 words) about your experience.
- Research exercise: Watch a video about a research study. Write a thought piece (within 100 to 300 words) about the study.

Your writings will be graded on a pass/fail basis. For failed cases, students will receive comments and have a chance to rewrite and resubmit with a one-point deduction.

Submission deadline: **5:00 pm, 30 September 2020**

4. *Learning journal* (5% x 4). For some main themes in this course, you will write up a reflection to explain and illustrate how your learning experience has transformed your understanding of yourself, other people, and the world, and/or how it has transformed yourself as a person. Your reflection will be graded as pass/ fail. It must show your effort and thinking. If you fail, you will receive feedback on your work and be given one chance to revise and resubmit with a one-point deduction. Submission deadlines: **5:00 pm** on the following dates:
 - Foundation and the physical basis of mind and behavior: **5 October 2020**
 - Basic cognitive functions: **21 October 2020**
 - Thoughts, emotion, and reason: **11 November 2020**
 - Self and others: **25 November 2020**
5. *Essay* (30%). The essay requires that you apply some concepts that you learned in class. It is a short essay. You don't have to write a lot, but you have to express yourself clearly. A workshop on 15 October 2020 will give you some pointers on how to write a good essay. Submission deadline: **5:00 pm, 18 November 2020**.
6. *Quizzes* (20% x 2). The quizzes will be in MCQ format and are meant to assess your conceptual understanding. Materials discussed in the lectures are tested.
 - Quiz 1 covers lecture # 1-9 and will be held during lecture time. Start time **10:30 AM, 27 October 2020**.
 - Quiz 2 covers lecture # 10-20 and will be held during lecture time. Start time **10:30 AM, 3 December 2020**.

(Detailed guidelines regarding these learning activities will be released in due course.)

Schedule (subject to minor changes)

Date	Lecture #	Topic	Theme
8-Sep		Introduction	
10-Sep	1	Historical perspective	Foundation
15-Sep	2	The scientific method	Foundation
17-Sep	3	Statistical thinking	Foundation
22-Sep	4	Nature and nurture	Physical basis of mind and behavior
24-Sep	5	The brain	Physical basis of mind and behavior
29-Sep	6	How we see 1	Basic cognitive functions
1-Oct		Holiday	
6-Oct	7	How we see 2	Basic cognitive functions
8-Oct	8	Learning and memory 1	Basic cognitive functions
13-Oct	9	Learning and memory 2	Basic cognitive functions
15-Oct		Writing workshop	
20-Oct	10	Language	Thoughts, emotion, reason
22-Oct	11	Intelligence	Thoughts, emotion, reason
27-Oct	12	Quiz 1; Emotion	Thoughts, emotion, reason
29-Oct	13	Judgment and decision making	Thoughts, emotion, reason
3-Nov	14	Consciousness	Thoughts, emotion, reason
5-Nov		Essay consultation	
10-Nov	15	Developmental psychology	Self and others
12-Nov	16	Personality	Self and others
17-Nov	17	Social psychology	Self and others
19-Nov	18	Psychological disorders 1	The dark side and the bright side
24-Nov	19	Psychological disorders 2	The dark side and the bright side
26-Nov	20	Treatments for psychological disorders	The dark side and the bright side
1-Dec	21	Positive psychology	The dark side and the bright side
3-Dec		Quiz 2	

Suggested textbooks (on Library Course Reserve)

Cacioppo, J. and Freberg, L. (2019). *Discovering Psychology: The Science of Mind*. 3rd ed. Boston: Cengage Learning.

Points to note

1. *Learning attitude*. Be active in class, ask questions, give answers. Your participation not only helps you learn more but also enables us to teach better! Think about what you want to learn and how you are going to learn them. Use grades, scores, and comments from us to understand how much and how well you have learned and how you can improve.

2. *Academic integrity.* We will thoroughly investigate every suspect case of cheating or plagiarism. We will heavily penalize confirmed cases and report them to the Head of the Division of Social Science for further review or action. Read <http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/index.html>. Make sure you understand what constitute academic honesty.
3. *Penalties.* Penalties apply to assignments that are submitted late or over the word limit. Find the details in each assignment's respective guidelines.
4. *Make-up exam.* A make-up exam will be granted to absentees with a medical condition. Other requests for a make-up exam will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Find the details in the respective guidelines.
5. *Student feedback.* Two course feedback sessions, one in the middle and the other (the standard university SFQ) at the end of the course, will be conducted. You are also encouraged to speak with us directly about any concerns or questions you may have about the course.