

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Division of Social Science
SOSC1960 Discovering Mind and Behavior (L2)
Course Syllabus
Spring Semester 2021

Lecture Time: Monday, Wednesday 12:00 - 13:20

Venue: Zoom (link in Canvas)

Teaching Team:

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Course Description

This course aims to provide a broad overview of the scientific studies of the human mind 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 (ILO)

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 mind and behavior.
3. Analyze human thinking processes and behaviors 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 (polls, demonstrations, videos, class discussion, etc.). They form the foundation of your learning in this course. Past studies have shown that lecture attendance and participation facilitate learning and predict course grades.
 - 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.
 - Some lectures require you to read a short article, watch a video, or do a short questionnaire beforehand. You can find a list of the required readings below. Recommended readings (if any) will be listed at the end of the lecture notes.

- If you miss a lecture, you can access the recording on Canvas. It will be available at the latest one day after each lecture.
2. *Research experience* (5% x 2, ILO#1). 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. If you fail, you will receive comments and have a chance to rewrite and resubmit with a one-point deduction.

3. *Learning journal* (5% x 4, ILO#2,3). 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 human mind and behavior. It must show good attempts at either relating the new knowledge you learned in the course to your prior knowledge or applying it to an example from your daily life. Your reflection will be graded as pass/ fail. If you fail, you will receive feedback on your work and be given one chance to revise and resubmit with a one-point deduction.

These are the four themes for the learning journals (please refer to the lecture schedule for the corresponding lecture topics):

- Physical basis of mind and behavior (lecture # 4-7)
 - Cognitive functions (lecture # 8-11)
 - Thoughts, emotion, and reason (lecture # 12-14)
 - Self and others (lecture # 15-17)
4. *Essay* (30%, ILO#1,2,3). The essay requires you to apply some concepts that you learned in class. The word limit is between 500 to 800 words. A workshop on 17 March 2021 will give you some pointers on how to write a good essay.
 5. *Quizzes* (20% x 2, ILO#1,2,3). The quizzes will be in MCQ format and are meant to assess your conceptual understanding. They will be held during lecture time. Both quizzes will be done in Canvas. Materials discussed in the lectures are tested (please refer to the lecture schedule for the corresponding lecture topics):
 - Quiz 1 covers lecture # 1-11.
 - Quiz 2 covers lecture # 12-19.

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

Assessment Dates and Deadlines

Research Study	26 Feb	12 noon
Research Exercise	26 Feb	12 noon
Learning Journal 1 (Physical basis of mind and behavior)	09 Mar	12 noon
Quiz 1	22 Mar	12:00 – 12:30
Learning Journal 2 (Cognitive functions)	25 Mar	12 noon
Learning Journal 3 (Thoughts, emotion, and reason)	15 Apr	12 noon
Essay	20 Apr	12 noon
Learning Journal 4 (Self and others)	29 Apr	12 noon
Quiz 2	05 May	12:00 – 12:30

Lecture Schedule

Note that this schedule may be subject to minor changes. Lectures with required readings are marked by “RR#”. You can find a list of the required readings in the next section.

Week	Date	Theme	Lecture # and Topic
1	1 Feb		Introduction
1	3 Feb	Foundation	1. History of psychology
2	8 Feb		2. The scientific method
2	10 Feb		3. Statistical thinking (RR#1)
3	15 Feb		Public holiday
3	17 Feb	Physical basis of mind and behavior	4. Nature and nurture (RR#2)
4	22 Feb		5. The brain
4	24 Feb		6. Sensation and perception 1
5	1 Mar		7. Sensation and perception 2
5	3 Mar	Cognitive functions	8. Consciousness
6	8 Mar		9. Learning
6	10 Mar		10. Memory
7	15 Mar		11. Intelligence (RR#3)
7	17 Mar		Writing workshop
8	22 Mar		Quiz 1
8	24 Mar	Thoughts, emotion, reason	12. Thoughts and language
9	29 Mar		13. Emotion
9	31 Mar		Mid-term break
9	5 Apr		Mid-term break
9	7 Apr		14. Decision making (RR#4)
10	12 Apr		Essay consultation
10	14 Apr	Self and others	15. Developmental psychology
11	19 Apr		16. Personality (RR#5)
11	21 Apr		17. Social psychology
12	26 Apr	The dark side and the bright side	18. Psychological disorders 1
12	28 Apr		19. Psychological disorders 2 (RR#6)
13	3 May		20. Positive psychology

13	5 May	Quiz 2
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Required Readings

Please complete these before coming to the lecture sessions indicated in brackets. You need to access #3 and #5 online, for the rest, pdf copies are available in Canvas Files.

1. Beauty is in the eye of the beer holder (10 February)
2. Everything's a little bit heritable (17 Feb)
3. The power of believing that you can improve ([link to video here](#)) (15 March)
4. Making good decisions (7 April)
5. Personality measurement ([link to site here](#)) (19 April)
6. Stigma, prejudice and discrimination against people with mental illness (28 Apr)

Suggested Textbook (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 constitutes academic honesty.
3. *Penalties*. Penalties apply to assignments that are submitted late or over the word limit. Find the details in the assignment guidelines.
4. *Make-up quiz*. Make-up quiz will be granted only to absentees with medical condition, which is supported by a medical certificate. Other requests for make-up quiz will generally not be catered to. More details will be made available in the assignment guidelines.
5. *Student feedback*. Two course feedback sessions will be conducted: a mid-term survey and the end-of-semester university SFQ. You are also encouraged to email or speak with the teaching team directly about any concerns or questions you may have about the course. We will respond to your email within 2 business days.