

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus

SOSC1969 Discovering Mind and Behavior (Spring 2026)

3 Credits

Instructor

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*When emailing us, please **prefix the subject line** with the course code [SOSC1969-Spring26]. Use your university email account only.

Do NOT leave messages in the Canvas inbox.

Lecture Time: **Wed, Fri 15:00 – 16:20**

Venue: **LTE**

Course Description

This course introduces the fundamental scientific knowledge about human thinking and behavior processes, and illustrates the relevance of this knowledge to the betterment of human performance and well-being in a wide variety of settings in the society.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

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

1. recognize some fundamental scientific concepts about human mind and behavior;
2. analyze human performance and well-being in various social settings with reference to these concepts; AND
3. explain how scientific research on human mind and behavior is conducted.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided below, outlining the criteria used for evaluation.

Lecture Reflection (20%):

- In two designed lectures, students have to complete some questions to consolidate their understanding of the psychological concepts covered. Questions will be released on Canvas. **Deadline: by 23:59 (HKT) of the corresponding lecture day.** More details about the deadline are as follows. No submission is allowed after the deadline.

Lecture Topics	Deadline
L4 – Human Memory	By 23:59 (HKT), 4/3/2026
L9 – Health and Mind	By 23:59 (HKT), 22/4/2026

Tutorial Reflection (15%):

- The course will include a variety of in-class activities throughout the semester. These activities are designed to engage students to evaluate on the empirical evidence of the key concepts covered. Questions will be released on Canvas. **Deadline: by 23:59 (HKT) of the corresponding tutorial day.**

Quizzes (30%*2):

- Two quizzes will be administered to test your understanding of course materials. The quiz will include multiple-choice questions only and non-cumulative (The relevant chapters will appear on the last page of the lecture handouts).
- Supplementary readings are also listed in the lecture note but they will NOT be included in the quizzes. These readings are useful for a deeper understanding of the course contents.
- Please arrive on time for the quiz as no additional time will be given for students arriving late.
- No make-up quizzes will be given to students who are absent from the examination unless students can provide validated medical reasons. You should notify the teaching team (through email) about your absence by attaching your official medical certificate **within 24 hours of the original exam date** if you wish to arrange for a make-up quiz. All make-up quizzes will ONLY be in the form of essay questions.

Research Experience (5%):

- To gain more insights about psychological research, students can choose to either (a) participate in a research study OR (b) complete a video exercise. Some reflective questions will be completed in both activities.

Summary

Assessment Tasks	Contribution to Overall Course Grade (%)	Due Date
Lecture Reflection	20%	By 23:59 (HKT), 4/3 & 22/4/2026
Tutorial Reflection	15%	By 23:59 (HKT), 13/3 & 6/5/2026
Quiz 1	30%	18/3/2026
Quiz 2	30%	8/5/2026
Research Experience	5%	9/5/2026

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Tasks	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
Lecture Reflection	ILO1, ILO2	This task assesses students' ability to understand the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology (ILO1) and to critically reflect on the application of these psychological concepts to their real-life experience (ILO2).
Tutorial Reflection	ILO2, ILO3	This task assesses students' ability to reflect on the application of the key psychological concepts (ILO2) with the support of the research evidence (ILO3).
Quiz	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3	Quizzes are designed to assess students' understanding and familiarity of the fundamental knowledge, key concepts (ILO1), and how these concepts can be applied and related to social settings (ILO2), as well as the implications of the research findings in psychology (ILO3).
Research Experience	ILO3	This task provides student with the first-hand experience in how psychological research is conducted (ILO3). Students can choose from participating in a research study or reflecting on a video describing psychological research and reflect on some questions about psychological research.

Final Grade Descriptors

Grades	Short Description	Elaboration on Grading Description
A	Excellent Performance	Demonstrates a deep understanding of the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology. Familiarizes very well with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in psychology. Exhibits exceptional critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Reasonably applies the concepts to real-life setting with practicality.
B	Good Performance	Shows good understanding of fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology. Familiarizes well with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in psychology. Exhibits good critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Applies the concepts to real-life setting with practicality.

C	Satisfactory Performance	Possesses adequate understanding of fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology. Demonstrates satisfactory familiarity with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in psychology, but with some misunderstandings. Shows satisfactory critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Applies the concepts to real-life setting, but with limited practicality.
D	Marginal Pass	Has very basic understanding of fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology. Shows minimal familiarity with the implications of classical and contemporary findings in psychology. Shows limited critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Applies the concepts to real-life setting with minimal practicality.
F	Fail	Demonstrates insufficient understanding of fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology. Lacks critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Unable to apply the concepts to real-life setting and with no practicality.

Course AI Policy

The use of GenAI in the Writing Assignment is permitted. Students have to sign a declaration and include the prompts requested.

Communication and Feedback

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within two weeks of submission. Feedback on assignments will include comments on strengths and areas for improvement. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Late Submission Policy

NO submission will be accepted after the deadline. Any unanticipated technical errors or submission errors would NOT be considered. This policy will be strictly enforced; NO exception will be made. To ensure that your efforts are reflected in the course grade, please make sure to do your submission well before the deadline.

Recommended Reading Resources

Noba Project. (2023). *Introduction to Psychology*. <http://noba.to/7hymnvpc> (Recommended units of chapters can be referred in the table below)

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University

has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.

Other Notes

Interaction in Class

Interactions (both verbal and non-verbal) between the teaching team and the students (and among students) are one of the key ingredients to an optimal learning experience. Your active participation in class discussions or activities will not only enhance your learning, but also motivate the teaching team to do better! Stay behind the class and share with me your thoughts about the course contents.

Lecture Slides

Lecture slides will be posted to Canvas before each class, but the contents will be slightly different from the displayed slides. I hope to encourage you to take your notes. Note-taking facilitates your reflection and assimilation of the lecture contents.

Communication

Expect that your emails will be responded to during weekdays 10 am to 6 pm HKT. Do NOT inbox your message on Canvas.

Teaching Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Units
1	Feb 4	Introduction to the Course	1
	Feb 6	[L1] Discovering Psychology	
2	Feb 11	[L2] Research Methods in Psychology	2
	Feb 13		
3	Feb 18	<i>Lunar New Year</i>	
	Feb 20		
4	Feb 25	[L3] Psychology of Learning	3
	Feb 27	[L4] Human Memory*	
5	Mar 4	4	
	Mar 6		
6	Mar 11	[L5] Human Development	7
	Mar 13	[Tutorial 1]	
7	Mar 18	Quiz 1 (L1 to L5)	
	Mar 20		
8	Mar 25	[L6] Personality	8
	Mar 27	[L7] Social and Collective Behaviors	
9	Apr 1		9
	Apr 3		
	Apr 8		
	Apr 10		
10	Apr 15	[L8] Consciousness and Sleep	5
	Apr 17	[L9] Health and Mind*	
11	Apr 22	10	
	Apr 24		
12	Apr 29	[L10] Psychological Disorders	11
	May 1	<i>Labor Day</i>	
13	May 6	[Tutorial 2]	
	May 8		
Quiz 2 (L5 to L8)			

Grading Rubrics for Students

Lecture Reflection (20%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Marginal	Fail	Mapping to Course ILOs
Quality of Reflection	Provides insightful reflections that critically analyse the material and its relevance to personal experiences. Demonstrates a deep understanding of the lecture material.	Offers thoughtful reflections with some analysis of the material's relevance. Shows a good understanding of the material.	Includes basic reflections but lacks critical analysis or depth. Displays adequate understanding of the material.	Provides minimal reflection with little analysis or relevance. Shows limited understanding of the material; personal connections are vague or unclear.	No reflection or analysis provided. Fails to demonstrate understanding of the material; no personal connections made.	ILO1, ILO2
Clarity and Organization	Writing is well-structured, clear, and coherent, making it easy to follow.	Writing is generally clear and organized, with minor issues in coherence.	Writing is understandable but lacks clear organization or has several unclear sections.	Writing is poorly organized and difficult to follow.	Writing is incoherent or not submitted.	ILO1, ILO2

Tutorial Reflection (15%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Marginal	Fail	Mapping to Course ILOs
Quality of Reflection	<p>Provides thoughtful reflections and evaluation on discussion questions after each tutorial.</p> <p>Demonstrates deep understanding and critical analysis on the psychological concepts discussed in tutorials.</p>	<p>Offers good reflections that show understanding of the questions, with some analysis in most tutorials.</p> <p>Demonstrates good understanding and critical analysis on the psychological concepts discussed in tutorials.</p>	<p>Includes basic reflections but lacks depth or critical analysis of the questions in several tutorials.</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding and critical analysis of the psychological concepts discussed in tutorials.</p>	<p>Provides minimal reflection that lacks insight or relevance to the discussion questions in most tutorials.</p> <p>Demonstrates several misunderstandings and critical analysis of psychological concepts discussed in tutorials.</p>	<p>No reflection provided or reflections are irrelevant to the discussion questions in all tutorials.</p> <p>Demonstrates a number of misunderstandings of psychological concepts discussed in tutorials.</p>	ILO2, ILO3