PS3031: Conceptual Issues and Theoretical Perspectives in Psychology

Semester	Semester 1 2022
Meeting times	Thursday Location to be confirmed. In person lectures and tutorials if restrictions permit
Credits	SCOTCAT credits: 10 ECTS credits: 5
Module summary	This module aims to develop an advanced understanding of the historical and philosophical background to current debates in psychology. Teaching will be based on lectures, seminars and practicals in which class members will be expected to play an active part (group discussions on key readings followed by class discussion), based on reading of original material. Emphasis will be placed on the development of the skill of critical evaluation of alternative models and levels of explanations of behaviour, with a particular focus on some current debates and critiques of psychology.
Prerequisites & Anti-requisites	Prerequisites: PS2002 Available only to students in either year of the Honours programme.
Assessment	Essay (1000 words) 100%, **Wednesday 26th October 2022, 12:00, Week 7**
Staff	Module Coordinator: Paul Gardner Room: 1.01 Email: Paul Gardner's Email Address plg@st-andrews.ac.uk

Timetable

Week	Date	Lecture Theme & Assignment Dates	Tutorial Sessions
1	15/09/2022	**Introduction to the module.** In this session I will outline the aims and objectives of the course and offer an overview of our journey	10 Myths in Psychology Task 1: What is a human essay (500 words)
2	22/09/2022	**What is this thing called science? (and pseudoscience)** You might have thought that this was obvious but the history of science is littered with comment and criticism. This lecture will explore these critiques.	What is a human? Task 2: A non-Western science powerpoint slide
3	29/09/22	A history of Psychology – My western bias and your global perspective	A global perspective. Task 3: My favourite, most-influential psychology experiment or person (500 words)
4	06/10/2022	**Models of the person and society I: Philosophical perspectives.** A case study – children in deprived circumstances and our understanding of development	What are the great studies in Psychology?
5	13/10/2022	**Models of the person and society II: Twentieth Century thought.** Some big ideas and re-interpretations of some old stories	Themes, perspectives and consequences.
6	17/10/2022	Independent Learning Week	

Suggested background reading

Brysbaert, M. and Rastle, K. (2009) Historical and Conceptual Issues in Psychology. London: Pearson.

Bem, S. and de Jong, H.L. (1997) Theoretical Issues in Psychology. London: Sage Publications.

Bolton, N. (Ed) (1979) *Philosophical problems in psychology.* London: Methuen and Co.

Chalmers, A.F. (1999) *What is this thing called science?* Open University Press

Dunbar, R. (1996) *The trouble with science.* London: Faber and Faber

Stanovich, K. (2001) *How to think straight about psychology.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Thomson, A. (2002) *Critical Reasoning: a practical introduction.* London: Routledge.

You might also wish to consider the representation of psychology in popular culture e.g. A Clockwork Orange, One flew over the cuckoo's nest, The secret world of a five year old, Walden II etc.,

Attendance

Students taking the course for credit must attend a minimum of 40% of the lectures, practicals/workshops are optional. Auditing students must attend a minimum of 60% of the lectures and are not permitted to attend other aspects of the course or submit Assessments.

Assessment

Coursework

Formative Assessment (3 opportunities) to be submitted by Wednesday 12:00 in Weeks 2, 3 and 4.
Summative Assessment Essay (1000 words) 100%, **Wednesday 26th October 12:00 2022, Week 7**

Feedback due 29th November 2022

Learning Objectives

By the end of PS3031 students should be able to...

- …distinguish between scientific and pseudoscientific claims
- …have an appreciation of different models of the person
- ...integrate competing, contrasting and complementary theories in psychology
- ...critically evaluate published articles for their theoretical content

Assessment of learning outcomes

- Demonstration of core biases and beliefs through the short essay activities (formative assessment: does not contribute to module grade).
- The presentation of practical and theoretical outcomes in an applied essay (100% of module grade).

Transferrable Skills

1. Demonstrate original thought

2. Apply critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis to solve complex problems

3. Reason from the particular to the general

4. Engage directly with current research, developments and skills in the discipline

5. Engage with primary and secondary material and differentiate between them

6. Demonstrate creativity and curiosity

7. Demonstrate independence of thought and reasoning

Module-specific requirements

All summative assessment must be submitted in order to pass the module

Inclusive curriculum statement

The School is committed to making its teaching and learning fully inclusive, so that all students are given the opportunity to reach their potential, all students feel like they belong and are not made to feel excluded, and students have the opportunity to contribute to curriculum development. If you have any comments or feedback on this module in terms of the inclusivity of the content, delivery or assessments/feedback, please contact the Module Co-ordinator or, if you would rather provide anonymous feedback, please use the Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ). Alternatively, you can contact your School President or Class Representative, who can raise ideas or issues via the relevant staff-student meetings and consultative committees. If you want to report any instances of bullying, harassment or discrimination that have occurred in teaching and learning environments, you can use the University's Report & Support tool.

Assessment regulations

For further information regarding advice, support, policies and procedures, please see the

University Student Handbook at Click on this link to the University Handbook

Extensions

Honours Students: To apply for an extension on continuous assessment due to unforseen circumstances, please fill out the form found at: Click on this link to report unforseen circumstances if you need an extension or deferral

Late work & late penalties

Academic alerts will be issued for late submissions that are not excused (see: Click on this link for the University policy for Academic Alerts).

Late penalties will be applied at the rate of one grade point per day or part thereof that an assignment is late (Policy A of the Penalties for Late Work; see: Click on this link for the University Policy on Late Penalties)

Over-length penalties

Over-length penalties will be applied at the rate of 1 mark for work that is over-length to any extent, then a further 1 mark per additional 5% over (Policy C of the Penalties for work of incorrect length). Words will be counted electronically and all aspects including text boxes will be counted unless otherwise stated. See: Click on this link for the University Policy on work that exceeds the word limit

Grade descriptors

Honours Modules: For details regarding the 'Common reporting scale for module grades' please see: Click on this link for the University Policy on the 20 point scale.

For details regarding the reporting scale and grade descriptors for coursework, please see individual assessment descriptions that will be provided during the semester.

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Support contacts

School administrative office for general teaching matters	psyneuroug@st-andrews.ac.uk
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Psychology & Neuroscience Student Wellbeing Officer	Maggie Ellis psyneuro_wellbeing@st-andrews.ac.uk
Advice & Support Centre (ASC) – welfare and support services	theasc@st-andrews.ac.uk
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