Aims

In this module we will cover important conceptual issues relevant for psychological research, and the recent history of major schools of thought in Psychology, linking present day research with the underlying historical debates.

	LECTURE SUMMARY	LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1-7	HISTORICAL ISSUES	
1	The birth of psychology The early days of the new 'psychology'. Review of the contributions of key historical figures such as Wundt.	Students will be able to: • outline and analyse antecedent influences and the contributions of key historical figures in the early days of psychology; • discuss early conceptions of how to study the mind.
2	Early schools of thought; and Gestalt Psychology The development of the first main schools of thought, Structuralism and Functionalism based on the work of Titchener and James. Thorndike. The development of Gestalt Psychology: Wertheimer, Köhler, Koffka.	Students will be able to: • outline and analyse the contributions of key historical figures and schools in the early days of psychology; • outline and analyse the contributions of Gestalt psychologists; • discuss conceptions of how to study the mind and the subject matter of psychology according to Structuralism, Functionalism and Gestalt theory.
3	Behaviourism & reactions against it The behaviourist movement, including neobehaviourism and sociobehaviourisrm, as pioneered by Watson, Tolman, Skinner and Bandura. The emergence of Wilson's sociobiology, and of evolutionary psychology.	Students will be able to: • outline and analyse the role of behaviourist theory in Psychology; • trace the influences of sociobiological thought in modern psychology; • outline and analyse the contributions of key historical figures in comparative psychology.
4	The cognitive "revolution" The context, origins and history of modern cognitive psychology: the influence of WWII and the development of the computer, and contributions of key figures such as Miller and Neisser. Brief review and critical evaluation of what cognitive psychology became.	Students will be able to: • discuss the key historical figures, movements, and external influences in the development of cognitive psychology; • critically discuss the importance of cognitive explanations of behaviour; • evaluate the study of the mind as viewed from the perspective of cognitive psychology, and compared to other schools of thought.
5-6	Psychopathology & personality Criticisms and contributions of Freud and his psychoanalysis. The growth of Psychology in mental health care as influenced by factors such as WWII and the anti-psychiatry movement (Szász; R.D.Laing). Review of psychological developments in treatment of psychopathology and personality theory, such as Rogers' client-centred therapy and humanistic psychology (Maslow); cognitive and behaviour therapy; positive psychology.	Students will be able to: • evaluate the contribution of Freud and his psychoanalytic theory to psychology and conceptions and treatments of psychopathology; • evaluate subsequent, psychological conceptions and treatments of psychopathology. • discuss the increasing role of psychology in treatment of psychopathology and the factors that influenced this.
7	The Dark Side of Psychology A historical overview of the 'bad ideas' that were examples of misapplication of psychological science, including discussion of scientific sexism and racism.	Students will be able to: • discuss what historical and social trends were involved in the misuse of psychology • discuss critically the modern situations in which psychological science is misused and evaluate the effects this has

8	The different kinds of evidence which psychology struggles to relate: people's actions, their physiology, what they report about their thoughts. How these relate to their feelings and to our empathetic understanding: 1st, 2nd, 3rd person perspectives.	Students will be able to: • Debate the validity of each of the concepts introduced, and apply them to examples not given in the lectures, including: a) the three types of evidence (behaviour, self-report, physiology); b) in what way experiments are valuable, c) pure vs. applied science, d) types of explanation.
9	The basic elements of experiments and science: The Newtonian triad of theory, prediction, observation.	
10	Why experiment? Causation, inference; deduction and induction.	
11	The contrast between pure and applied science, and what this means for designing experiments and drawing conclusions.	• Discuss how psychology compares to and differs from other disciplines. • Assess the overall success of psychology.
12	Argument schemas (patterns) in differing scientific subcultures. Differences between disciplines. The pure-applied, and the Humanities-Sciences dimensions for representing disciplinary differences.	
13	Critique of reductionism; and the feeling of explanation. What is distinctive about psychology, and how should we assess it overall? Is it a failure? Is so little variance explained in its experiments that it shows there are no situations where it can describe and predict most of what is going on? What are its clear successes, demonstrating progress since Wundt in establishing it as a separate discipline with a wide scope? And what are its implicit successes?: things which other people don't realise but which psychologists are so sure of that they take them for granted.	

Core reading

For more extensive and up to date information, always check the Moodle page for the course. Preliminary and general advice on reading is as follows:

The key textbook for this course is:
Brysbaert, M., & Rastle, K. (2013). Historical and Conceptual Issues in Psychology. Pearson.

For lectures 1-7, another excellent book is:
Schultz, D. P., & Schultz, S. E. (2012). Modern Psychology - A History.
Wadsworth, Cengage Learning

For lectures 8-13, details of additional papers will be during the course.