

PS11420
Introduction to Core Topics in Social and Individual Behaviour
Module Handbook
Semester 1 2014-2015

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1. MODULE OVERVIEW

Welcome to PS11420 which is one of the core level one psychology modules. We very much hope that you will enjoy the module, that you will develop a better understanding of individual and social perspectives in psychology, and that you will learn study skills that you can use throughout your degree. The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information about all aspects of the module, to include lecture content, assessment for the module, teaching format, and reading lists. The module is designed to provide you with an introduction to some of the central concepts and theories in the sub-disciplines of social psychology and personality.

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of the module, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of what defines and distinguishes personality and social psychology.
2. Identify the major concepts/theories in the different sub-disciplines.
3. Critically assess the contribution each sub-discipline makes to our understanding of human behaviour.
4. Examine and evaluate some of the central studies that have contributed to the emergence of key findings in social psychology and personality.
5. Critically evaluate the difficulties and challenges of conducting research in the sub-disciplines.
6. Demonstrate how your understanding of psychology can support your own development as a self-directed learner.

3. TEACHING

3.1. Module teaching staff

The module convenor is Dr Antonia Ivaldi, and lectures are taken mainly by Antonia Ivaldi (ani@aber.ac.uk), with some guest lecturers. Dr Eric Drogin, a clinical and forensic psychologist from Harvard University, will be delivering the lecture on 'assessing personality', and Karl Drinkwater (librarian for psychology), and Saffron Passam and Martine Robson (PhD students) will be leading the study skills lectures. Seminars will be run by Saffron Passam.

As module co-ordinator, all questions regarding the module should come to me (unless they are more general administrative questions that Anna can help you with in reception). I can be contacted by email or during my office hours if you wish to discuss matters face-to-face. My office hours can be found following the Contacts link on the module page. Appointments are not required but you may have to wait if someone else is already being seen.

3.2. Contact time

Each module is assigned a credit value (e.g., 20 credits) that gives an indication of the total number of contact hours and independent learning time, where 10 credits is equal to 100 hours in total. For this 20 credit module the 200 hours are made up of 11 hours of lectures, 11 hours of seminars, and 178 hours for independent study that are necessary to satisfactorily complete the module. Students are advised to spend a minimum of 4 hours preparation, post reading and study per lecture and seminar.

3.3. Overview of teaching methods

The module is taught through lectures and seminars outlined in Section 4 below. The two teaching methods aim to provide you with a comprehensive introduction to psychological theory and application allowing you to further develop a number of key skills.

Lectures provide a basic framework for each topic, outlining key concepts and further reading in the particular subject. They are not designed to provide students with everything they need to know about the topic; rather, they are the starting points for your own study.

Seminars are complementary to lectures. The structure of the seminars aims to develop your understanding of the lecture topics. The seminars give you the opportunity to work in a smaller group and to explore concepts and evidence in psychology through debate, discussion and project development. Students will be expected to work in small groups and contribute to debates and tasks. Seminars are an opportunity to further your understanding of psychology as well as develop teamwork skills and review other classmates' input. Preparatory reading/questions for each of these topic areas will be posted on Blackboard, where appropriate, and you will be expected to complete any required work before turning up to class.

The materials presented in lectures, seminars and on Blackboard provide the basics of the topic and as such require additional reading to understand the area more fully and to answer examination questions.

NB Attendance at lectures and seminars is compulsory and your attendance will be monitored. If you have a genuine reason for non-attendance you must inform the module convenor and Anna Cole and provide appropriate evidence.

3.4. Blackboard support

The module Blackboard site provides the module handbook and the PowerPoint presentations which form the basis of the lectures, as well as additional supportive material and information regarding the module.

3.5. Feedback

Generic class feedback on the exam will be provided after the exam period once the marks have been released. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their feedback with their personal tutors (or if it is very specific to the module, the module co-ordinator) at all times. This is particularly important for your first few modules (such as this one) where students may like clarification on the marking criteria used and guidance on how to improve in all future work.

Written feedback is far more useful to students than the actual mark as it is the marker's comments that help explain and justify to students the mark awarded, as well as indicating the strengths of the students' work, and the areas that could be improved. Students should make use of the generic exam feedback provided, and it should be revisited when approaching the next assignment (even if it is for a different module). Feedback is also provided in other ways, and not just formally in assessed work. For example, you may be given verbal feedback in your seminars or in your lectures. Generic class feedback can be a useful way for you to compare how you are performing in relation to the rest of the class. Whenever you receive feedback, you should reflect on the comments and think about how you can build on them in each aspect of your degree.

3.6 Employability

Employability refers to the transferrable skills that you have achieved that help to make you (and remain) employable. In a psychology degree, students gain a variety of key skills that make them attractive to employers if successfully demonstrated. Over the course of this module you will gain key transferrable skills, for example, critical and analytical thinking (e.g., through your interpretation and critique of key studies and argument development), effective communication (e.g., through your exam and speaking in seminars), time management (e.g., preparing for each lecture and particularly seminar, where you will be expected to prepare work in advance) and working independently and in a team. This list is not exhaustive, and students are strongly encouraged to reflect on all skills that they have gained as a result of completing the module. A more detailed review of the key module skills you will gain can be found on the module database for PS11420. In addition, towards the end of the course there will be a session on the skills that you have gained specific to the module, the role that psychology has to them, and in how these can be used more generally in terms of transferable skills.

4. TIMETABLE

There are 11 x one hour lectures and 11 x one hour seminars in this module. The dates and lecture/seminar topics are outlined below. All lectures and seminars will be completed before the Christmas vacation. All weeks have one lecture and one seminar. The study skills weeks have been built into the course to support your studies in this module and all other modules. They have been designed to coincide and assist you with your exam writing and essay writing in other modules; the skills you learn here will be invaluable throughout your degree.

4.1. Module Timetable

Lectures = One 1-hour lecture each week.

Seminars = One 1-hour seminar each week.

You will be allocated to the same seminar group for the seminars. You can find out from your online timetable which seminar group you are in within these weeks. When you have been allocated a seminar place you must keep to that time for all sessions unless there are exceptional circumstances that require you to change. Any changes require the permission of the module convenor. Rooms are allocated based on class size, therefore, for this reason alone, it is important you keep to the group to which you were assigned.

Date (WB)	Lecture Topic
29.09.14	<i>Study skills week: Introduction and transferable skills</i> Lecture - Skills 1: Module overview and key skills in psychology Seminar - Skills 2: Conducting a literature review (Karl Drinkwater)
06.10.14	<i>Core topic</i> Lecture - Attribution Seminar - Finding and discussing articles on Attribution
13.10.14	<i>Core topic</i> Lecture - The social self Seminar – Applying the social self
20.10.14	<i>Study skills week: Writing in psychology</i> Lecture - Skills 3: Your writing goals (Saffron Passam/Martine Robson) Seminar - Skills 4: Organizing and structuring your writing (Saffron Passam/Martine Robson)
27.10.14	<i>Core topic</i> Lecture - Social influence Seminar – Exploring the influence of others
03.11.14	<i>Core topic</i> Lecture - Aggression and pro-social behaviour Seminar – Social psychology in the media
10.11.14	<i>Study skills week: Producing academic work</i> Skills 5: Understanding, critiquing and evaluating sources (Saffron Passam/Martine Robson) Skills 6: Writing seminar (Saffron Passam/Martine Robson)
17.11.14	<i>Core topic</i> Lecture - Theories of personality Seminar – Applying personality
24.11.14	<i>Core topic</i> Lecture - Assessing personality (Dr Eric Drogin) Seminar – Understanding your own personality
01.12.14	<i>Core topic</i> Lecture - Personality and the career self Seminar - Transferable skills in psychology
08.12.14	Lecture – Topic revision Seminar – Exam overview and tips

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1. Overview of assessment methods

You will be assessed by one examination (100%) which, through a variety of different questions, will help to demonstrate the extent to which you have successfully achieved the learning outcomes of the module; you must therefore pass the exam to pass the module overall. The questions will require you to demonstrate your understanding of psychology using material from across the module. Further details of what to expect and how to plan for the exam will be given over the duration of the course, and particularly in the last week of teaching. It is therefore very important that you do not arrange to leave for your Christmas holidays before teaching has finished (NB it is also University policy that students remain on campus until term has ended; anyone needing to leave before then, under exceptional circumstances, must seek the permission of the Head of Department). Further information can be found in the Department Handbook, alongside marking rubrics for exams which illustrate the marking criteria for each degree classification.

6. READING LIST

6.1 Essential Reading and Purchase

- Holt, N., Bremner, A., Sutherland, E., Vlieg, M., Passer, M. W., & Smith, R.E (2012). *Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour* (2nd ed.). McGraw Hill: London.
- Smyth, T.R. (2004). *The principles of writing in psychology*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

6.2 Strongly recommended

- Adams, B (2009). *The psychology companion*. London: Palgrave.
- Cottrell, S (2013). *The study skills handbook* (4th ed.). Palgrave Macmillan Publishers of London.
- Glassman, W.E., & Hadad, M. (2013). *Approaches to psychology* (6th ed.). London: McGraw Hill.
- McGee, S. (2010). *Key research and study skills in psychology*. London: Sage.
- Parson, V. (2012). *Study and communication skills for psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

General Texts

- Berk, L. E. (2007). *Development through the lifespan* (4th ed.). London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2007). *Personality and individual differences*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Gross, R. (2009). *Themes, issues, and debates in psychology* (3rd ed.). London: Hodder Education.
- Hewstone, M., Stroebe, W., & Jonas, K. (2007). *Introduction to social psychology* (4th ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hock, R. R. (2009). *Forty studies that changed psychology: Explorations into the history of psychological research* (6th ed.). London: Pearson Education.
- Kail, R., & Cavanaugh, J. (2009). *Human development*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.
- Mitchell, P. (2007). *Fundamentals of development: The psychology of childhood*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Myers, D., Abell, J., Kolstad, A., & Sani, F. (2010). *Social psychology: European Edition*. Berkshire: McGraw-Hill.
- Sigelman, C. K. (2009). *Life-span human development: International student edition* (6th ed.). United Kingdom: Wadsworth Cengage.
- Stevenson, A. (2007). *Studying psychology*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.