



UCL SUMMER SCHOOL

Psychology in Action

Key Information

Module code	ISSU0014
Taught during	Session One: Monday 24 June - Friday 12 July 2024
Mode of delivery	Face-to-face on campus
Module workload	45 contact hours plus approximately 100 study hours
Module leader	Dr Daniel C. Richardson
Department	Psychology & Language Sciences, Faculty of Brain Sciences
Credit	15 UCL credits, 7.5 ECTS, 4 US
Level	Level 1, first year undergraduate
Prerequisites	Standard entry requirements
Assessment	In-class seminar contribution (30%); 1,500-word written coursework (30%); Multiple choice exam (40%)

Module Overview

Our aim is to develop students' psychological literacy through the cycle of enquiry and evidence. Students will be introduced to key conceptual issues, methodological approaches and significant findings in scientific psychology, their historical background, and the kinds of empirical evidence on which these findings are based. We will take simple questions, and cut across traditional disciplines looking for answers.

- Week One - The science of mind and behaviour; methodological and conceptual issues; experimental design
- Week Two - Perceptual processes; visual attention; cognition; learning and memory; neuroscience methods
- Week Three - Human development, the interplay of nature and nurture; genes and personality; social and emotional development; clinical disorders

Module Aims

Our aim is to develop students' psychological literacy through the cycle of enquiry and evidence. In lectures, students will be introduced to key conceptual issues, methodological approaches and significant findings in scientific psychology, their historical background, and the kinds of empirical evidence on which these findings are based. In afternoon workshops, students will be encouraged to think critically and evaluate their own behaviour through in-lecture experiments. A scientific approach will be developed through an appreciation of how empirical data can be used to test competing theories. We will take simple questions, and cut across

traditional disciplines looking for answers. For example, asking the question, 'why do we see ghosts?' will integrate ideas from visual perception, cognition, emotion, cross cultural differences, and neuroscience. We will address several such questions during the lecture sessions, and in their workshop sessions students will develop their own research question to address. With support from the staff and group members they will investigate the different ways that they can answer their question. Individually, they will then complete a written project.

Teaching Methods

The classes will consist of lectures in the morning session, workshops in the afternoon, and activities after class that students complete online and in groups.

The lectures will be both traditional format and 'flipped' lectures, in which students will study material prior to the class. They will also include in-lecture experiments, data collection and analysis, so that students are encouraged to think critically and evaluate their own behaviour.

In afternoon workshops, students will break into discussion / work groups and follow up on the issues raised in lectures. They will complete activities individually and in small groups such as designing experiments, collecting data, researching papers online, brainstorming different approaches, and analysing results. They will give presentations to the rest of the class discussing their work. Experiencing this cycle of enquiry and evidence will give students the psychological literacy to integrate knowledge across psychology and apply it to the world around them

On the class website students will post questions, comments and discussion topics. We will use this material to evaluate, monitor and enhance their understanding of the course material.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, students will:

- Understand key conceptual issues in psychology
- Be aware of the history of ideas in understanding the mind
- Appreciate a range of modern methods in scientific psychology
- Think critically about how psychological issues are portrayed in the media
- Develop their own research project in which they raise a question, and should how the empirical techniques of psychology can be used to address it. Experiencing this cycle of enquiry and evidence will give students the psychological literacy to integrate knowledge across psychology and apply it to the world around them.

Key Texts

Gerrig (2009) *Psychology and Life*, Pearson

Gleitman, Gross & Reisberg (2010) *Psychology*, Norton.

Further reading will be suggested as the module progresses.

Module Lead

Professor Daniel C. Richardson is a reader in Experimental Psychology at University College London. Prior to this, he was an undergraduate at Magdalen College, Oxford; a graduate student at Cornell; a postdoctoral researcher at Stanford; and an assistant professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz. His research examines how

individuals' thought processes are related to the people around them, and he has authored many scientific articles in cognitive, developmental and social psychology, as well as 'A Dummies Guide to Social Psychology'.