

## SOSC1960 Discovering Mind and Behavior Course Outline

### Highlights

1. *20 lectures, 20 keywords about human mind and behavior!* With a broad analysis of the scientific concepts and empirical evidences behind, each lecture discusses human mind and behavior around one keyword and one guiding question. Creativity, personality, abnormality etc.
2. *WE don't just talk!* In lectures we teach and learn through all sorts of activities. Watch videos, write stories, draw figures, play games—you name it! In terms of readings, we have websites, magazine articles, scientific reports, TED talks, and so on!
3. *YOU don't just read about research studies; YOU take part in them!* Is there any better way of learning how research studies are conducted than actually being part of them? There are plenty of opportunities for you to be part of real research studies and learn up close!

### Aim

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

On completion of this course, you are expected to be able to (i) recognize some fundamental scientific concepts about human mind and behavior; (ii) analyze human performance and well-being in various social settings with reference to these concepts; and (iii) explain how scientific research on human mind and behavior is conducted.

### Teaching team

Kevin Tam, [kevintam@ust.hk](mailto:kevintam@ust.hk); William Chan, [williamchan@ust.hk](mailto:williamchan@ust.hk)

### Communication platform

<http://canvas.ust.hk>

### Learning activities

1. *Lectures.* The lectures introduce the science of human mind and behavior through a variety of activities. They form the foundation of your learning in this course. Though lecture attendance is not compulsory, research has shown that students attending more lectures generally have better course performance. If you plan to skip a lot of lectures, think twice!
2. *Readings.* For each lecture a reading list is provided. You will find some recommended readings (they are highly relevant to the lecture discussion) and some further readings (for those who want further exploration) on the list. The readings complement the lectures by providing deeper analyses and broader coverage. If you like to read, you will definitely find a lot of fun in them!
3. *Quizzes.* The two quizzes (30% of course grade) assess your conceptual understanding. Materials discussed in the lectures and some selected recommended readings are tested. The quizzes include multiple-choice questions only. Quiz 1 covers the first half of the course, and Quiz 2 covers the second half.
4. *Essay.* The essay (20% of course grade) requires that you apply some concepts to the real world. It is a short essay; you don't have to write a lot, but you have to express yourself clearly. A workshop will give you some pointers on how to write a good essay. Submission deadlines: **15:00 pm, 19 Oct 2018.**
5. *Learning reflection.* The learning reflection (10% of course grade) requires that you reflect on your learning experience in this course. Through writing, discuss how such experience has transformed your knowledge and yourself as a person. Submission deadlines: **15:00 pm, 30 Nov 2018.**
6. *Research experience.* The science of human mind and behavior advances through empirical research. In this course, you can experience such research up close! There are two types of experience: (1) Research studies: You will join real research studies as a participant and learn firsthand how they are conducted; this is something you can rarely experience outside this course, so we highly recommend this to you! (2) Research exercises: You will watch videos about classic research studies on human mind and behavior and write about your thoughts on it; these videos are fun! You have the choice of participating in either one or a combination of both. You gain 1 credit for each 30-minute research study or exercise session completed. At maximum you can obtain 3 credits (which translates into 10% of the course grade). All research studies and exercises will be conducted between **17 Sep 2018 and 16 Nov 2018.**

(Detailed guidelines regarding these learning activities will be released in due course.)

## Suggested references

- Lilienfeld, S. O. et al. (2014). *Psychology: From inquiry to understanding*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Myers, D. G. (2014). *Psychology* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Worth.

## Schedule (subject to minor changes)

09:00 – 10:20, Monday and Wednesday, LT-F

Date	Keyword	Guiding question
03 Sep		Overview: Why do we need to “discover” human mind and behavior?
05 Sep	#01 Scientific method	Does taking notes on a laptop facilitate learning?
10 Sep	#02 Perception	Is that dress white and gold or blue and black?
12 Sep	#03 Circadian rhythm	What happens in our mind while we are asleep?
17 Sep	#04 Consciousness	Is it possible that you walk fast but you don’t really know why you do so?
19 Sep		Essay writing workshop
24 Sep	#05 Emotions	Do people all over the world show similar emotional expressions?
26 Sep	#06 Memory	“Um...sorry, I know I know you, but what is your name?”
1 Oct		(Holiday)
3 Oct	#07 Learning	Is it possible to train pigeons to play ping pong?
8 Oct	#08 Rationality	Do you really decide how much you eat?
10 Oct	#09 Intelligence	Do IQ scores tell us anything about people’s job performance?
15 Oct	#10 Creativity	Do creative ideas just pop up randomly?
17 Oct		(Holiday)
22 Oct		Consultation (no lecture)
24 Oct		Quiz 1 (venue TBC)
29 Oct	#11 Motivation	What happens when a person feels extremely lonely?
31 Oct	#12 Personality	Can you tell your new date’s personality by his/her choice of movies?
5 Nov	#13 Development	Is a child’s mind really an empty canvas?
7 Nov	#14 Parental influence	To what extent do your parents shape who you are?
12 Nov	#15 Social influence	“No man is an island.” How true is it?
14 Nov	#16 Abnormality	What is normal? What is not?
19 Nov	#17 Psychological disorders	What does someone with mental illness look like?
21 Nov	#18 Psychotherapy	How can depression and other psychological disorders be treated?
26 Nov	#19 Mind and body	Does a healthy body depend on a healthy mind?
28 Nov	#20 Positive psychology	Is happiness all we need?
Exam period		Quiz 2 (date, time and venue TBC)

## Points to note

1. *Learning attitude*. Be active in class. Your participation not only helps you learn more but also enables us to teach better! Think about what you want to learn and how you are going to learn them. Use grades, scores, and comments from us to understand how much and how well you have learned and how you can improve!
2. *Academic integrity*. We will thoroughly investigate every suspect case of cheating or plagiarism. We will heavily penalize confirmed cases and report them to the Head of the Division of Social Science for further review or action. Read <http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/index.html>. Make sure you understand what constitute academic honesty.
3. *Penalties*. Penalties apply to assignments that are submitted late or over the word limit. Find the details in the respective guidelines.
4. *Make-up quizzes*. Make-up quizzes will be granted to absentees with a medical condition. Other requests for a make-up quiz will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Make-up quizzes will consist of both multiple-choice questions and essay questions. Find the details in the respective guidelines.
5. *Lecture slides*. We understand that you want the lecture slides. They will be available on Canvas before each lecture, but note that some contents will be removed from the Canvas version (to avoid copyright violation and create suspense that facilitates class discussion). Remember: Lecture slides are not notes or handouts! Take your own notes. Research has shown that personal note-taking improves learning and course performance!