

SOSC 1969 – Discovering Mind and Behavior

School:	School of Humanities and Social Science
Subject Area:	Social Science
Course Credit:	3
Instructor:	SIU Nicolson
Pre-requisite/co-requisite:	Nil

Notes:

- The syllabi provided here is for reference only and may be subject to changes and adjustments as determined by the course instructors.

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus

SOSC1969 Discovering Mind and Behavior (Summer 2025)

3 Credits

Instructor

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Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Assistant (TBA)

Name:

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*When emailing us, please ***prefix the subject line*** with the course code [SOSC1969-L2]. Use your university email account only.

Do NOT leave messages in the Canvas inbox.

Course Description

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 (ILOs)

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. recognize some fundamental scientific concepts about human mind and behavior;
2. analyze human performance and well-being in various social settings with reference to these concepts; AND
3. explain how scientific research on human mind and behavior is conducted.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided below, outlining the criteria used for evaluation.

Tutorial Participation and Reflection (20%):

- The course will include a variety of in-class activities throughout the semester. These activities are designed to engage students and reinforce the key concepts being covered. Students have to complete some exercises (e.g., reflection questions) during the tutorial sessions. Topics and details of each tutorial will be announced in due course.

Research Experience (5%):

- To give you first-hand experience in psychological research, students are required to either (a) participate in a research study OR (b) complete a video exercise. Students have to answer some reflective questions for (a) and (b).

Writing Assignment (15%):

- Students are required to complete a writing assignment in *a maximum of 300 words* to demonstrate their understanding of the topic.
- The guidelines for the assignments will be uploaded on Canvas in due course. Please read and follow the instructions carefully.

Quizzes (20%*3):

- Three quizzes will be administered to test your understanding of course materials. The quiz will include multiple-choice questions only and non-cumulative (The relevant chapters will appear on the last page of the lecture handouts).
- Supplementary readings are also listed in the lecture note but they will NOT be included in the quizzes. These readings are useful for a deeper understanding of the course contents.
- Please arrive on time for the quiz as no additional time will be given for students arriving late.
- No make-up quizzes will be given to students who are absent from the examination unless students can provide validated medical reasons. You should notify the teaching team (through email) about your absence by attaching your official medical certificate *within 24 hours of the original exam date* if you wish to arrange for a make-up quiz. All make-up quizzes will ONLY be in the form of essay questions.

Summary

Assessment Tasks	Contribution to Overall Course Grade (%)	Due Date
Tutorial Participation and Reflection	20%	23/7, 1/8 and 8/8/2025
Research Experience	5%	TBA
Writing Assignment	15%	TBA
Quiz 1	20%	23/7/2025
Quiz 2	20%	1/8/2025
Quiz 3	20%	8/8/2025

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Tasks	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
Tutorial Participation and Reflection	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3	This task assesses students' ability to understand the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology (ILO1) and to reflect on the application of these psychological concepts (ILO2) with the support of the research evidence (ILO3).

Writing Assignment	ILO1, ILO2	This paper assesses students' ability to understand the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology (ILO1) and to relate these theories and concepts to their real-life experience (ILO2).
Quizzes	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3	Quizzes are designed to assess students' understanding and familiarity of the fundamental knowledge, key concepts (ILO1), and how these concepts can be applied and related to social settings (ILO2), as well as the implications of the research findings in psychology (ILO3).

Final Grade Descriptors

Grades	Short Description	Elaboration on Grading Description
A	Excellent Performance	Demonstrates a deep understanding of the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology. Familiarizes very well with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in psychology. Exhibits exceptional critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Reasonably applies the concepts to real-life setting with both practicality and innovation.
B	Good Performance	Shows good understanding of fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology. Familiarizes well with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in psychology. Exhibits good critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Applies the concepts to real-life setting with only practicality.
C	Satisfactory Performance	Possesses adequate understanding of fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology. Demonstrates satisfactory familiarity with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in psychology, but with some misunderstandings. Shows satisfactory critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Applies the concepts to real-life setting, but with limited practicality.
D	Marginal Pass	Has very basic understanding of fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology. Shows minimal familiarity with the implications of classical and contemporary findings in psychology. Shows limited critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Applies the concepts to real-life setting with minimal practicality.

F	Fail	Demonstrates insufficient understanding of fundamental knowledge and key concepts in psychology. Lacks critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in psychology. Unable to apply the concepts to real-life setting and with no practicality.
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Course AI Policy

The use of GenAI in the Writing Assignment is permitted. Students have to sign a declaration and include the prompts requested.

Communication and Feedback

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within two weeks of submission. Feedback on assignments will include comments on strengths and areas for improvement. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Late Submission Policy

A 5-hour grace period after the deadline is applied to the assignment submission. Submissions received less than 5 hours after the deadline will NOT be penalized. NO submission will be accepted after the grace period of the due date.

Score deduction applies to any assignments over the word limit. More details can be found in the assignment guidelines.

Recommended Reading Resources

Noba Project. (2023). *Introduction to Psychology*. <http://noba.to/7hymnvpc>

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.

Teaching Schedule (To be confirmed)

Week	Date	Topic	Recommended Chapters
1	Jul 14	[L1] Discovering Psychology	1
	Jul 16	[L2] Research Methods in Psychology	2-3
	Jul 18	[L3] Personality	18-19
2	Jul 21	[L4] Social and Collective Behaviors	21-25
	Jul 23	Quiz 1 (L1 to L3) [Tutorial 1]	
	Jul 25	[L5] Human Development	15-16
3	Jul 28	[L6] Psychology of Learning	4
	Jul 30	[L7] Human Memory	5-6
	Aug 1	Quiz 2 (L4 to L6) [Tutorial 2]	
4	Aug 4	[L8] Health and Mind	26
	Aug 6	[L9] Psychological Disorders and Treatment	29, 31-33
	Aug 8	Quiz 3 (L7 to L9) [Tutorial 3]	

Other Notes

Interaction in Class

I believe interactions (both verbal and non-verbal) between the teaching team and the students (and among students) are one of the key ingredients to an optimal learning experience. Your active participation in class discussions or activities will not only enhance your learning, but also motivate the teaching team to do better! Stay behind the class and share with me your thoughts about the course contents.

Lecture Slides

Lecture slides will be posted to Canvas before each class, but the contents will be slightly different from the displayed slides. I hope to encourage you to take your notes. Note-taking facilitates your reflection and assimilation of the lecture contents.

Communication

Expect that your emails will be responded to during weekdays 10 am to 6 pm HKT. Do NOT inbox your message on Canvas.

Grading Rubrics

Tutorial Participation and Reflection Student Rubrics (20%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Marginal	Fail	Mapping to Course ILOs
Participation and Reflection	Demonstrated an exceptionally good understanding of psychological concepts discussed in tutorials. Demonstrated an outstanding reflection and evaluation on the discussion questions raised in tutorials.	Demonstrated a good understanding of psychological concepts discussed in tutorials. Demonstrated a good reflection and evaluation on the discussion questions raised in tutorials.	Demonstrated understanding of psychological concepts discussed in tutorials. Demonstrated reflection and evaluation on the discussion questions raised in tutorials.	Demonstrated mere understanding of psychological concepts discussed in tutorials. Demonstrated mere reflection and evaluation on the discussion questions raised in tutorials.	Demonstrated some misunderstanding of psychological concepts discussed in tutorials. A lack of reflection and evaluation on the discussion questions raised in tutorials.	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3

Writing Assignment Student Rubrics (15%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Marginal	Fail	Mapping to Course ILOs
Content (10%)	Demonstrated an outstanding understanding to the question by analyzing the psychological concept using a real-life or a personal example. Descriptions of the example are profoundly insightful, comprehensive in scores and sound in depth.	Demonstrated good understanding to the question by analyzing the psychological concept using a real-life or a personal example. Descriptions of the example are in general insightful, comprehensive in scores.	Demonstrated satisfactory understanding to the question by analyzing the psychological concept using a real-life or a personal example. Descriptions of the example are in general understandable, but with some confusing points.	Demonstrated mere understanding to the question by analyzing the psychological concept using a real-life or a personal example. Descriptions of the example are fairly understandable, or with a lot of confusing points.	Demonstrated poor understanding to the question by analyzing the psychological concept using a real-life or a personal example. Did not include the descriptions of the example and with a lot of confusing points.	ILO1, ILO2
Reasoning/ Critical Thinking (3%)	The discussion and conclusion cannot be easily contested or questioned and be able to rigorously evaluate ideas.	The discussion and conclusion can be contested with other arguments or questioned.	The discussion and conclusion can easily be contested with other arguments or questioned.	The discussion and conclusion lacked good support of arguments and evidence.	The discussion and conclusion did not include any supporting arguments or evidence.	ILO1, ILO2
Expression, Presentation, and APA Referencing (2%)	Expression of arguments is well-structured, very smooth and coherent. Writing style follows APA citation and referencing very appropriately (No APA referencing is needed if you refer to the lecture materials).	Expression of arguments is structured, and smooth, but with flaws in coherency. Writing style follows APA citation and referencing appropriately (No APA referencing is needed if you refer to the lecture materials).	Expression of arguments is in general comprehensible. Writing style follows APA citation and referencing (No APA referencing is needed if you refer to the lecture materials).	Expression of arguments is unorganized and barely comprehensible. Writing style follows APA citation and referencing (No APA referencing is needed if you refer to the lecture materials).	Expression of arguments presents poor logic in reasoning. Writing style does not follow APA citation and referencing (No APA referencing is needed if you refer to the lecture materials).	ILO1, ILO2