

unit guide

Foundations of Psychology

PSY_1_FOP

Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences
Department of Psychology

Academic Year 2007-08
Semester 1

become what you want to be

Table of Contents

1.0	Unit Details	3
2.0	Short Description	3
3.0	Aims of the Unit	3
4.0	Learning Outcomes	4
4.1	Knowledge and Understanding	4
4.2	Intellectual Skills	4
4.3	Practical Skills	4
4.4	Transferable Skills	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.0	Assessment of the Unit	4
6.0	Introduction to Studying the Unit	6
6.1	Overview of the Main Content	6
6.2	Overview of Types of Classes	6
6.3	Importance of Student Self-Managed Learning Time	7
6.4	Employability	7
7.0	The Programme of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	7
8.0	Learning Resources	15
8.1	Core Materials	15
8.2	Optional Materials	15
NOTES	Error! Bookmark not defined.

1.0 UNIT DETAILS

Unit Title:	Foundations of Psychology
Unit Level:	1
Unit Reference Number:	PSY_1_FOP
Credit Value:	1
Student Study Hours:	150
Contact Hours:	36
Private Study Hours:	114
Pre-requisite Learning (If applicable):	None
Co-requisite Units (If applicable):	None
Course(s):	BSc Psychology
Year and Semester	Year 1 Semester 1
Unit Coordinator:	Dr Nicky Rycroft
UC Contact Details (Tel, Email, Room)	rycroftn@lsbu.ac.uk Tel 020 7815 8047 Room E337 Office Hours Mondays 2-4pm
Teaching Team & Contact Details (If applicable):	Dr Rachel Wilcock, room E341 wilcockr@lsbu.ac.uk Jacqui Lawrence, room E344 lawrenci@lsbu.ac.uk Richard Fenn, room E344 Fennr@lsbu.ac.uk Agata Flis, room E344 flisa@lsbu.ac.uk
Subject Area:	Psychology
Summary of Assessment Method:	1 x Unseen Examination (60%) 1 x Comparison Matrix (40%)

2.0 SHORT DESCRIPTION

This unit introduces new students to five major approaches to psychology: psychodynamic, humanistic, behaviourist, cognitive and biological. Attention is given to the history of these approaches and the development of psychology as a science. The explanations given by each approach for key topics in psychology, such as personality, aggression and mental illness will be discussed, contrasted and compared.

3.0 AIMS OF THE UNIT

The unit aims to:

- Introduce students to key aspects of five major approaches to Psychology
- Introduce students to selected aspects of historically important ideas in Psychology
- Help students criticize each of these approaches and identify their strengths and weaknesses
- Help students understand these approaches by comparing their explanations of selected phenomena

4.0 LEARNING OUTCOMES

4.1 Knowledge and Understanding

- Describe key aspects of five major approaches to Psychology
- Understand how they differ in explaining specified key topics in Psychology
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each approach
- Describe the historical and conceptual relationship between the different approaches

4.2 Intellectual Skills

- Comparing and contrasting different explanations for key topics in Psychology
- Evaluating these different explanations
- Reading selectively to extract key ideas from texts

4.3 Practical Skills

- Retrieve and/or organise information effectively e.g. from electronic sources.
- Incorporate information from a variety of sources

4.4 Transferable Skills

- Make critical judgements and evaluations about relevant research;
- Successfully apply multiple perspectives to issues in psychology;
- Communicate effectively using written and spoken language.
- Self-management of own study time

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

Assessment for this unit is one piece of coursework (40%) and one exam (60%).

Coursework

The coursework for this unit is a comparison matrix that compares and contrasts three of the approaches to Psychology covered in weeks 2-6. Completion of the comparison matrix requires students to describe the approaches on a number of different dimensions. The comparison matrix will be available through blackboard as an MS Excel file. You do not need to have used Excel before to complete the matrix, it is very simple and easy to use and seminar time in this unit will be used to explain how to complete it. Also, seminars in weeks 2-6 of this unit will be used to discuss and consolidate information given in the lectures with the aim of helping students understand how the approaches differ from one another. **Therefore, attendance at seminars will be of great benefit when completing the comparison matrix.**

In addition to summarising and demonstrating understanding of three of the approaches to Psychology, the comparison matrix will also ask students to apply each approach to

the development of gender roles, a topic that will not be covered in lectures or seminars and therefore requires independent background research. Students will be asked to briefly state how each approach explains the development of gender roles in Western society.

Once completed, students must print out two copies of the comparison matrix and hand them in to the Faculty Office (see below). Occasionally, individual students may be asked, in writing, to also provide an electronic copy. Failure to supply electronic copy within two weeks of a written request will result in the coursework being deemed as an incomplete submission, hence given a mark of zero.

Exam

A 2-hour, unseen, essay examination. Students will be asked to answer two essays from a choice of six. More information on the exam will be available later in the term.

Notes about submitting coursework

Coursework deadlines are published in Course/Field Guides and on Psychology notice boards. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of these dates. All coursework must be submitted to the AHS Faculty Office in Borough Road (B266).

1. When handing in coursework, you must:

- complete the coursework submission form and attach it to the front of your coursework;
- take the coursework to the Faculty Office. Your submission form will be date stamped and a receipt issued. Please keep all receipts;
- hand in two copies of your coursework (both attached to the same submission form)
- **keep a copy of your coursework**

You must not hand coursework to your unit co-ordinator or other lecturer.

2. Unless you have obtained a formal extension from your year tutor, coursework submitted:

- up to two weeks after the deadline date will receive a maximum mark of the pass mark (40%);
- more than two weeks after the deadline will not be marked.

3. Extensions are only granted for valid reasons (see Course guide). The Year Tutor will normally require concrete evidence (e.g. medical certificate). If you want an extension of the deadline date, you must:

- get a copy of the form for late submission from the Faculty Office;
- fill in Part A of the form, giving reasons why you cannot meet the existing deadline date;
- supply the Year Tutor with relevant documentary evidence;
- submit the form to the Year Tutor who will fill in Part B – the decision whether to agree the request rests with the Year Tutor;

- attach the form to the front of your coursework when you submit it (keep a copy for your records);
- each extension form is only valid for one piece of coursework;
- the maximum extension is two weeks.

Students should note that extensions are only granted in exceptional circumstances. In order for an illness or other personal problem to be accepted as grounds for an extension, the Year Tutor will need to convince herself that the problem occurred at such a time, and was of such a duration, that a student's ability to complete the assignment to the best of their ability was significantly reduced.

6.0 INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE UNIT

6.1 Overview of the Main Content

Week	Lecture	Seminar
1	Introduction to and overview of the course	None
2	The Psychodynamic Approach	Details of the seminar programme and seminar groups & rooms will be available in week 2 of term and will be given out after the lecture. PLEASE COME PREPARED TO ATTEND A SEMINAR AT 11AM IN WEEK 2, ALTHOUGH YOUR SEMINAR GROUP MAY NOT HAVE A SESSION UNTIL WEEK 3.
3	The Behaviourist Approach	
4	The Humanistic Approach	
5	The Biological Approach	
6	The Cognitive Approach	
7	Perspectives on Personality	Coursework Preparation – Tutors available in their office during seminar time.
8	No Lecture	
9	Perspectives on Social Behaviour	
10	Perspectives on Abnormal Behaviour	
11	Revision Lecture	
12	No Lecture	

6.2 Overview of Types of Classes

The first five lectures introduce students to the approaches to Psychology covered in the course. The last three lectures apply each approach to a key topic in Psychology. **Lectures start promptly at 9.30am on Monday morning.**

Seminars will be used to discuss and consolidate material from the lectures and help to develop study skills required in this unit and throughout the degree programme. **In addition, seminar activities will help students complete the coursework for this unit.**

6.3 Importance of Student Self-Managed Learning Time

Self-managed learning is particularly important for this as the lectures provide the basic information required for the assessments, and further reading is crucial to obtain good marks in the coursework and the exam. One core text is recommended for this course, see below.

6.4 Employability

The seminars for this unit promote small group discussion and peer learning. These will help to develop skills such as listening to others, being aware of others needs and abilities and help to develop confidence in evaluating new and sometimes complex material.

7.0 THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Week One

Introduction to the Unit

Aims:

To provide a brief overview of the unit by identifying the five major approaches to Psychology and to demonstrate how they give different explanations for the same phenomena. A brief history of Psychology will also help to place each approach in context.

Learning outcomes:

At the end of this lecture students will be able to:

- Describe some of the characteristics of each of the five major approaches
- Compare and contrast explanations given by these approaches
- Understand the development of Psychology as a science.

Synopsis

This lecture will provide a brief history of Psychology as a scientific discipline. In doing so, each of the main approaches will be described and applied to selected psychological topics. The lecture will end by discussing the similarities and differences between the approaches.

Reading

Glassman, W. & Hadad, M. (2004) Approaches to Psychology 4th edition. Open University Press. **Chapter 1**

Davey et al (2005) Complete Psychology. London: Hodder & Stoughton **Chapter 2**

Week 2

The Psychodynamic Approach

Aims:

- Introduce students to the psychodynamic approach, its development and key areas within it
- Help students to understand where psychodynamic psychologists stand on a number of key issues within psychology
- Describe to students how selected phenomena are understood in terms of the psychodynamic approach

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the lecture students will be able to:

- Give a description of the psychodynamic approach, its development and key areas within it
- Describe how psychodynamic psychologists view key issues within psychology
- Explain how selected phenomena are understood in terms of the psychodynamic approach

Synopsis:

This lecture will introduce students to the psychodynamic approach and its history. We will examine the main aspects of psychodynamic theory such as personality, stages of development and the application of theory in working therapeutically and conducting research. Finally we will look at some of the contributions and limitations of this approach to understanding psychology and human behaviour.

Reading

Core Reading

Glassman, W. & Hadad, M. (2004) Approaches to Psychology 4th edition. Open University Press. **(page 203-250)**

Optional Reading

Dryden W and Mytton J (1999) Four approaches to counselling and psychotherapy. Routledge:London **(Chapter 2)**

Minsky, R. (1996) Psychoanalysis and gender: an introductory reader. Routledge:London **(Chapter 1: Introduction)** *Other chapters may also be of interest. Good for critical thinking and discussion.*

Week 3

The Behaviourist Approach

Aims:

- To identify key assumptions and characteristics of the behaviourist approach

- To describe the principles of operant and classical conditioning
- To identify some of the applications of conditioning
- To outline the behaviourist explanations of selected topics
- To identify strengths and weaknesses of the behaviourist approach

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the lecture students will be able to:

- Report the key characteristics of the behaviourist approach
- Explain how classical and operant conditioning work
- Describe some of the applications of conditioning
- Outline how learning can be used to explain selected phenomena
- Report some of the problems of behaviourism

Synopsis:

The lecture traces the origins of the behaviourist approach and identifies some of its key assumptions and characteristics before going on to describe the principles of classical and operant conditioning. Having outlined some applications of conditioning the lecture goes on to see how conditioning is used to explain phenomena such as aggression, personality and mental illness. The lecture concluded with some of the problems of the behaviourist approach.

Reading

Core Reading

Glassman, W. & Hadad, M. (2004) Approaches to Psychology 4th edition. Open University Press. **(Chapter3: The Behaviourist Approach)**

Davey et al (2005) Complete Psychology. London: Hodder & Stoughton **(Chapter 8: Animal Learning and Cognition)**

Week 4

The Humanistic Approach

Aims:

- Introduce students to the humanistic approach, its development and key areas within it
- Help students to understand where humanistic psychologists stand on a number of key issues within psychology
- Describe to students how selected phenomena are understood in terms of the humanistic approach

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the lecture students will be able to:

- Give a description of the humanistic approach, its development and key areas within it
- Describe how humanistic psychologists view key issues within psychology

- Explain how selected phenomena are understood in terms of the humanistic approach

Synopsis:

This lecture will introduce students to the humanistic approach and its history. We will examine the main aspects of humanistic theory such as personality, stages of development and the application of theory in working therapeutically and conducting research. Finally we will look at some of the contributions and limitations of this approach to understanding psychology and human behaviour.

Reading

Core Reading

Glassman, W. & Hadad, M. (2004) Approaches to Psychology 4th edition. Open University Press. **(page 253-293)**

Optional Reading

Dryden W and Mytton J (1999) Four approaches to counselling and psychotherapy. Routledge:London **(Chapter 3: The Person Centred Approach)**

Week 5

The Biological Approach

Aims:

- Introduce students to the biological approach to psychology and its historical origins.
- Describe the basic structure of the nervous system with reference to the 'fight or flight' response in aggression
- Describe the basic principles of genetic inheritance
- Outline some problems/criticisms of the biological approach.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the lecture students will be able to

- Identify the principles underlying the biological approach to psychology
- Describe the evolutionary origins of aggressive behaviour
- Describe how genes could contribute to personality and abnormal behaviour
- Explain the limitations of the biological approach

Synopsis

This lecture will introduce students to the historical origins of biological psychology and the methods used by psychologists to link biological processes to behaviour. We will examine how the nervous system works and the mechanisms underlying genetic inheritance to demonstrate how these processes can affect behaviour. Finally, some limitations of the biological approach will be discussed.

Core Reading

Glassman, W. & Hadad, M. (2004) *Approaches to Psychology* 4th edition. Open University Press. **(Chapter 2: The Biological Approach)**

Davey et al (2005) *Complete Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton **(Chapter 6: p66-85 only and Chapter 7: p.86-98 only)**

Week Six

The Cognitive Approach

Aims:

- Introduce students to the Cognitive Approach, its development and key areas within it;
- Help students to understand where Cognitive Psychologists stand on a number of key issues within Psychology;
- Describe to students how selected phenomena (within development, social behaviour, and abnormal behaviour) are understood in terms of the Cognitive Approach.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the lecture students will be able to:

- Give a description of the Cognitive Approach, its development, and key areas within it;
- Describe how Cognitive Psychologists view key issues within Psychology;
- Explain how selected phenomena are understood in terms of the Cognitive Approach.

Synopsis:

This lecture will introduce students to the cognitive psychology approach and its history. We will examine main areas in cognitive psychology such as perception, memory, and language and focus on how cognitive psychologists view key issues such as methodology and practical application of research in everyday life. Finally we will look at how cognitive psychology can help us to understand problems such as aggression and abnormal behaviour.

Reading:

Glassman, W.E. & Hadad, M. (2004). *Approaches to Psychology*. Open University Press **(p. 150-201)**

Davey, G., Albery, I., Chandler, C., Field, A., Jones, D., Messer, D., Moore, S., & Sterling, C., (2005). *Complete Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton **(p. 179-280)**

Week Seven

Perspectives on Development

Aims:

- Discuss some of the areas studied by developmental psychologists;
- Look at the methods used and the issues which arise in the study of human development;
- Consider the extent to which these methods and issues are similar to those already considered in the five approaches;
- Describe how each of the five approaches explains personality development;
- Draw attention to the key differences in how each approach explains the development of personality.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the lecture students will be able to:

- Outline, broadly, the areas studied in developmental psychology;
- Describe the methods used by developmental psychologists and the issues which arise in the study of human development;
- Describe how each of the five approaches explains the development of personality;
- Identify the fundamental differences in how each approach explains personality development.

Synopsis:

This lecture will introduce developmental psychology and identify the key areas of research that occur within this field. We will discuss the methods used by developmental psychologists to study human development, drawing contrasts and comparisons with the research methods employed in various other fields of psychological research. We will then go on to consider some theoretical issues that arise in developmental psychology, specifically 'Heredity vs. Environment in explaining patterns of development', 'Continuous vs. Discrete theories of development' and 'Generality vs. Specificity of theories'. The implications of each side of these issues will be briefly considered. The lecture will then focus on personality development, considering the concept of personality, and how each of the approaches attempts to account for its development. There will be a particular emphasis on the contrasts and comparisons between these different explanations, and the way in which they address the main issues identified earlier in the lecture.

Reading:

Glassman, W.E. & Hadad, M. (2004). *Approaches to Psychology*. Open University Press (p. 295-326).

Davey, G., Albery, I., Chandler, C., Field, A., Jones, D., Messer, D., Moore, S., & Sterling, C., (2005). *Complete Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. **Chapter 17 p 282-299**

Week Eight

There will be no formal lecture or seminar this week. Seminar tutors will be available in their offices during the normal seminar time (11am – 1pm)

Week Nine

Perspectives on Social Behaviour

Aims:

- Discuss some of the areas studied by social psychologists;
- Look at the methods used and the issues which arise in the study of social behaviours;
- Consider the extent to which these methods and issues are similar to those already considered in the five approaches;
- Describe how each of the five approaches explains aggressive behaviour;
- Draw attention to the key differences in how each approach explains aggression.

Learning outcomes:

At the end the lecture students will be able to:

- Outline, broadly, the areas studied in social psychology;
- Describe the methods used by social psychologists and identify the issues which arise in the study of social behaviour;
- Describe how each of the five approaches explains aggressive behaviour
- Identify the fundamental differences in how each approach explains aggression.

Synopsis:

This lecture will introduce social psychology and identify the key areas of research that occur within this field. We will discuss the methods used by social psychologists to study social behaviours, drawing contrasts and comparisons with the research methods employed in various other fields of psychological research. We will then go on to consider some theoretical issues that arise in social psychology, specifically 'Individual vs. Situational explanations of human behaviour' and 'Proximal vs. Distal causes of human social behaviour'. These issues will be considered in light of a broader question: Given the broad number of factors that potentially influence our social behaviours, how do we identify complete explanations for any given behaviour? The lecture will then focus on aggression, considering its definitions, issues with measuring aggressive behaviour, and how each of the approaches attempts to account for acts of aggression. There will be a particular emphasis on the contrasts and comparisons between these different explanations, and the way in which they address the issues identified earlier in the lecture.

Reading:

Glassman, W.E. & Hadad, M. (2004). *Approaches to Psychology*. Open University Press (p. 327-368).

Davey, G., Albery, I., Chandler, C., Field, A., Jones, D., Messer, D., Moore, S., & Sterling, C., (2005). *Complete Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. **Chapter 21, p362-376**

Week Ten

Perspectives on Abnormal Behaviour

Aims:

- Discuss the issue of normality and potential ways of distinguishing normal from abnormal behaviour;
- Outline some of the ways in which psychologists have historically attempted to define abnormality, and describe, broadly, current views on how abnormality should be defined;
- Consider how the five approaches explain the origins (aetiology) of abnormality, and how each then goes on to propose treatments;
- Identify the key assumptions upon which the various approaches justify their explanations, then draw contrasts and comparisons between each approach;
- Look at the effectiveness of treatments and discuss why different disorders might respond differentially to various treatments.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the lecture students will be able to:

- Describe the various approaches to defining abnormality and outline the prevailing views on what abnormal behaviour is;
- Explain how the five approaches view the aetiology and treatment of abnormal behaviour, and be able to compare these various approaches with regards to their stance on several key issues;
- Identify issues regarding effectiveness of treatments and outline possible explanations as to why certain disorders respond differentially to various treatments.

Synopsis:

This lecture will begin by considering the notion of normality with a view to developing a definition of abnormal behaviour. Current and historical views of abnormality will be considered, as well as the implications for the individual of how society defines and diagnoses abnormality. We will then look at how the five approaches explain the aetiology of abnormality, and then look at how each goes on to justify a variety of treatments. A distinction will be drawn between the biological approach and the other four approaches in this context as the biological model of abnormal behaviour is akin to the very influential Medical Model of abnormality; the other four approaches, although different in fundamental ways, all rely upon psychological, as opposed to physiological, explanations of abnormality. We will conclude with a consideration of the effectiveness of various medical and therapeutic treatments for abnormal behaviour, and consider some of the possible reasons why treatments differ in their effectiveness on various different disorders.

Reading:

Glassman, W.E. & Hadad, M. (2004). *Approaches to Psychology*. Open University Press (p. 369-412).

Davey, G., Albery, I., Chandler, C., Field, A., Jones, D., Messer, D., Moore, S., & Sterling, C., (2005). *Complete Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. **Chapter 32, p544-558**

Week Eleven: Revision Lecture

Aim:

- Summarise the content of the unit, with a particular emphasis on the areas relevant to the examination;
- Discuss strategies for answering exam questions in this area;
- Think about effective planning strategies for revision;
- Answer student queries relating to the unit.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the lecture students will be able to:

- Identify the key aims of the examination;
- Construct plans for answering essay answer examination questions;
- Plan their time effectively for revision.

8.0 LEARNING RESOURCES

8.1 Core Materials

Glassman, W.E. & Hadad, M., (2004). *Approaches to Psychology (4th Edition)*. Open University Press. **(Recommended purchase for this unit)**

Davey, G., Albery, I., Chandler, C., Field, A., Jones, D., Messer, D., Moore, S., & Sterling, C., (2005). *Complete Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton
(Recommended introductory text for Psychology in general, as well as specific reading for this unit)

8.2 Optional Materials

Davenport, G.C., (1994). *An Introduction to Child Development (2nd Edition)*. London: Collins Educational.

Dryden, W. & Mytton, J., (1999). *Four Approaches to Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Routledge.

Minsky, R., (1996). *Psychoanalysis and Gender: an introductory reader*. London: Routledge.