  
Birkbeck  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

# Foundation of Modern Psychology

Dr. Howie Fine

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## AIMS

- To introduce the discipline of psychology enabling you to make an informed choice of options within the Certificate and Diploma scheme.

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## OBJECTIVES

- Introduce the main concepts and theories in contemporary psychology:
  - Approaches and Methods within Psychology
  - Basic Processes
  - Socialisation
  - Applications of Psychology
- Provide and insight into different psychological perspectives and their application.
- Support and develop student's study skills.
- Build confidence in presenting ideas and in critical thinking.

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## ASSESSMENT METHODS



Four pieces of coursework including:

- Two timed essays under timed conditions
- One take home essay (1500 words)
- One presentation

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## INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY



### Definitions

The word PSYCHOLOGY is derived from two Greek words, *psyche* (mind soul or spirit) and *logos* (discourse or study) which put together produce "*Study of the mind*"

"Psychology is the Science of Mental Life, both of its phenomena and of theory condition...The Phenomena are such things as we call feelings, desires, cognitions, reasoning, decisions and the like."  
(William James, 1890)

"For the behaviourist, psychology is that division of Natural science which takes human behaviour – the doings and sayings, both learned and unlearned – as its subject matter."  
(John B. Watson, 1919)

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## INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY



"Psychology is usually defined as the scientific study of behaviour. Its subject matter includes behavioural processes that are observable, such as gestures, speech and physiological changes, and processes that can only be inferred, such as thoughts and dreams."  
(Clark & Miller, 1970)

And more recently and concisely :

"The scientific study of behaviour and mental processes"  
(Atkinson, 2000)

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## TWO LEVELS OF PSYCHOLOGY

<p><b>MICRO</b></p> <p><i>Biology</i> → Genetics          → Nerves          → Biochemistry          → Neurology</p> <p><i>Biology based</i></p>	<p><b>MACRO</b></p> <p><i>Social World</i> → Society          → Culture</p> <p>Social groups          Societies</p>
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← Sensation →  
 ← Attraction →  
 ← Perception →  
 ← Learning →  
 ← Condition →    How do we think socially  
 ← Development →    ⇒ effect from both fronts  
 ← Personality →  
 ← Interaction →

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## THE SCIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY

The science of Psychology has many definitions for its role, goal, and tool of the science

- **Definition of Psychology** - To understand the scientific, study of behaviour and mental process.
- **Goals of Psychology** - To understand, predict, and control the behaviour and mental process.
- **Tools of Psychology** - Scientific method  
 Observation  
 Definition – Identifying and defining problems.

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## THE SCIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY

Psychologists try to look at human behaviour from a range of different angles, so that they can get as complete a picture as possible, therefore many different branches of psychology and areas of interests have developed :

- Cognitive Psychology
- Individual Processes and Abnormality
- Physiological Psychology
- Social Psychology
- Developmental Psychology
- Comparative Psychology

These are general categories, though disciplines often relying on knowledge from different areas of psychology.

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## NOTES



- Please do invest in one of the suggested texts.
- **Reminder** : You are expected to do 2 – 4 hours background reading/homework a week.
- **Contact** : Please note e-mail address [howard.fine@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk](mailto:howard.fine@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk)
- Please e-mail me to opt in on course circulars and materials
- If you are unable to attend a session, please notify me as soon as you can, alternately phone the college.

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## GENERAL TEXTS



- Atkinson, R.C., Atkinson, R.L. et al (2000) *Introduction to Psychology* (13th Edition), Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Bernstein, D.A. et al (1999) *Psychology* (5th Edition) Houghton Mifflin.
- Coolican, H. et al (1996) *Applied Psychology* Hodder & Stoughton.
- Fancher, R.E. (1996) *Pioneers of Psychology* (3rd Edition) Norton.
- Francer, R. F. (1978) *Processes of Psychology*
- Gross, R. & McIlveen, R. (1998) *Psychology : A new introduction* Hodder & Stoughton.
- Hayes, N. (1998) *Foundations of Psychology* (2nd Edition) Methuen.
- Leahey, T.H. (2000) *A History of Psychology* (5th Edition) Prentice Hall
- Malim, T. et al (1998) *Perspectives in Psychology* Macmillan.

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