

PS922-15 Issues in Psychological Science

20/21

Department

Psychology

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Gordon Brown

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module covers core psychology and behavioural science content relevant to later modules, including memory, attention, perception, personality and individual differences, choice, and subjective well-being.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module, together with PS923 Methods and Analysis in Behavioural Science, will provide students on the MScs in Behavioural and Economic Science with the psychological background to enable them to understand and critically evaluate material on the additional modules offered by the Psychology Department. Through a combination of lectures, seminars, and laboratory-based sessions, the students will learn about both models and data in the relevant areas of psychology (see list of lecture topics). They will also learn basic MATLAB programming and model implementation.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Introduction

Economics and Happiness

Subjective well-being

Personality and individual differences

Models of Context Effects

Modelling with MATLAB

Attention

Memory

Agent-based Models and Polarisation

Income Inequality

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Understanding of the history of, and different methodological approaches within, psychology as relevant to Behavioural Science
- Ability to identify key areas where approaches from behavioural science either have been, or potentially can be, applied to real-world problems
- Understanding of how MATLAB can be used to build simple cognitive models

Indicative reading list

Ariely, D. (2009). *Predictably irrational: The hidden forces that shape our decisions*. Harper Collins.

Hertwig, R., & Ortmann, A. (2001). Experimental practices in economics: A methodological challenge for psychologists? *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, 24, 383-451.

Wilkinson, R., & Pickett, K. (2009). *The spirit level: Why more equal societies almost always do better*. Allen Lane.

Rosenbaum, D. A., Vaughan, J., & Wyble, B. (2014). *MATLAB for Behavioural Scientists*. Hillsdale, NJ: LEA.

Additional journal articles will be required reading for each lecture.

Subject specific skills

- Implementation of simple cognitive models in MATLAB programming language.
- Understanding of differences between approaches to both theory and experimentation in economics and psychology.
- Understanding of core concepts in memory, attention, perception, and social and evolutionary psychology.

Transferable skills

- Critical evaluation
 - programming skills
 - effective personal planning skills
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	8 sessions of 2 hours (11%)
Seminars	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Practical classes	3 sessions of 1 hour (2%)
Other activity	3 hours (2%)
Private study	126 hours (84%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

self-directed study related to seminar preparation, case studies and background reading, and assignment preparation.

Other activity description

Lecture

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time
Test 1	11%	
Modelling Assignment	67%	
MATLAB assignment		
Test 2	11%	

	Weighting	Study time
Test 3	11%	

Feedback on assessment

Formative feedback: during practical sessions/lab follow-up sessions and seminars.\r\nSummative feedback: written feedback and comments on MATLAB assignments; class tests.\r\n

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of TPSS-C803 Postgraduate Taught Behavioural and Data Science
- TPSS-C8P7 Postgraduate Taught Behavioural and Economic Science (Science Track)
 - Year 1 of C8P7 Behavioural and Economic Science (Science Track)
 - Year 1 of C8P7 Behavioural and Economic Science (Science Track)
- Year 1 of TECS-C8P8 Postgraduate Taught Behavioural and Economics Science (Economics Track)