

University of Guelph
Department of Psychology
PSYC6900 – Winter 2018
History and Philosophy of Psychology

"The history of science is science itself; the history of the individual, the individual."

Goethe

Instructor:

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Office hours: By appointment

Class: ROZH109, Tuesdays, 11:30am – 2:20pm

Course description:

In this course we will view the discipline of Psychology as concrete human activity located in a specific time and place. That is, we will try to understand Psychology in terms of the “mangle” of people, ideas and technologies that make it up.

We will try to answer questions like, “What is Psychology?”, “How did it develop into what it is today?”, “What are the core assumptions underlying Psychological knowledge?”, and “What role does Psychology play in our cultural self-understanding?” We will look at how Psychology developed, as a form of knowledge and as a profession, in relation to politics, war, social structure, new technologies and influential personalities, as well as the key theoretical and methodological debates that developed over its history.

This course will provide a critical historical overview of the development of Psychology in North America and Europe, and its dissemination around the world. It is not a history in the conventional sense of a chronological account of events in Psychology, but rather an historical and critical approach to the central theories, topics and practices of Psychology.

Course objectives:

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Understand and articulate the value of historical and theoretical analysis in Psychology.
- Compare and contrast the “natural science” and “human science” approaches to Psychology.
- Describe the internal and external factors that led to the development of Psychology and its major schools/fields.
- Reflect on the historicity of the theories and methods you employ in your own research.
- Reflect on and situate your own research in relation to contemporary society.

Course format:

The course will be presented in seminar format, with an emphasis on intensive reading, and open and active discussion. Students will also be asked to give presentations and lead discussions in class. PLEASE NOTE: This is a **reading-intensive** course.

Course topics and schedule:

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| 9 January | Introduction and course overview |
| 16 January | Why (and how) do we do history? |
| 23 January | The beginnings of Psychology |
| 30 January | Psychological science and/or humanities? Behaviourism and origin myths |
| 6 February | Psychoanalysis, “madness” and psychotherapy |
| 13 February | The new profession of Psychology: War and Industrial Psychology |
| 20 February | READING WEEK |
| 27 February | The internationalization of Psychology |
| 6 March | Psychology, gender and feminism |
| 13 March | Psychology, race and racism |
| 20 March | Cognition and the rise of neuroscience |
| 27 March | The public understanding of Psychology |
| 3 April | Psychological science and/or humanities revisited Summing up and conclusion |

Required text and course resources:

Pickren, W. E. & Rutherford, A. (2010). *A history of modern psychology in context*. New Jersey: Wiley.

- There is additional required reading that will be available on CourseLink.
- Please see the accompanying reading list for details.
- TIPS for effective reading:
 - The readings for this course are predominantly historical and philosophical and it is possible that you will be unfamiliar with these genres. Unlike the empirical

literature, it is not possible to skim these and grasp their arguments. To read effectively for this course, budget enough time to read slowly and look things up.

- Don't be discouraged if you initially find the papers difficult to understand. Our class discussions (and your writing assignments) will be an opportunity to clarify and deepen your understanding of these papers.

Course assessment:

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| 1. Reader response papers (6 x 10%) | 60% |
| 2. Participation in class discussions | 20% |
| 3. Seminar presentation and discussion | 20% |

1. Reader response papers

- You will submit six short essays (600-800 words) in response to the readings for a given week (**beginning on January 16th**). They should rely on a close reading of the texts, and respond to one or more of the main arguments/issues in the texts. Feel free to comment on their relevance to your own thinking and research interests, but **do not merely summarise material**. Referencing is not necessary unless you use additional sources.
- *Grading:* Response papers will be graded qualitatively (Outstanding = A+, Excellent = A, Very good = A-, etc.). These will be converted to numbers (A+ = 10, A = 9, A- = 8, etc.) and averaged.
- At the start of term, you will sign up for the six topics for which you will submit a response essay. Due to class size, I can only accept a maximum of 5 essays per topic (please sign up). Essays will be **due 24 hours before each class**, and must be uploaded to the Courselink Dropbox.
- *Late submissions:* 10% per day up to a maximum of 3 days, after which you will receive zero.

2. Participation in class discussions

- You will receive a participation grade for contributing actively and meaningfully to weekly seminars, and to class and small group discussions. At a minimum, I expect students to attend each class, except in the case of emergencies, and to come prepared to discuss the assigned readings.

3. Seminar presentation and discussion

- **Beginning on the week of January 23rd** (Topic: *The beginnings of psychology*), each of you will give a presentation on the topic and readings for a particular week. There will be an opportunity for you to sign up for a presentation in the first class.

- *Content:* Rather than attempt to exhaustively cover or summarise the contents of the readings, pick out and highlight what is salient to you, what you consider to be most important, intriguing, confusing (or outrageous)! You can assume that everyone will have done the reading for the week.
- Presentations will be graded on both content and presentation style (a rubric will be provided).
- Your presentations will also be graded by your peers. Their averaged grade will make up 50% of your presentation grade.
- The presentation can include audio or video and may go beyond the reading material and incorporate your own research interests. Discussion questions should be derived from the reading material.
- *Length:* Your presentation should be approximately 30 minutes long and you should prepare discussion questions/activities for approximately 30 minutes of discussion. Feel free to split the class into smaller groups and be creative with your discussions.

University Policies

Academic Consideration

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration: [Grounds for Academic Consideration](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offenses from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offense should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the [Graduate Calendar](#)

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email accessibility@uoguelph.ca or see the website: [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

Course Evaluation Information

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#)

Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday March 9th. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Academic Calendar: [Current Graduate Calendar](#)