



4th Year Seminar Descriptions (2024-25)

Fall

PSY 420F – Social Psychology Seminar: *The Psychology of Human Sexuality*

Sexuality is a topic of growing interest in psychology. Although sexual selection is arguably the strongest driver of human evolution and the management of sexual needs is deeply intertwined with cultural practices, psychology has left many fundamental questions regarding human sexuality largely unanswered. This course will survey multiple issues including sexual orientation, sexual attraction, short and long-term sexual relationships, and sexual fantasy. *Please be aware that we will be covering some very sensitive material.* Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 220H1/PSY 220H5/PSYB10H3/SOC 213H1.**

Dr. Geoff MacDonald
Tuesdays 12-2 p.m.

PSY 420F – Social Psychology Seminar: *The Social Psychology of Language*

Language is a social activity, and it permeates every dimension of one's social world. Although it has garnered much attention in cognitive psychology, it has been largely overlooked in mainstream social psychology. This course focuses on the social psychology of language and communication, and we will examine the role of language in social psychological processes. Topics will include identity, intergroup relations, person perception, bias, prejudice, and discrimination. The course will include a review of prevalent theories and current trends in the field. Students will learn how language intersects with social psychological variables and gain a greater understanding of the social psychological antecedents and consequences of language as well as its contribution to social meaning and social construction in their daily lives. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 220H1/PSY 220H5/PSYB10H3/SOC 213H1**; completion of **one of JLP 315H1/JLP 374H1/LIN 200H1/LIN 101H1/LIN 102H1** is strongly recommended.

Dr. Odilia Yim
Wednesdays 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

PSY 430F – Personality Seminar: *Cultivating Wisdom in Daily Life*

This seminar will involve an in-depth exploration into the construct of Wisdom. We will start by looking at different definitions of wisdom including folk beliefs and cultural differences in our understanding of wisdom. We will move on to discuss the measurement of wisdom as a state and personality trait. Finally, we will explore evidence-based practices for cultivating wisdom in our daily lives and discuss outcomes related to this. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 230H1/PSY 230H5/PSYB30H3 or one of PSY 240H1/PSY 240H5/PSYB32H3.**

Dr. Amanda Sharples
Mondays 2-4 p.m.

PSY 440F – Seminar in Psychopathology and Clinical Science: *Advanced Topics in the Practice of Psychotherapy*

This seminar will involve exploration and discussion of advanced topics relevant to clinical practice, building on concepts introduced in *PSY 343H1*. Topics include further examination of the role of the counsellor (empathy, safe and effective use of self, cultural competence and cultural humility, alliance ruptures), an introduction to specialized psychotherapy (trauma-informed care, sex therapy), an introduction to therapy involving multiple individuals/clients (group therapy, family or couples/relationship therapy), the importance of good assessment, and the role of diagnosis in psychotherapy. Completion of this course will provide students with an introduction to some of the complexities surrounding these topics in preparation for a career providing psychotherapy to clients. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of *PSY 230H1/PSY 230H5/PSYB30H3* or one of *PSY 240H1/PSY 240H5/PSYB32H3***; completion of *PSY 343H1* is strongly recommended.

Dr. Malvina Skorska

Thursdays 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

PSY 471F – Seminar in Cognition: *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience*

This course will ask how changes in the developing brain can influence our understanding of how infants, children, and adults learn and think. To answer this question, we will first go over the process of human brain development. We will then cover specific topics including the development of sensory and motor systems and the development of multiple aspects of learning and memory. In all cases, we will ask whether neural measures inform our understanding of how cognitive processes change with age. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of *PSY 270H1/PSY 270H5/PSYB57H3***; completion of **one of *PSY 210H1/PSY 210H5/PSYB20H3* and *PSY 493H1*** is strongly recommended.

Dr. Amy Finn

Mondays 1-3 p.m.

PSY 471F – Seminar in Cognition: *Addiction*

Despite an enormous global effort to understand and treat addiction, the health and societal problems associated with substance use disorder persist. For example, drug overdoses have caused more deaths in the US than car accidents in recent years. Why do we continue to fail at treating the disease of addiction? Or are we thinking about this wrong, to begin with: is addiction actually a disease that can be treated medically? This seminar will explore questions such as these from behavioural, neuroscientific, and sociological perspectives, using evidence from non-human and human research. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of *PSY 260H1/PSYB38H3* or one of *PSY 270H1/PSY 270H5/PSYB57H3* or one of *PSY 290H1/PSY 290H5/PSYB64H3/HMB 200H1/PSL 300H1***.

Dr. Suzanne Wood

Tuesdays 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

PSY 490F – Seminar in Behavioural Neuroscience: *Topics in Human Chronobiology*

The course will present an analysis of biological rhythms from several perspectives while focusing on the impacts that circadian and other rhythmicity have on human behaviour, physiology, and health. We will address the diverse roles that timing and timekeeping play in everyday life, and how disturbed rhythmicity can cause or contribute to neuropsychiatric disorders. In particular, rhythmicity has evolved as a crucial factor in producing normal health, both mental and physical, regulating thought and action, and enabling anticipation of future events and conditions. Particular attention will be directed toward the temporal opportunities and constraints that are imposed on human behaviour and physiology, including the significant impacts on memory, personality, emotional regulation, and the

awareness of time. This will be augmented by discussions of how rhythms support the biology of other model species. Weekly topics will be chosen by the instructor, and will have current relevance to health, but we will also augment these discussions with examinations of the theoretical reasons for the existence of rhythms in biological processes and placed in a presentation order whereby later topics may refer to the earlier discussions. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of** *PSY 290H1/PSY 290H5/PSYB64H3/HMB 200H1/PSL 300H1*; completion of *PSY 397H1* is strongly recommended.

Dr. Martin Ralph
Tuesdays 3-5 p.m.

Winter

PSY 420S – Social Psychology Seminar: *Social Psychology of the Media*

Media surround our everyday lives, from the movies and TV shows we watch to the apps we use to stay in touch with friends and family. However, despite how pervasive media is in our lives, psychologists have only been able to scratch the surface in understanding the specific ways media impacts, and exists alongside, human psychology. This course focuses on the intersection of social psychology and media studies and addresses some contemporary issues in applying social psychology to understanding media. Topics include media influences on social behaviour (e.g., aggression, pro-sociality) and the self-concept (e.g., social identity, self-esteem), pre-trial publicity and legal decision-making, media literacy, audience theory, and social media. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of** *PSY 220H1/PSY 220H5/PSYB10H3/SOC 213H1*.

Dr. Patricia Sanchez
Mondays 2-4 p.m.

PSY 420S – Social Psychology Seminar: *The Moralities of Everyday Life*

This seminar dives into the modern science of moral thought and moral action, explored through the disciplines of cognitive science, social and developmental psychology, neuroscience, behavioural economics, and analytic philosophy. Topics include empathy and compassion in babies and young children; emotional reactions to family, friends, and strangers; the origins of prejudice and bigotry; sexuality, disgust, and purity; punishment, revenge, and forgiveness; dehumanization, and the relationship between morality and religion. No specific requirements, but participants should be prepared to read, and discuss, articles from a wide range of intellectual disciplines. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of** *PSY 220H1/PSY 220H5/PSYB10H3/SOC 213H1*.

Dr. Paul Bloom
Mondays 4-6 p.m.

PSY 420S – Social Psychology Seminar: *Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Stigma*

This course will examine contemporary issues in stereotyping, prejudice, and stigma, both from the perceiver's and the target's perspective. The focus will be on understanding current trends in the field by focusing on what has been recently published over the past few years. Connections with classic issues and research will be made through weekly presentations and discussions led by discussion facilitators. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of** *PSY 220H1/PSY 220H5/PSYB10H3/SOC 213H1*.

Dr. Alison Chasteen
Tuesdays 5-7 p.m.

PSY 430S – Personality Seminar: *The Policy Relevance of Subjective Well-Being*

The course will explore the emerging role of subjective well-being as a policy indicator. Subjective well-being refers to the cognitive assessment and affective feelings about the quality of one's life. Together we will examine classic and current issues related to subjective well-being research, such as: Do citizens value happiness? How can we measure happiness at the individual and population level? To what extent is population well-being malleable? Does money buy happiness? Does moving to a nicer house make you happier? Is a long and prosperous but dissatisfying life a good life? What are the benefits of population well-being? Is subjective well-being a viable policy goal? We will read and discuss research articles from within and beyond psychology to promote a multidisciplinary understanding of subjective well-being research. The format of the course involves in-class discussion, oral presentations, and a written assignment. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 230H1/PSY 230H5/PSYB30H3 or one of PSY 240H1/PSY 240H5/PSYB32H3.**

Dr. Felix Cheung

Wednesdays 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

PSY 460S – Seminar in Learning: *Biopsychological Approaches to Study Cognition*

Recent advances in tools and technology open the door to investigating the biological basis of various cognitive processes, such as memory, spatial navigation, decision making, and social interaction. In this course, we will read and discuss primary research articles on biopsychological experiments using non-human animals to gain insights into how cognitive processes are associated with genetic and physiological changes in the brain. The course will include brief lectures on methods and measures used in the assigned articles; however, a basic understanding of molecular biology, neurophysiology, and neuroanatomy is expected. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 260H1/PSYB38H3; completion of PSY 290H1 is strongly recommended.**

Dr. Kaori Takehara-Nishiuchi

Tuesdays 3-5 p.m.

PSY 471S – Seminar in Cognition: *Current Research in Visual Cognition*

This seminar focuses on the fundamental properties of the visual system that work to build our representation of the visual world. Students will be reading both foundational cornerstone articles, as well as articles that represent the current state of the research field. Topics will broadly include Perception, Visual Attention, and Visual Working Memory. Emphasis will be placed on understanding how the modern articles have incorporated what was learnt from the cornerstone articles. Students will be encouraged to think of the 'next steps' themselves and to propose further research questions and experiments. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 270H1/PSY 270H5/PSYB57H3.**

Dr. Zachary Hamblin-Frohman

Wednesdays 3-5 p.m.

PSY 480S – Seminar in Perception: *Visual Aesthetics*

Why do we like certain visual stimuli over others? Specific artworks may evoke strong emotions and leave us in awe while others may not move us at all. Even our everyday surroundings have the power to stress us or to calm us. In this seminar, we will explore the how and why behind our aesthetic experiences. Brief lectures and interactive discussions will complement the weekly assigned readings, which will include research and review articles spanning fields such as psychology, neuroscience, and philosophy. Completion of *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 280H1/PSY 280H5/PSYB51H3** is recommended, however, this course may also be of interest to students in *Architecture, Art History, Philosophy, and Cognitive Science*.

Instructor TBA

Thursdays 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

PSY490S – Seminar in Behavioural Neuroscience: *Optogenetic Probing of Animal Behaviours*

The course will provide an extensive overview of diverse genetic neuron manipulation techniques currently employed within the systems neuroscience. Emphasis will be placed on exploring light-induced neuron manipulation methodologies and their practical applications. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 290H1/PSY 290H5/PSYB64H3/HMB 200H1/PSL 300H1**; completion of **one of PSY 390H1/PSY 355H5/HMB 265H1** is recommended.

Dr. Junchul Kim

Fridays 1-3 p.m.

PSY 497S - Seminar in Biological Timing: *Biological Rhythms from Molecules to Human Behaviour*

Biological clocks that time natural oscillations in the physical world are ubiquitous among living organisms throughout phylogeny. However, there is a large literature showing that rhythms may be conditioned by experience. This has important implications for human beings who as a species have developed social behaviours (habits) that oppose the advantages that have propelled the development of biological clocks in all species. The incongruence of human behaviour with the evolutionarily derived biological timing systems produced serious mental and physical issues, and ultimately affects aging. In this seminar we will examine issues of rhythmicity which have become part of mainstream thought in medicine, biology, social sciences, and engineering. Various different influences on performance, such as sensory processing, memory formation, motivation, or emotionality, may be influenced by internal timekeeping in different ways. Some aspects of rhythmicity are innate while others are learned. The synchronization of internal clocks has an enormous effect on mental and physical performance; and this includes the rhythms of the internal microbiome. This course will look at these various ways in which clocks participate in regulating behavioural timing, from molecules to cells, to populations, and how they are coordinated in regulating the daily temporal program of physiology and behaviour. Prerequisites are *PSY 202H1 (or equivalent)* **and one of PSY 290H1/PSY 290H5/PSYB64H3/HMB 200H1/PSL 300H1**; completion of *PSY 397H1* is strongly recommended. Exclusion to *PSY 490H1* if taken in Fall 2024.

Dr. Martin Ralph

Tuesdays 2-4 p.m.