Psychology in Modules
Saul Kassin
Annotated Table of Contents

Modules
The modular approach makes content more accessible for students without compromising meaning because modules are shorter and more focused than traditional chapters. Each module is an average of 15-20 pages in length and focuses on a specific topic, giving you the flexibility to focus on the topics you consider to be most important for your students, in the sequence that works best in your course.

Psychology, Past and Present
This module explores the historical roots of psychology, including founding scholars, such as Wundt, James, and Freud, and modes of inquiry, such as psychoanalysis, behaviorism and cognition. It goes on to survey the field today, including topics such as evolutionary psychology, behavioral genetics, and behavioral neuroscience. (M01; 20 pp)

Methods of Psychological Research
This module begins by establishing the importance of research to the field of psychology. It goes on to define the various elements of research: statistics, surveys, random sampling, correlation, independent and dependent variables, and control groups. (M02; 19 pp)

Behavioral Neuroscience: The Nervous System
This module describes the body’s communication networks – the central nervous system and the endocrine system – and how they affect behavior. (M03; 12 pp)

Behavioral Neuroscience: The Brain
This module describes the basic anatomy of the brain, and goes on to explore how research into specific regions of the brain – brainstem, limbic system, and cerebral cortex – are important to psychological research. (M04; 15 pp)

The Brain’s Capacity for Specialization, Integration, Growth, and Repair
This module describes the different functions performed by the two hemispheres of the brain, and looks at the brain’s ability to change and heal as an opportunity for future therapies and treatments. (M05; 19 pp)

Sensation and “Extrasensory” Experiences
This module explores the connection between physical stimuli and the sensory perception thereof. It goes on to explore the debate over extrasensory perceptions. (M06; 9 pp)

The Visual System
This module describes the process of vision from the external stimulus, through the physiology of the eye, to the sense of perception. It goes on to explore different explanations for color vision and deficiency. (M07; 11 pp)
Hearing and Other Senses
This module describes the stimulus and sensory perceptions of hearing, smell, taste, touch, temperature, pain, and coordination. It goes on to explore how the brain keeps all of these sensory inputs straight, or in some cases, fails to keep them straight. (M08; 19 pp)

Perception and Illusion
This module examines how the brain turns external stimuli into perceptions, beginning with Gestalt Psychology – the idea that the whole is different from the sum of the parts. It goes on to explore how expectations influences perception, including constancy and depth perception, and how those expectations can give way to illusions. (M09; 14 pp)

Consciousness and Attention
Psychologists generally define consciousness as attention; this module examines both selective and divided attention, as well as the influence of subliminal messages and priming. Often, attempts to control consciousness meet with exactly the opposite of the intended result. (M10; 12 pp)

Sleep and Dreams
This module explores various influences on and aspects of sleep, including Circadian rhythm, jet lag, night shifts, stages of sleep and REM sleep. It goes on to examine the role of dreams and their interpretation as well as sleep disorders. (M11; 21 pp)

Consciousness Altering Experiences
This module discusses the myths and realities of hypnosis, including hypnotic susceptibility and posthypnotic suggestion and amnesia. It also describes various psychoactive drugs such as sedatives, stimulants, hallucinogens, and opiates. (M12; 17 pp)

Rudiments of Learning: Classical Conditioning
This module defines learning as a permanent change in behavior as a result of experience, from habituation to conditioning. It describes Pavlov’s experiments on dogs as well as the legacy thereof. (M13; 16 pp)

Operant Conditioning and Observational Learning
This module describes B.F. Skinner’s experiments that demonstrate how reinforcement and shaping influence behavior, and the practical applications of his findings, including research on latent learning and locus of control. (M14; 21 pp)

Sensory and Short-Term Memory
This module explores the mechanics and limitations of short-term memory, as well as techniques for increasing one’s short term memory such as chunking and maintenance rehearsal. (M15; 14 pp)

Long-Term Memory
This module describes different forms of long term memory, including procedural and declarative memory, the different ways in which memories can be stored, and different mechanisms for retrieving memories, such as free recall and recognition. (M16; 20 pp)
Memories Forgotten and Reconstructed
This module discusses the various reasons that memories are forgotten: lack of encoding, decay, interference, and repression and how memories are reconstructed according to a subject’s own schema. It goes on to explore how we remember our own lives can be distorted by flashbulb memories, childhood amnesia, and hindsight bias. (M17; 20 pp)

Thinking, Rationality, and Bias
This module explores the building-blocks of thought, including concepts, prototypes, and how humans solve problems through trial and error, algorithms, heuristics, and analogies. It goes on to describe the elements of rational thought and judgments, including syllogisms, heuristics, and critical thinking. (M18; 26 pp)

Language
This module describes the defining characteristics of language: semanticity morphemes, generativity, syntax, and displacement, and the development of language in humans. It goes on to explore the influence of thought on language and the reverse. (M19; 18 pp)

Genes, Evolution, and Behavior
This module describes recent advances in our knowledge about the human genome, and how the combination of genetic and environmental factors affects human behavior. Evolutionary psychology applies the ideas of adaptive changes to human behavior. (M20; 14 pp)

The Nature-Nurture Debates
This module explores the debate over whether genetic or environmental factors dictate behavior. Twin and adoption studies show that both play a role, and that they are interdependent. Two particularly important examples of the debate are gender roles and sexual orientation. (M21; 27 pp)

Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn
This chapter briefly describes the ways in which scientists study human development, and in particular explores the developments of the fetus and newborn. It focuses on the effect of certain substances and behaviors on the development of the fetus and what senses newborns develop at what age. (M22; 14 pp)

Infancy and Childhood
This chapter describes Piaget’s stages of childhood cognitive development – sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational – and more recent reaction to and extensions of his experiments. It goes on to explore stages of social development, including imprinting, attachment, and peer relationships such as those formed in day care settings. (M23; 19 pp)
Adolescence
This module describes the physical, cognitive, and social developments that occur during adolescence, including Kohlberg’s levels of moral thought, and the reactions to his theories. As teenagers grow, they come to terms with their parent relationships, peer influences, and their own sexuality. (M24; 14 pp)

Adult Development
This module begins with the physical and cognitive developments experienced during adulthood. It goes on to explore various models of social development, including Erikson’s eight stages of development, Levinson’s seasons of life, and the idea of a social clock. It concludes with Elizabeth Kübler-Ross’s five stages of coping with death. (M25; 13 pp)

Intelligence and Its Measurement
This module describes some of the ways that intelligence is measured, including the Stanford-Binet test and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, and some of the controversies about their use. It goes on to explore the different ways of analyzing intelligence, including multiple intelligences, Sternberg’s triarchic theory of intelligence, creativity, and practical intelligence. (M26; 23 pp)

Social Issues in Intelligence and Education
This module discusses the controversies over differing performances on intelligence tests, including nature vs. nurture, gender and racial gaps, and cultural differences. It goes on to discuss how education can influence intelligence, and how expectations of intelligence can influence the kind of education that children experience. (M27; 23 pp)

“Basic” Human Motives
This module describes several general theories of motivation, including the instinct, drive, arousal, and incentive theories. It goes on to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs: physiological, security, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization, with an expanded discussion of the physiological motivations of hunger and sexual motivation. (M28; 21 pp)

Social Motives
This module discusses the motivations at the top of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, including the needs for affiliation and intimacy, and the desires for achievement and power. It goes on to explore how employers use different theories of motivation to inspire their employees to work hard and achieve. (M29; 14 pp)

The Components of Emotion
This module begins with the physiological manifestations of emotion, including responses of the nervous system and the implications for polygraph results. It goes on to explore the universal nature of non-verbal communication of emotion and cognitive appraisal and misappraisal of emotions experienced. (M30; 24 pp)
Special Topics in Emotion
This module explores the different kinds of emotions and the dynamic states people move through in experiencing them. It goes on to explore consistency and differences in gender and cultural experiences of emotion, and how people anticipate and experience happiness. (M31; 12 pp)

Social Perception and Attraction
This module introduces social psychology, including attribution (and attribution errors), the formation of impression, and attraction. (M32; 18 pp)

Social Influence and Persuasion
This module explores the various reasons that a person’s behavior is influenced by the behavior of others-- informational and normative influence – and the role that obedience to authority plays. However, for such changes in behavior to be anything other than transitory, underlying attitudes must change also. (M33; 16 pp)

Social Relations in Groups
People act differently in groups than when alone, but the difference is not universal: the difficulty and type of activity and the size of the group also affect individual’s behavior. Groupthink leads people to make poorer decisions than they might alone. Aggression and altruism are discussed as examples of opposite social behaviors. (M34; 19 pp)

Cultural Psychology
This module explores the similarities and differences in and between cultures, especially in their value for individualism vs. collectivism. Increasingly, people of different cultures live in greater proximity to each other, which brings to the fore issues such as assimilation and ethnic identity. (M35; 17 pp)

Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination
This module explores how stereotypes and prejudice evolve and result in discrimination, and what steps can be taken to combat racism. (M36; 16 pp)

Psychoanalytic Theories of Personality
This module explores the basic elements of Freud’s psychoanalytic approach to the study of personality. He posited three parts of personality – the id, ego, and superego – and asserted that personality is shaped by unconscious conflict during the psychosexual states of development. Researchers’ focus on unconscious factors show the continued influence of Freud’s ideas. (M37; 15 pp)

Alternative Theories of Personality
This module describes theories of personalities that developed in reaction to Freud: cognitive social-learning theory and humanistic theory. The first is based on classical conditioning and focuses on an individual’s interaction with his/her environment. The latter focuses on a person’s free will and desire for self-actualization. (M38; 16 pp)
Personality Traits and Their Measurement
This module describes the five-factor model of personality traits and the scales developed to assess them such as the MMPI and MMPI-2. It goes on to explore the trait of introversion/extroversion in depth. (M39; 15 pp)

Outlook on Psychological Disorders
This module provides a general overview of psychological disorders: what factors define a disorder, and different models of abnormality: medical, psychological, sociocultural, and culture-bound syndrome. It goes on to discuss how the use of DSM-IV attempts to improve the reliability of psychological diagnoses. (M40; 12 pp)

Anxiety Disorders
This module provides an overview of anxiety disorders: generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, simple and social phobias, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Anxiety and its physical manifestations are universal, but the specific causes and manifestations of anxiety are culturally specific. (M41; 10 pp)

Somatoform, Dissociative, and Personality Disorders
This chapter discusses a variety of disorders, including those that result in physical symptoms, those that result in a loss of memory or identity, and those characterized by rigid, self-defeating patterns of behavior. (M42; 11 pp)

Disorders of Mood and Thought
This module examines the mood disorders of depression and bipolar disorder, including genetic indicators, reaction to environmental factors, and suicide. It goes on to explore schizophrenic disorders: symptoms, types, and causes. (M43; 20 pp)

Psychological Therapies
This module explores the major types of psychological therapy: psychoanalysis, behavioral therapies, cognitive therapies, humanistic therapies, and group therapy approaches. (M44; 27 pp)

Does Psychotherapy Work?
This module lays out some of the aggregate data showing that psychotherapy is effective, and then goes on to look at specific treatments for specific conditions. Three factors characterize effective treatments of all types: a supportive relationship, hope, and a secure environment. (M45; 10 pp)

Medical Treatment for Psychological Disorders
This module explores treatments for psychological conditions that go beyond therapy: psychopharmacology, electroconvulsive therapy, and psychosurgery. (M46; 10 pp)

Mind, Self, and Well-Being
This module explores the connection between the mind and body, and how that can affect a person’s sense of well-being. Specific topics addressed include the placebo effect, self-esteem, self-awareness, and positive illusions. (M47; 10 pp)
Stress, Health, and Illness
This module explores the causes and sources of stress, and the effects of stress on health, including coronary heart disease and weakened immune systems. (M48; 17 pp)

How People Cope with Stress
This module explores the many ways people cope with stress, including problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, suppression, and relaxation. It also looks at other factors that make people better able to deal with stress, such as hardiness, optimism, and social support. (M49; 13 pp)

Concepts in Statistics
This module explores how psychologists use statistics to measure and describe the results of experiments. In particular, it explains the role of the null hypothesis, normal distribution, variance, and standard scores. (M50; 8 pp)

Glossary (G; 7 pp)

What’s Your Prediction? Exercises
These exercises are designed to help students learn to think like psychologists. Each exercise starts with a description of an experiment, case study, or survey, after which students are asked to predict the outcome. The exercises conclude with a discussion of the actual results and their significance.

Thinking Like a Psychologist (A01; 2 pp)
One Brain or Two? (A02; 2 pp)
Does Culture Influence Depth Perception? (A03; 2 pp)
Do Subliminal Self-Help Tapes Work? (A04; 2 pp)
Can People Learn Without Realizing It? (A05; 2 pp)
Can a Memory be Created? (A06; 2 pp)
Using Words to Shape Thoughts (A07; 2 pp)
Nature or Nurture? (A08; 2 pp)
How Old do People Feel? (A09; 2 pp)
Are People Smarter Today than in the Past? (A10; 2 pp)
What Does it Take to Make People Motivated at Work? (A11; 2 pp)
Can Culture Influence Emotion? (A12; 2 pp)
How Far Can People be Pushed? (A13; 2 pp)
Does Culture Shape Social Behavior? (A14; 2 pp)
How Stable is Personality? (A15; 3 pp)
How Common are Psychological Disorders? (A16; 3 pp)
Does Psychotherapy Help? (A17; 2 pp)
Does Stress Lower Resistance? (A18; 3 pp)
Complete Set of “What’s Your Prediction?” Exercises (AS1; 39 pp)