PHIL1060: Introduction to the Philosophy of Psychology

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Colin Wilks  
Room: Mc107  
Ph: 49215192  
Email: Colin.Wilks@newcastle.edu.au

Course Overview  
Semester: Semester 2 - 2006  
Unit Weighting: 10  
Teaching Methods: Lecture, Tutorial

Brief Course Description  
This course introduces students to the philosophical issues that arise from the theory and practice of Psychology. It has been specifically designed to meet the requirements of the Bachelor of Psychology degree. Topics covered include the mind/body problem, scientific method, behaviourism, norms and ethics.

Contact Hours  
Lecture for 2 Hours per week for the Full Term  
Tutorial for 1 Hour per week for the Full Term

Course Objectives  
On completion of this course students will be able to (i) Discuss basic philosophical issues as they relate to psychology; (ii) Engage in the critical assessment of psychological research in the light of the issues raised by the Scientist-Practitioner model of Psychological practice; (iii) Demonstrate a framework of professional ethics for critical reasoning and problem solving to meet societal ethical expectations; (iv) Effectively communicate their understanding and ability to interact effectively so as to problem solve with diverse communal groups; (v) Demonstrate a critical appreciation of the larger framework of Western ideas which form the problematic from within which have emerged the various schools of psychological practice.

Course Content  
Content will be organised around (i) basic problems in Philosophy of Psychology (e.g. mind/body, nature/nurture, determinism, rationalism, reduction); (ii) philosophical bases of classical schools of Psychology (e.g. behaviourism, functionalism, psychoanalysis); (iii) Philosophy of scientific method (including deductive and inductive reasoning, empiricism, falsification, Kuhn); (iv) The nature of norms and their application and professional ethics. Although the topics explored are philosophical in nature, the focus is on how decisions made on the philosophical issues shape the theory and practice of Psychology.

Assumed Knowledge  
Qualification for entry to Bachelor of Psychology or other relevant degrees.
Plagiarism

University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one’s own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs. Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty. For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link:


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may:

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

Written Assessment Items

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations

Students are required to submit assessment items by due date, as advised in Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves extension for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised. Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or
2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on prescribed form. Please go to Policy and on-line form for further info, particularly for information on options available to you, at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/adverse_circumstances.pdf

Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

* Requests for Special Consideration must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the date of submission or examination.
* Requests for Extensions on Assessment Items must be lodged no later than the due date of the item.
* Requests for Rescheduling Exams must be lodged 5 working days before the date of the examination.

Your application may not be accepted if it is received after the deadline. Students who are unable to meet above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak to Program Officer in the first instance.
Changing your Enrolment

The last date to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) for semester 2 courses is: **31 August 2006** Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade. Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the Student Enquiry Centre. To change your enrolment online, refer to http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html

Contact Details

The Faculty of Education and Arts
Room: GP1-22 (General Purpose Building) Phone: 02 4921 5314

The Dean of Students
Dr Jennifer Archer Phone: 02 4921 5806, Fax: 02 4921 7151 resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:

Alteration of this Course Outline

No change to this course outline will be permitted after the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with HOS approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Professional Doctorate Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing support services for students with a disability or chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your course coordinator. Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

Online Tutorial Registration:

Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system: http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm

Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:

- **Type your assignments:** All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length:** The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University coversheet:** All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/studentguide/index.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/studentguide/index.html)
- **Assignments are to be deposited at any Student Focus. Focus are located at:**
  - Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  - Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  - Ground Floor, University House, City
  - Ground Floor, Administration Building, Ourimbah
- **Do not fax or email assignments:** Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments:** All students must date stamp their own assignments using the machine provided. Mailed assignments to schools are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

**Online copy submission to Turnitin**
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website. Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing. Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

**Penalties for Late Assignments**
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the **reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark** for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded **zero marks**.

**Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications**
Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student Focus: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/index.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/index.html)

**No Assignment Re-submission**
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

**Remarks**
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/procedures_appeals_finalresult.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/procedures_appeals_finalresult.pdf)

**Return of Assignments**
Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Focus during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Focus to go to and the earliest date assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.

**Preferred Referencing Style**
In this course, it is recommended that you use the use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure. An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors' last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:
Student Representatives
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:

Purpose of Course

This course introduces students to some of the philosophical issues arising from the theory and practice of psychology but focuses in particular on the issue of the extent to which psychology can be considered ‘a science’ as opposed to ‘an art’.

Broadly speaking, psychology is considered ‘a science’ to the extent that it theories and methods are consistent with the theories and methods of the paradigmatic sciences (physics and chemistry) and ‘an art’ to the extent that its theories and practices are not. But, in order to determine the extent to which its theories and practices are consistent with the theories and practices of the paradigmatic sciences, we will first need to determine what the theories and practices of the paradigmatic sciences are and what it is about their theories and practices that renders them paradigmatically scientific.

On the basis of these initial determinations, we can then proceed to (i) distinguish those aspects of psychological theory and practice which are more properly considered ‘science’ from those which are more properly considered art; (ii) identify the limitations of psychological science; (iii) distinguish between pseudo-psychological science and psychological art, and (iv) explore the domain of human thinking and behaviour over which psychological art has (for the time being at least) exclusive jurisdiction.

The course concludes with an examination of the professional ethics which apply (or should apply) in the fields of psychological research and clinical psychological practice, and the philosophical foundations upon which these professional ethics are founded.

Consultation

Teachers in this course will be available for consultation at the following times:

Dr Colin Wilks  MC107  Thur. 12.00 – 1.00
Email: Colin.Wilks@newcastle.edu.au

Dr. Robert Farrell  MC123  Wed  3.00 – 4.00
Email: Robert.Farrell@newcastle.edu.au

Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture and Tutorial Times</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>1.00 - 3.00</td>
<td>MCTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>1.00-2.00</td>
<td>W238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>2.00-3.00</td>
<td>W238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>10.00-11.00</td>
<td>V07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>11.00-12.00</td>
<td>V07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>3.00 - 4.00</td>
<td>W243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Assessment Items, Word Lengths, Weightings and Due Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Item</th>
<th>Word Length</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Essay 1</td>
<td>1200-1500</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Monday September 4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Essay 2</td>
<td>1200-1500</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Monday October 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Take Home Exam</td>
<td>2000-2500</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Examination Period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Essay Questions

Essay 1.

Question:

Part A: To what extent are computer analogies helpful in understanding the relationship between the brain and the mind.

Part B: Explain how a human’s worldview differs from a rat’s ‘worldview’ and how your worldview informs your attitude to experimenting on rats.

Essay 2

Answer ONE of the following Questions:

1. To what extent should psychological science be guided by empiricism?

2. What role does falsification have in psychology? Discuss in relation to both Popper and Kuhn.

3. Describe a prominent psychological paradigm. Is it testable or is it a dogma?

Take Home Exam

The Take-Home Examination paper will be posted on Blackboard at time to be determined during the examination period. From the point at which it is posted, students will have one week in which to complete and return it in HARD COPY form. Further details will be made available later in the semester.
Course Readings

Specific Weekly readings

General Readings (Most of these books, chapters and articles are held in Short Loan in either hard copy of electronic form)

“Determinism and Modern Psychiatry” in The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.
Gardener, H., ‘Scientific Psychology: Should We Bury or Praise it?’ in Sternberg, R. J. (Ed), Unity in Psychology: Possibility or Pipedream, American Psychological Association, 2005.
Hempel, C. G. “Scientific inquiry: Invention and test” in Hempel Philosophy of Natural Science
Holmes, J., Between Art and Science, Routledge, 1993


“National statement on ethical conduct in research involving humans” (extracts) National Health and Medical Research Council, June 1999.


Sternberg, R. J. (Ed), Unity in Psychology: Possibility or Pipedream, American Psychological Association, 2005.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tutorial</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>July 17</td>
<td>Introductory Lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>July 24</td>
<td>Science: the scientific (hard-soft) spectrum; spectrums within spectrums; reductionism and emergence; the psychological scientific spectrum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3    | July 31  | Science – the hard-soft spectrum Psychology and Science  
*Reading:* Gardener, H., ‘Scientific Psychology: Should We Bury or Praise it?’  
Psychology as Science: hard-soft psychology; reductionism-emergence in psychology |
| 4    | Aug 7    | Psychology as science  
*Reading:* Pinker, S., ‘Silly Putty’ and ‘The Last Wall to Fall’ (Chs. 2 and 3 of *The Blank Slate*)  
The mind-brain-body problem – the metaphysical spectrum; hardware-software analogies |
| 5    | Aug 14   | Mind-brain-body problem  
*Reading:* Churchland, P “The Puzzle of Consciousness”, and Nagel, T. “What is it Like to be a Bat?”  
Views of the world and worldviews; facts, values, beliefs and ideals. |
| 6    | Aug 21   | Views of world and World view  
*Reading:* Schumacker, J. F., “The Problem of Reality” (Ch 1 of *The Corruption of Reality*)  
Closed and open world views and their psycho-dynamics; the scientific world view |
| 7    | Aug 28   | Closed and open worldviews; their psychodynamics; the scientific worldview and the problem of ‘modernity’.  
*Reading:* To be Announced  
What is science? Empiricism and Behaviourism |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Topics</th>
<th>Reading/Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 4</td>
<td>Problems of Induction</td>
<td>Popper and Falsificationism; Duhem-Quine thesis; Giere’s six-step strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Chalmers, A. F. “Deriving Theories from the Facts: Induction”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Klee, R. “The Underdetermination of Theory”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 11</td>
<td>Evaluating Science using Giere’s Six-Step Strategy.</td>
<td>Kuhn and paradigms; pluralism and experimental testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Giere, R. Understanding Scientific Reasoning Ch’s 2 and 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 18</td>
<td>Evaluating Pseudo-Science using Giere’s Six-Step Strategy.</td>
<td>Statistics and pluralistic testing; error-avoidance; fraud in science; what is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Giere, R. Understanding Scientific Reasoning Ch’s 2 and 4.</td>
<td>science?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Popper, K. “Science: Conjectures and Refutations”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>Error in science</td>
<td>Theories of Ethics; Professional Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> To be announced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-Semester Recess: Monday 2 October – Friday 14 October</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 16</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Codes of Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> To be announced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>Codes of Ethics</td>
<td>Course Synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> O’Donohue, W. and Mangold, R. “A Critical Examination of the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 30</td>
<td>Course Synthesis</td>
<td>Possible Revision Session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>