

## PSYC SPECIAL TOPICS COURSES 2023-2024 – COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### [PSYC 398 Fall 2023 \(Dr Smallwood\) - Experience Sampling from lab to daily life](#)

Experience Sampling from lab to daily life: how to map patterns of ongoing thought. In this class you will learn how the technique of experience sampling is used by scientists to study the nature different patterns of ongoing thought, and the methods and techniques that allow this information to be related to objective measures of cognition.

### [PSYC 320 Winter 2024 \(Dr Wammes\) - Principles of Memory](#)

Memory is absolutely fundamental to our everyday functioning. We rely on memory when we interact with friends or peers, walk a familiar route, or complete a course exam. As memory researchers, we attempt to understand the different kinds of memory; how memories are acquired, changed, and stored; what helps or hinders memory; how we forget; and how all of these are instantiated in the brain. The topics that this course covers may include the history of memory research, contemporary theories, common methodologies, patient work, and neuroscientific approaches. The course may also address differences between sensory, short-term, working, procedural, semantic, and episodic memory systems. Last, the course may cover related topics and real-world applications, including memory and the legal system, autobiographical memory, amnesia and dementia, emotional memory, and memory in education.

This is a lecture-based course with a textbook and assigned readings. Students will be evaluated on a mix of exams, participation quizzes, and occasional short written or hands-on assignments. This course should take up approximately 8-10 hours per week on average (though this will change depending on due dates). 3 hours will be in class, and the remainder will be finishing the assigned reading and working on assignments, when applicable.

### [PSYC 340 Winter 2024 \(Dr O'Connor\) - Aggression](#)

In this course we will examine the social psychological theories of aggression. We will discuss different forms of aggression, contextual factors, and interactionist perspectives. Aggression will be examined at the individual and group level, in the context of both current and historical events. Topics will include intergroup conflict, bullying, media violence, as well as strategies for reducing and preventing aggressive behaviour.

### [PSYC 398 Winter 2024 \(Dr Tusche\) – Laboratory in Decision Making](#)

This course examines experimental approaches to studying social and strategic decision-making, focusing on computerized economic exchange games (how to divide resources) and self-reports. Topics will include altruism (and selfishness), the impact of social identity (e.g., membership in groups, gender), social norms (e.g., reciprocity, fairness), and 'punishment' to reinforce norms. The course adopts a mixture of lectures, collection of your own data, and hands-on laboratory sessions on how visualized and analyzed data of our class fit standard theories and results in the field.

## **PSYC SPECIAL TOPICS COURSES 2023-2024 – COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **PSYC 435 Winter 2024 (Dr Vine) - Affective Psychophysiology**

This course explores complexities in the study of psychophysiology to understand human experience. We consider questions like, how is the body involved in generating emotional experience? What can we learn about socially important processes by measuring activity in the body? How does measuring the body help us understand why some people thrive and others struggle with mental health? Students will learn about body systems involved in socio-emotional outcomes and how they are measured and will consider benefits and interpretive challenges inherent to this area of research.

### **PSYC 440 Winter 2024 (Dr Hauser) - Language and Reasoning**

This course will explore the science behind how seemingly-innocuous changes in language can impact how people think about social concepts. For instance, do metaphorical frames impact how we think about diseases (such as cancer and COVID19)? Do subtle variations in wording (such as talking about climate change vs global warming) influence whether we intend to live more “green” lives? This course sheds light on how language structures shapes the mental models that we use to understand and reason about complex social phenomena.

### **PSYC 450 Winter 2024 (Dr Kelley) – Autism Spectrum Conditions**

This course will have students reading review and empirical articles (no textbook) on a very wide variety of topics related to autism. These topics will include the symptoms of autism, how and when autism is diagnosed, how autism is treated, the potential causes of autism, conditions that commonly co-occur with autism and why, gender differences in presentation and diagnosis, and cognitive profiles of autistic individuals, among others.

### **PSYC 480 Winter 2024 (Dr Kilik) – Applied Clinical Psychology**

This course is designed to orient students to the field and profession of clinical psychology. This course offers a survey of major topics in clinical psychology, including a brief history of clinical psychology; common theoretical approaches in assessment and intervention; ethical, professional and theoretical issues; and emerging trends. Students also will be briefly introduced to subspecialties within clinical psychology, such as clinical Neuropsychology. Professional activities of clinical psychologists (e.g., consultation) will also be discussed.

### **PSYC 485 Winter 2024 (Dr Tusche) – Decision -Making Motivations**

This course examines fundamental theories and research findings on rational choice, drawing on research conducted by psychologists, economists, and biologists. We will compare basic principles of rationality with actual choice behavior and illustrate how the way that we think about decision problems systematically deviates from rationality. We will also discuss factors that underlie systematic biases in human decision-making and “irrational” behavior (including emotions and social aspects), “nudges” that utilize characteristics of the human choice architecture, and applications of JDM theories and results in various fields. Studying the principles of rational decision-making and systematic discrepancies with actual behavior is not only fascinating, but it is also actually practically useful, as it can help us to improve the quality of choices in our daily lives. Assessments include weekly reaction papers on the required reading, student presentations, and a final essay.