PSYCHOLOGY 1001 SYLLABUS

NEUROSCIENCE

1. The lecture syllabus consists of two halves, each taking a different approach to describing the nervous system:

2. The first part presents basic information about the anatomy and physiology (what and how) of the nervous system. It includes a description of the basic concepts of reception, coding and transmission of information by cells of the nervous system, as well as the chemical communication between cells and the effects on this by drugs of abuse.

3. The second part of the syllabus takes a "systems" approach to neuroscience, concerned mostly with the functional anatomy of the nervous system. Topics include the involvement of various brain areas in sleep and wakefulness, motivation and emotions, sensory and motor function, and language.

References:

5. http://www.sfn.org/content/Publications/BrainBriefings/index.html

APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

1. Introduction to Abnormal Psychology I: Defining abnormal behaviour; the classification and diagnosis of psychological disorders.
2. Introduction to Abnormal Psychology II: Models of psychopathology and approaches to treatment.
3. Anxiety Disorders I: Differentiating between normal anxiety and anxiety disorders; description of anxiety disorders in DSM.
4. Anxiety Disorders II: Sociocultural, psychological and biological variables related to anxiety disorders.
5. Mood Disorders: Defining major depression and other mood disorders; sociocultural, psychological and biological variables related to mood disorders.
6. Eating Disorders: Defining the various eating disorders; sociocultural, psychological and biological variables related to eating disorders.

References:

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

1. Introduction to social psychology.
   What is social psychology? What do social psychologists study? Research methods used in social psychology: Descriptive methods vs. Experimental Methods.


3. Social influence II: Social loafing
   What is social loafing? Factors that contribute to social loafing. Theories of social loafing (Latané and colleagues). How to stop social loafing in groups.


6. Social Perception I: Attributions; stereotypes
   Attribution theories. Person vs. situational attributions. Attributional biases (e.g., the fundamental attribution error). Stereotypes and attributions. The self-fulfilling prophecy.

7. Social Perception II: Attitudes and summary
   What are attitudes? How attitudes guide our behaviour. Summary of the social psychology lectures.

References:


PERSONALITY THEORY AND SYSTEMS

1. The concept of personality. The psychoanalytic approach: The development of Freud's thought; the concept of repression and the unconscious.

2. The tripartite model; Introduction to the theory of psychosexual development and defence mechanisms.

3. The behavioural approach: (i) Dollard & Miller; (ii) Bandura's social learning theory.


5. Personality assessment: typologies and trait perspectives.

6. Other phenomenological and cognitive theories of personality: Lewin's field theory; Kelly's personal construct theory.

References:


**CONCEPTUAL ISSUES IN PSYCHOLOGY**

1. What is Psychology? How does this determine the organisation of the discipline into fields? What makes a discipline scientific? What is a theory, an hypothesis, a prediction, data, evidence?

2. The origins of contemporary Anglo-American Psychology: Cartesian philosophy; British empiricism; evolutionary theory; introspectionism; behaviourism; psychoanalysis; cognitive science.

3. Some enduring philosophical issues: Free-will/determinism; the mind–body relationship and reductionism; mediated/un-mediated cognition.

4. Some assumptions behind quantification and the use of statistics in Psychology.

**References:**


**SCIENCE AND STATISTICS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

1. Distinguishing science and pseudo-science. Examples of pseudoscience as they exploit psychological ideas and exploit our own psychological weaknesses. Learning to be sceptical as a psychologist.

2. Psychological measurement and scale types: The distinction between an underlying "construct" of psychological interest and the scale(s) chosen to measure it; construct definition via operationalized measurement. Scale types: Nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio scales; the dangers of overinterpreting scales.

3. Descriptive statistics: The importance of data reduction in perceiving the "information" contained in a group of scores. Graphical summaries of a group of scores; frequency histograms, relative frequency histograms, cumulative histograms. The visual correlates of "location" and "spread". The scientific importance of location and spread.

4. Numerical indices summarizing a group of scores. Indices of location: Mode, median and mean; examples of their limitations. Indices of spread or dispersion: Range, average absolute deviation, variance and standard deviation; examples of their limitations. Z scores and areas under the normal curve.


**References:**

3. The Skeptic's Dictionary: www.skepdic.com