

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	Psychology
Programme:	Psychology
FHEQ Level:	4
Course Title:	Biological Basis of Human Behavior
Course Code:	PSY 4215
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	30
Seminar / Tutorials:	15
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

Exposes students to the relationship between biology and behavior. Students are expected to assess critically the extent to which biological explanations can be used to understand or explain human behavior. Topics covered are: motivational behavior; social behavior; sleep; perception; learning; and memory. Special discussion topics include: sexual behavior; eating disorders; emotions; and consciousness. In addition, the course also looks at perceptual and memory disorders.

Prerequisites:

PSY 3100 Foundations in Psychology

Aims and Objectives:

This course introduces students to the key topics, theories and scientific methods involved in the study of biological psychology. We will first discuss the different biological explanations of human behaviour and why scientists are interested in this field. Then we will move on to examine different areas of biological psychology such as the mechanisms of the nervous system, vision, attention, language, emotion, psychological disorders etc. Special emphasis will be placed on the applications of theories through experimentation and the critical evaluation of these. Also we will discuss ethical issues in psychological research related to neuroscience.

Programme Outcomes:

Psychology: 4Ai, 4Aiii, 4Ci, 4Ciii, 4Dii, 4Diii

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Develop an understanding of the major areas in biological psychology.
- Gain an insight into the scientific methods that gave rise and continue to shape theories in biological psychology.
- Appreciate the connections between biological theories and their applications in experimentation and to be able to critically evaluate these.
- Gain an insight into the ways in which different methodologies are used best when specific phenomena are examined.
- Appreciate the links between biology and human behaviour and the importance of the mind-body relationship.
- Demonstrate the ability to work in a group and independently to answer critical thinking questions on readings.

Indicative Content:

- The field of biological psychology
- Nerve cells
- Synapses
- Nervous system
- Brain
- Emotion
- Language
- Psychopathology

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

The course material will be covered in the following ways:

- I. Lecture presentations with the key concepts
- II. Group discussions on journal articles and important questions on the topics discussed
- III. Internet sites related to psychology
- IV. Intra-net access to lecture notes and reading material

Indicative Texts:

Kalat, J.W. (2016). *Biological Psychology*. Cengage.

Ramachandran, V.S. (2011). *The Tell-Tale Brain*. London: William Heinemann.

Journals:

Neurological Review Evolutionary Psychology Brain

Journal of Psychiatry & Law

Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine

The Cerebellum

Current Directions in Psychological Science Scientific American

American Psychologist Psychological Bulletin

Psychology, Public Policy and Law

Web Sites:

TED Talks

<http://www.jove.com>

See syllabus for complete reading list

Change Log for this CSD:

Major or Minor Change?	Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body	Change Actioned by Registry Services
Major	Change of prerequisites to only PSY 3100	09.11.21, Psychology Department	
	Various updates as part of the UG programme review	AB Jan 2022	
	Revision – annual update	May 2023	