

# PSYCHOLOGY AO1Y: SPRING 2002 Tues 2-4: H-216, Thurs 2-3: Pavilion

**Instructor:** Prof. John M. Kennedy, Office: S-513; Tel:7435:

kennedy@utsc.utoronto.ca

**Office hours:** Tu 10.15 --11.15 +extra hours+ near exams:\*YOU & questions welcome!\*

Topics: 1:Jan7/14 2:Jan21/28 3:Feb5 4:Feb12/26 5:Mar5/12 6:Mar19 7:Mar 26/Apr2

NOTE: January 8th and February 5th (first hour): Prof. Marilyn Smith will lecture

1. Sensation and Perception: What is awareness of our environment? What gives us information? How sensitive are you? Do you have a handicap? Colour blindness perhaps?

How do our senses develop-- and age? Are your relatives losing their hearing? What are INTERNAL senses? Are there careers for "sensory instructors"? Yes! Ch 6&7

2. Intelligence and Thinking: Your senses feed your comprehension: What results in differences in intelligence? How can we test our differences? What differences are often due to variation in factors in our environment? Intelligence at work is "thinking".

Classifying and reasoning-- are there some secrets to good problem-solving? Yes! Ch 11

3. Language: people who speaking good: Putting your experience into words. Meaning and rules (semantics, syntax). The mysterious invention of reading: Do you know someone who had trouble learning to read? How little children crack the language game. Are there careers aiding children with language? Yes! Ch 10

4. Life-span development: From before infancy to old age..., very important themes for all of us, physically, socially and ethically. Careers in "developmental"? Yes! Ch 12

5. Evolution, heredity and behaviour: These were reflected in perception, cognition and language throughout development. Now let's get some principles and mechanisms clear. The HOW. Careers as "genetics counsellors"? Yes! Ch 3

6. Motivation and emotion: Most of us take a long, long time to understand our own motives and feelings. And our EFFECTS on others! And even longer to learn how best to express and communicate our true emotions to others. We also learn remarkably slowly how to appreciate what others need, or enjoy, and how to accommodate them. Ch 13....lucky for some.

7. Social psychology: This has a lot to do with BALANCING inner and outer: our wishes with the needs of

others. Do you notice the attitudes of others, how to work with others, how to check out the other person's roles? These are key to developing a group. Careers promoting EFFECTIVENESS in the workplace and HARMONY at home? Yes! Ch 15

Voluntary demonstrations will be arranged + Small group discussions on the results!

NB: Term Exam FEB 6, 5-7pm (CHAPTERS: FROM Dr. Smith & FROM Dr. Kennedy CH 6, 7) and Final Exam: Full details provided later. NB Drop date is FEB 17

**PSYCHOLOGY AO1Y: SPRING 2002**

Tues 2-4: H-216, Thurs 2-3: Pavilion

Instructor: Prof. John M. Kennedy, Office: S-513; Tel:7435: kennedy@utsc.utoronto.ca  
Office hours: Tu 10.15 --11.15 +extra hours+ near exams:\*YOU & questions welcome!\*

Topics: 1:Jan7/14 2:Jan21/28 3:Feb5 4:Feb12/26 5:Mar5/12 6:Mar19 7:Mar 26/Apr2  
NOTE: January 8th and February 5th (first hour): Prof. Marilyn Smith will lecture

1. **Sensation and Perception:** What is awareness of our environment? What gives us information? How sensitive are you? Do you have a handicap? Colour blindness perhaps? How do our senses develop-- and age? Are your relatives losing their hearing? What are INTERNAL senses? Are there careers for "sensory instructors"? Yes! Ch 6&7

2. **Intelligence and Thinking:** Your senses feed your comprehension: What results in differences in intelligence? How can we test our differences? What differences are often due to variation in factors in our environment? Intelligence at work is "thinking". Classifying and reasoning-- are there some secrets to good problem-solving? Yes! Ch 11

3. **Language:** people who speaking good: Putting your experience into words. Meaning and rules (semantics, syntax). The mysterious invention of reading: Do you know someone who had trouble learning to read? How little children crack the language game. Are there careers aiding children with language? Yes! Ch 10

4.**Life-span development:** From before infancy to old age., very important themes for all of us, physically, socially and ethically. Careers in "developmental?" Yes! Ch 12

5.**Evolution, heredity and behaviour:** These were reflected in perception, cognition and language throughout development. Now let's get some principles and mechanisms clear. The HOW. Careers as "genetics counsellors"? Yes! Ch 3

6. **Motivation and emotion:** Most of us take a long, long time to understand our own motives and feelings. And our EFFECTS on others! And even longer to learn how best to express and communicate our true emotions to others. We also learn remarkably slowly how to appreciate what others need, or enjoy, and how to accommodate them. Ch 13....lucky for some.

7. **Social psychology:** This has a lot to do with BALANCING inner and outer: our wishes with the needs of others. Do you notice the attitudes of others, how to work with others, how to check out the other person's roles? These are key to developing a group. Careers promoting EFFECTIVENESS in the workplace and HARMONY at home? Yes! Ch 15

Voluntary demonstrations will be arranged + Small group discussions on the results!  
NB: **Term Exam** FEB 6, 5-7pm (CHAPTERS: FROM Dr. Smith & FROM Dr.Kennedy CH 6, 7) and **Final Exam:** Full details provided later. NB Drop date is FEB 17

## Psy AO1Y John M. Kennedy Your quest

I presented some up-to-the minute work by a younger researcher to AO1 last year. One student -- call him Haseem -- asked some powerful questions I could not answer. He asked about perceiving in NOISE. He asked about the effects of our INTERNAL NOISE! He asked if children and adults had the same levels of internal noise! Some data, he noted, suggested children had more: The graph line for SENSITIVITY, if we EXTEND it back to the X axis hits the axis in MORE EXTREME locations for children than adults. I took the question back to my colleague and he struggled to come up with the answer. I relayed it back to the class, with congratulations to the student for his bright question.

Last year I also asked some students to read out some examination questions I made up to the class, for discussion and practice. Some enjoyed doing this. Others were shy.

You might wish to have as a goal to understand enough to ask a good question. Some of your questions might be strong enough to challenge a researcher. Some might be just matters of clarification that would help you with the standard material of the class. Either way, that would be welcome. And you would have become more involved with our material.

What are some other good goals for a first year student of psychology?

**1. WORDS:** Some students are learning English as we go. Of course, we are all learning basic technical terms, like "transduction." This is the change from one kind of energy to another, like sound waves to neuron activity. But some are also improving their English as a second language. Either way, good for you. You should learn definitions of technical terms, and many of us should aim to improve our ESL skills.

Which of these can you read comfortably?

The Sun. The Star. The Globe. The Post.

Do you read nontechnical material for general interest every day?

Most days? Once a week? Once a month?

Serious novels? Paperbacks? Plays? Poetry? Magazines? Web sites?

The more you read, the better, generally speaking.

**2. REASONS:** Haseem, the student who asked good questions about my colleague's research, reasoned about a part of it. He asked about possible meanings of the results from my colleagues studies. Some of us are learning to reason effectively. This means we ask questions about the key parts of a theory. We ask if the theory is properly put together. Is it clear or vague? What can it be applied to? What alternatives does it have? The student did not say "the researcher says his results mean X!"

Can you follow an argument comfortably? Or do you just try to recall "the researcher said X?"

Do you generally understand what the basic terms are?

Do you know you have to understand how they are defined?

Can you devise implications? That is, do you know your argument should have this form: "If X then Y"?

For interest, during this term, count the number of times a fellow student makes a comment and uses the form "if X then Y". Let me know once every month or so. We'll chat about it, you and I.

**3. UNDERSTANDING:** When Haseem set my colleague and I a good problem he asked "why?" He was asking "why did the experiment produce those results?" And he offered an explanation. He realized there were ways to explain the results. Sometimes you may feel you understand how a theory explains some data. But sometimes you may feel there is a gap. Some part of the theory may seem incomprehensible. Or, the data may not seem to fit the theory. That can be very helpful. This means you have set a criterion for yourself. How do the two things fit together?

What is powerful in science is **theory that can be tested** by data. Your goal should be to understand how! When someone is collecting data, you should ask WHY? What hypothesis are they testing? What theory did the hypothesis derive from?

Can you keep a theory and a description of data separate? Frequency is ??? And an explanation is ???

Can you see how a theory can lead to different hypotheses? If we have a theory about INFORMATION IN PERCEPTION, will it have applications to VISION and to AUDITION and to TOUCH?