EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY TASTER COURSE

THINKING OF PSYCHOLOGY AT UNIVERSITY?

Contents

WHAT DOES THE COURSE INVOLVE?

Course Goals

WHY THIS COURSE?

This course provides a taster of University level Psychology, to aid students in the decision process by providing an accurate reflection of University content.The structure of the compulsory modules is based on the structure of the undergraduate psychology course at Oxford University: Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, and Neuroscience.

Throughout there will be a focus on the experimental side of psychology, by centring the course on real studies, and discussing the techniques and limitations involved in psychological experiments.

Finally, most modules will focus on experimental debates, where there have been contradictory or conflicting findings from different studies. Being able to critically evaluate experiments and understand how we get contradictory results is a crucial part of every experimental psychology course, and will likely come up at interview.

The course will provide material which students can write about in personal statements, and discuss during their interviews.

- By dividing the course into compulsory and optional modules, students can use the compulsory content to choose which broad area of psychology they would like to focus on for their options. The aim of the compulsory modules will be to provide an introduction or 'taster' to the different areas of psychology. Subsequent optional modules will provide cutting-edge content which can be discussed in personal statements and interviews, as well as providing the background for students to design their own research projects.
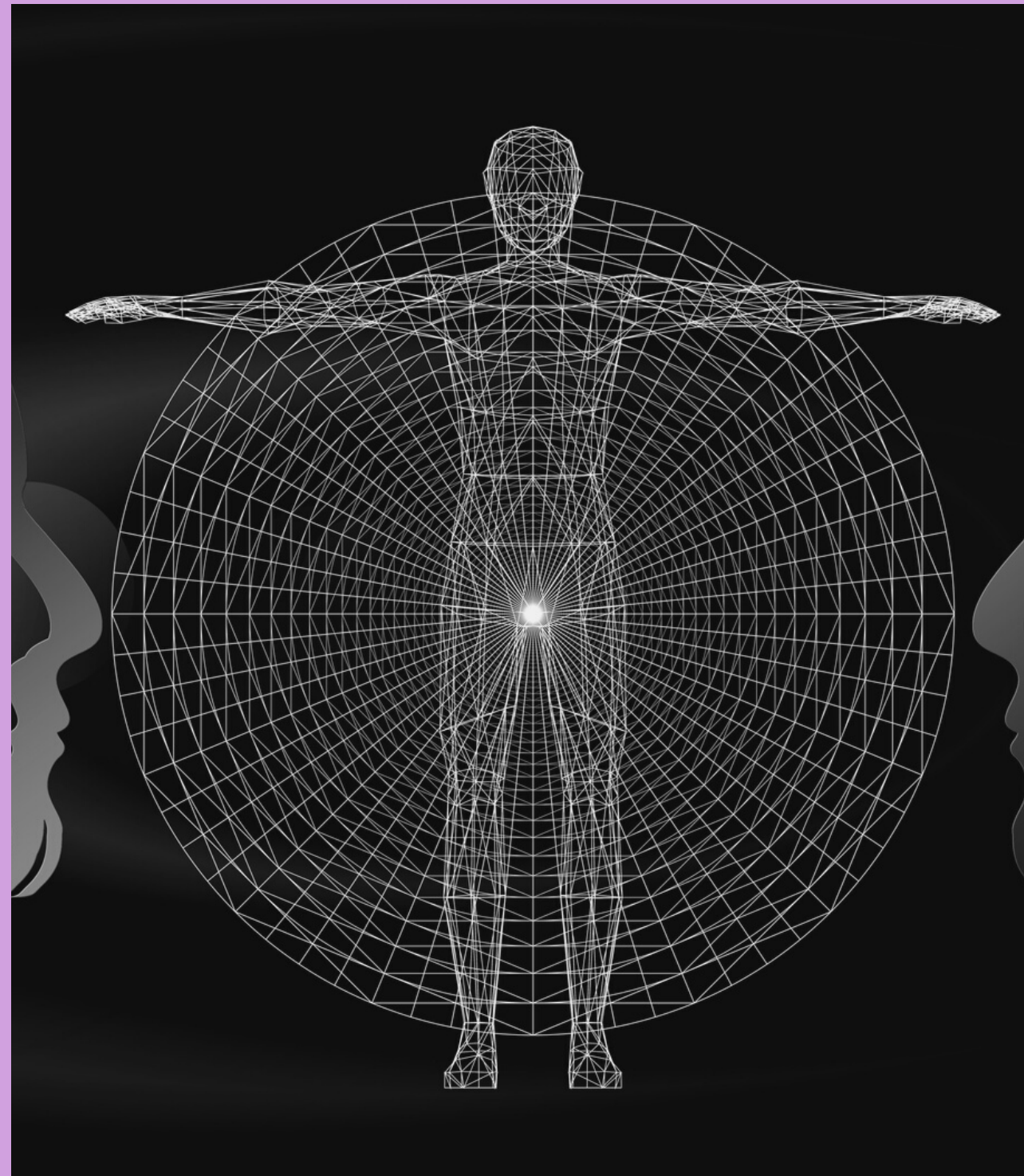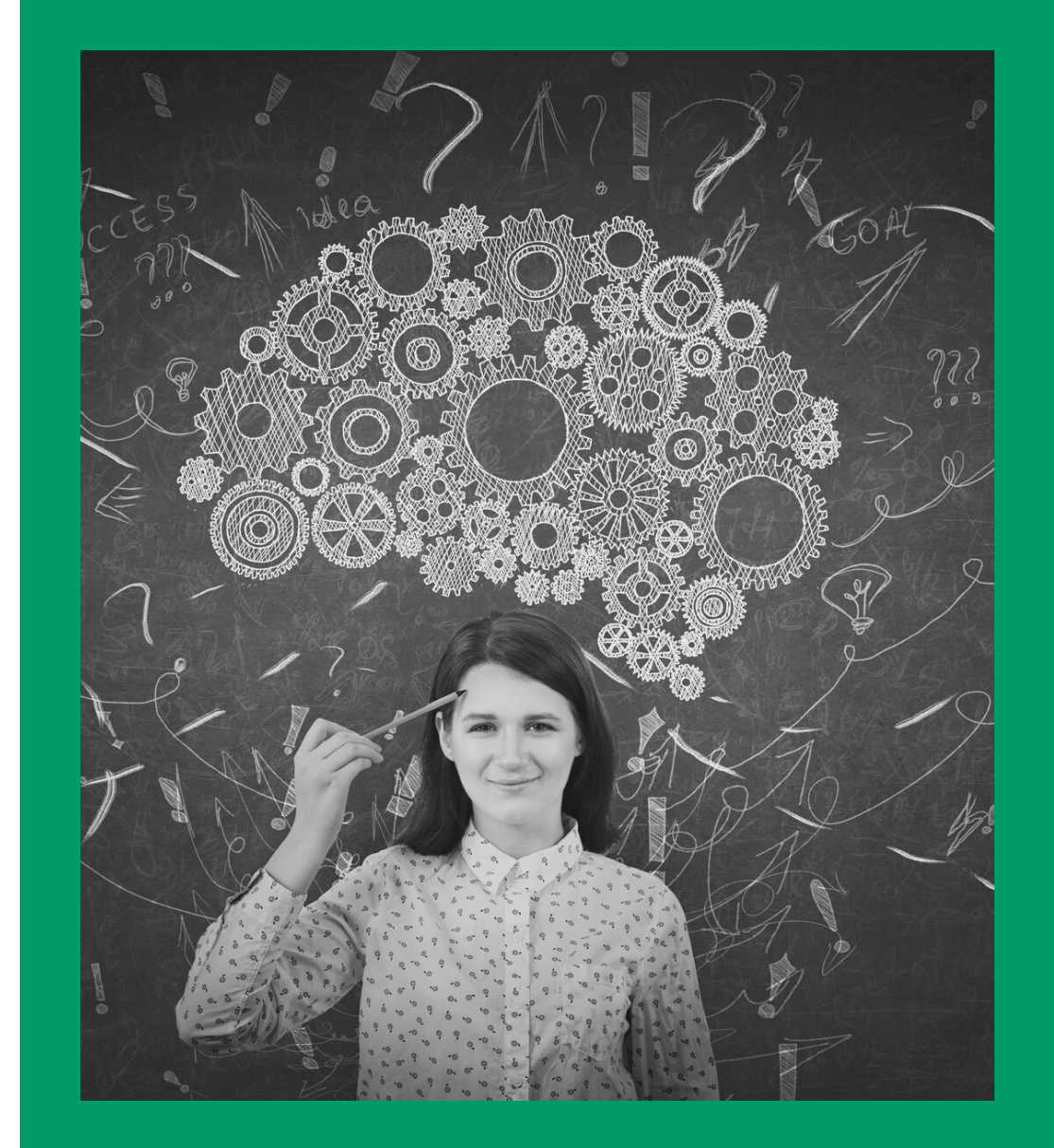
Compulsory Modules

1. Introduction to Social Psychology:
   Group identity, Pro-Social Behaviour
   (Altruism), Critical Thinking.

2. Introduction to Developmental
Psychology: Theory of Mind.

3. Introduction to Cognitive
Psychology: Attention & Memory.

4. Short Introduction to Neuroscience:
How do we learn about the brain?

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Solving Group Conflict, Implicit Cognition

COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Reason & Rationaity, Social Cognition

NEUROSCIENCE

Social Cognition - Are there areas of the brain which are specialised for social cognition?

AIMS

The aim of the research project is to use optional modules as inspiration for the students' own experiment. For example, students interested in implicit cognition could create their own version of the IAT (software available online) to investigate for example the relation between gender and attitudes to sport, or the relation between age and attitudes to Brexit.

WHAT DO PROJECTS INVOLVE?

a) Reading 2-3 original research articles to get a sense of background research, and forming hypotheses on the basis of this.
b) Proper experimental method i.e. proper use of consent forms, anonymising the data etc.
c) Experience using SPSS or similar as a statistical tool to analyse the resultsexperiment. For example, students interested in implicit cognition could create their own version of the IAT (software available online) to investigate for example the relation between gender and attitudes to sport, or the relation between age and attitudes to Brexit.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

Investigation of the link between apathy (measured using the Lille apathy test), and time spent using social media.

Creation of an Implicit Association Test to measure the relation between e.g. gender and attitudes to sport (can be personalised based on the student's interests).

A study of how memory is affected by bias. For example, whether students are more likely to falsely remember words which relate to the environment they learned in which they learned them.