

PSYC3023

Special Topics in Psychology

Title of Project	Contemporary Debates in Psychology
Supervisor	Dr Bradley Jack
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Expressions of Interest due by	Week 1 of Semester 2
Project Background	This course explores central debates in contemporary psychology through a seminar-based, student-led format. Rather than treating psychology as a settled body of knowledge, the course examines key theoretical, methodological, and applied questions that continue to shape the discipline. Topics include debates about the nature of intelligence and personality, the validity of psychiatric diagnosis, the role of culture in shaping cognition and emotion, the reliability of psychological evidence, and the prospects for unified theories of mind. Each seminar is organised around a focused debate question and anchored by one to two core readings that present contrasting perspectives or foundational positions. Students extend these readings through independent research and lead seminar discussions that critically engage with the relevant literature. The course emphasises argumentation, synthesis, and the evaluation of competing explanations rather than rote coverage of content.
Time and duration of project	Semester 2
Pre-requisites	N/A
Proposed Assessment	Students will be assessed as follows: - Seminar presentation (30%) assesses oral communication, critical thinking, and discussion leadership. - Position paper (30%) assesses ability to take and defend a position. - Literature synthesis (40%) assesses evaluation and integration of evidence.
Any additional information	N/A
Places Available	30