

Jesus College, Oxford



Subject Notes: PSYCHOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY AND LINGUISTICS

Academic Staff

Lecturers

Dr Nir Shalev is a Lecturer in Experimental Psychology at Jesus College. His research interests are in Attention and Time Perception. He uses behavioral experiments and electrophysiology in human participants. His research involves working with neurotypical (children and adults), neurodivergent (e.g., children with genetic syndromes), and individuals with neurological damage (e.g., stroke survivors and Parkinson's)

Dr Joe Cunningham is a Lecturer in Philosophy who teaches General Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Ethics, Knowledge & Reality, and Philosophy of Mind. His research interests are in the theories of reasons, rationality, and moral psychology.

Dr Jamie Findlay is a Departmental Lecturer in Syntax at the Faculty of Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics, and a Lecturer in Linguistics for Jesus. He teaches general linguistics at all levels, as well as syntax and sociolinguistics. His research focuses on constraint-based theories of grammar, and issues at the syntax-semantics interface.

About the Course

Psychology, Philosophy and Linguistics is a course which allows you to study thought, behaviour and language, and the connections between them. Psychology at Oxford is essentially a scientific discipline, involving the rigorous formulation and testing of ideas. It includes subjects as diverse as social interaction, learning, child development, schizophrenia and information processing.

Philosophy is concerned with a wide range of questions concerning ethics, knowledge and the nature of mind. Philosophy at Oxford has active interests in the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of science, and has very close links with neuroscience and psychology.

Linguistics is the study of language, including structure, meaning, and pronunciation. There are many areas which link two or more of the component subjects, e.g. language learning, generation and interpretation of language, psycholinguistics.

Psychology, Philosophy and Linguistics at Oxford is a flexible course, offering a wide range of choices within all of the branches. Initially you apply to take TWO of the component subjects, i.e. the available combinations are:

- Psychology & Philosophy (CV85)
- Psychology & Linguistics (CQ81)
- Philosophy & Linguistics (VQ51)

In terms 1 and 2, students take three of the following courses leading up to the Preliminary Examination at the end of the second term:

- Psychology
- Philosophy
- Linguistics

- Neurophysiology
- Statistics

From term 3, you may take up study of the third subject if you wish (with permission from your college), or continue with the bipartite degree in the two subjects already studied for Prelims.

Philosophy

The Philosophy for the Preliminary Examination consists in the study of Moral Philosophy (focused particularly on JS Mill's *Utilitarianism*), General Philosophy (Epistemology, Metaphysics, and Philosophy of Mind), and Logic (the study of argumentative structure and valid inference). Work is divided between lectures (about six per week), and tutorials and classes (two to three per week).

During terms 3-9 leading to the Final Honours School examination, your time will again be divided between attending lectures (about six per week), tutorials (average of one to two per week). Students choosing Philosophy take between three and five courses in Philosophy, and those taking a least three courses have the option to write a thesis in Philosophy in place of an additional paper. A full list is available at: <https://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses>

The options include bridge papers such as Philosophy of Cognitive Science and Philosophy of Mind (mind-body relations, personal identity, imagination, and the nature of actions and motives).

Psychology

In terms 1 and 2, students take courses in Psychology and Statistics. Students choosing Psychology take four of the eight courses in Experimental Psychology in terms 3-5, plus a course in Experimental Design and Statistics (examined by submission of a practical portfolio), followed by one, two or three advanced options in Psychology in terms 6-8.

Linguistics

The Introduction to Linguistics course in the first two terms provides a foundation in the basic components of phonetics and phonology (speech and sound patterns), morphology and syntax (word structure and grammar), and semantics (meaning), with an introduction to linguistic theory and the connections between linguistics and other subjects such as sociology and psychology. The course is taught through 3 lectures per week on Grammar, Phonetics and Phonology, and General Linguistics (the latter in four modules: Introduction to General Linguistics, Introduction to Psycholinguistics, Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics, and Introduction to Sociolinguistics). These are supported by 7 practical classes on Grammar, 7 tutorials on General Linguistics, and 10 small-group tutorials on Phonetics and Phonology.

At the end of the second term, the course is assessed by a 3-hour exam.

After the Prelims exam, you may study from three to five special subjects in linguistics. See the options at <https://www.ling-phil.ox.ac.uk/undergraduate/fhs-psychology-philosophy-linguistics>. Options include the topics mentioned above (in greater depth and to a more advanced standard), other topics such as language change and historical linguistics, or an original research project.

Joint Schools

- Experimental Psychology can also be studied as a separate degree course.
- Jesus College does not offer the Biomedical Sciences degree (which has replaced the PPP options involving Physiology, and the Physiological Sciences course).

Philosophy cannot be studied as a separate subject at Oxford. It can be studied at Jesus College in the following combinations:

- Computer Science and Philosophy
- Mathematics and Philosophy
- Philosophy and Modern Languages
- Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE)
- Philosophy and Theology

Linguistics can also be studied in combination with a Modern Language.

Admissions

In a total College entry of about 100 undergraduates, 4 are offered places in a typical year to read either single honours Experimental Psychology or PPL. Candidates are selected on the basis of academic record (e.g. GCSEs) and potential, as shown by their UCAS reference, performance in the written test and in interviews if shortlisted.

Academic requirements: Offers made to candidates will be conditional upon A-level results (A*AA) or equivalent qualifications. It is highly recommend for candidates to have studied one or more science subjects (which can include Psychology) or Mathematics to A-level or other equivalent. English Language or another foreign language to A-level or equivalent would be helpful to study Linguistics as part of the PPL course.

Written test: All candidates must take the **Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA)** in schools on **4 November 2020**. The TSA is administered by Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing, and the registration deadline is **15 October 2020**. Further details of these tests can be found at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/tests/tsa>

Written work: No submitted written work is required for this course.

Interviews: In the interview, Tutors are keen to see whether you can evaluate evidence; are able to consider issues from different perspectives; have a capacity for logical and creative thinking.

Deferred Entry: You should be aware that applicants who are offered places for deferred entry will generally be among the strongest of the cohort for their subject. We would not usually offer more than one deferred place per subject in order not to disadvantage the following year's candidates. You must apply for deferred entry at the time of application to Oxford: you cannot change your mind after an offer has been made. Please refer to departmental web sites for subject-specific advice. In some cases, an applicant for deferred entry may be offered a place for non-deferred entry instead. If you require any further advice, please contact the Admissions Officer via admissions.officer@jesus.ox.ac.uk

Postgraduate Studies and Careers

The following degrees are available at postgraduate level:

- DPhil or MSc by Research in Experimental Psychology
- MSc in Neuroscience
- MSc in Psychological Research
- BPhil or DPhil in Philosophy
- MSt in Ancient Philosophy
- MSt in Philosophy of Physics
- MSt, MPhil or DPhil in Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics

Given the nature of the degree, PPL students are able to consider a wide range of careers, including careers in professional psychology, education, research, medicine, the health services, finance, commerce, industry, the media and information technology. Some careers will require further study and/or training after your degree.

If you study Psychology as part of PPL, your degree is accredited as conferring eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the British Psychological Society (provided you study sufficient Psychology options and obtain a 2:1 or above). However, it is not generally possible to earn a living as a psychologist if your only qualification is an undergraduate degree in the subject. For nearly all professional jobs in the subject, further qualifications are necessary. At present, some 15-20% of our undergraduates go on to take second degrees (usually a DPhil, PhD or MSc). These are usually based on independent research done under supervision at some academic institution. They are usually preludes to careers in teaching and research in one or another branch of psychology at a university.

Preliminary Reading and Further Information

Suggested Reading: Psychology

Gerrig, R. J., Zimbardo, P. G., Campbell, A. J.,
Cunning, S. R., & Wilkes, F. J. (2015)

Psychology and life. Pearson Higher Education AU

Suggested Reading: Philosophy

If you are contemplating a course involving Philosophy, or wondering whether such a course would suit you, you might wish to read some of the following:

Thomas Nagel
Bertrand Russell
M Hollis
Nigel Warburton
Julia Driver
Simon Blackburn
Roger Scruton

What Does It All Mean? (Oxford)
The Problems of Philosophy (Oxford)
Invitation to Philosophy (Blackwell)
Philosophy: The Basics (Routledge)
Ethics: the Fundamentals (Blackwell)
Think (Oxford)
An Intelligent Person's Guide to Philosophy (Duckworth)

Suggested Reading: Linguistics

Hornsby, David. (2014)

Linguistics: a complete introduction. Teach Yourself/Hodder & Stoughton.

Further information about reading Psychology, Philosophy and Linguistics at Oxford can be found on the department websites as below:

- www.psy.ox.ac.uk
- www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk
- www.ling-phil.ox.ac.uk

Information about Admissions is available at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses-listing/psychology-philosophy-and-linguistics>

Contact details

If you have any questions about our entrance requirements, or about applying to study at Jesus College, please contact the Admissions Officer:

Tel: 01865 279721
Email: admissions.officer@jesus.ox.ac.uk
Web: www.jesus.ox.ac.uk/study-here

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