Unit 1 Handout
Psychological Perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychology’s Current Perspectives</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Sample Questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neuroscience</td>
<td>How the body and brain enable emotions, memories, and sensory experiences</td>
<td>How are messages transmitted within the body? How is blood chemistry linked with moods and motives?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evolutionary</td>
<td>How the natural selection of traits promotes the perpetuation of one’s genes</td>
<td>How does evolution influence behavior tendencies?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior genetics</td>
<td>How much our genes and our environment influence our individual differences</td>
<td>To what extent are psychological traits such as intelligence, personality, sexual orientation, and vulnerability to depression attributable to our genes? To our environment?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic</td>
<td>How behavior springs from unconscious drives and conflicts</td>
<td>How can someone’s personality traits and disorders be explained in terms of sexual and aggressive drives or as the disguised effects of unfulfilled wishes and childhood traumas?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td>How we learn observable responses</td>
<td>How do we learn to fear particular objects or situations? What is the most effective way to alter our behavior, say, to lose weight or stop smoking?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>How we encode, process, store, and retrieve information</td>
<td>How do we use information in remembering? Reasoning? Solving problems?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social-cultural</td>
<td>How behavior and thinking vary across situations and cultures</td>
<td>How are we—as Africans, Asians, Australians, or North Americans—alike as members of one human family? As products of different environmental contexts, how do we differ?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structuralism vs. Functionalism

- **Structuralism**
  - Task of Psychology is to analyze consciousness into its basic elements and how they relate
  - Dependent on introspection – careful, systematic self-observation of one’s own consciousness experience
  - Favorited Lab Experiments

- **Functionalism**
  - Psychology should investigate the function or purpose of consciousness rather than its structure
  - Influenced by Darwin and his theory of Natural Selection
  - Favored how people adapt to real world situations

Scientific Method

1. Observe some aspect of the universe and formulate a question
2. Invent a theory (“Hypothesis”) that is consistent with what you have observed
3. Use a theory to make predictions
4. Test those predictions by experiments or further observations
5. Modify the theory in light of your results
6. Go Back to Step 3 if necessary
7. Draw conclusions
8. Report your results
Comparing Research Methods

**Table 1.2: Comparing Research Methods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Method</th>
<th>Basic Purpose</th>
<th>How Conducted</th>
<th>What Is Manipulated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>To observe and record behavior</td>
<td>Case studies, surveys, and naturalistic observations</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlational</td>
<td>To detect naturally occurring relationships; to assess how well one variable predicts another</td>
<td>Computing statistical association, sometimes among survey responses</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>To explore cause and effect</td>
<td>Manipulating one or more factors and using random assignment to eliminate preexisting differences among subjects</td>
<td>The independent variable(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlational Relationships**

- **Strong Positive**
- **Strong Negative**
- **Weak Positive**
- **Moderate Negative**
- **None**
- **Weak Negative**

**Standard Deviation**

- $\mu - 3\sigma$: 2.15%
- $\mu - 2\sigma$: 13.6%
- $\mu - \sigma$: 34.1%
- $\mu$: 34.1%
- $\mu + \sigma$: 34.1%
- $\mu + 2\sigma$: 13.6%
- $\mu + 3\sigma$: 2.15%

- $68.2\%$
- $95.4\%$
- $99.7\%$