



# Participant Package

# Debunking Psychology

**Continuing Education**  
**(Glendon Campus)**

**Running Time:** 1 hour 15 minutes



# Introduction

## Description

### Debunking Psychology

The field of psychology plays an important role in multiple social domains. In addition to working in mental health, psychology researchers and practitioners contribute to such diverse fields as education, organisational development and marketing, among others. However, despite its broad reach, there remain many misconceptions about psychology and a general lack of knowledge regarding the role psychology plays beyond the field of mental health. This workshop addresses some of these misconceptions and seeks to demystify what it means to study and work in the field of psychology. Participants will look at concrete examples of how psychology research is conducted and explore examples of real-world applications beyond the field of mental health.

**Running Time:** 1 hour 15 minutes

### About the author of this workshop

Josée Rivest, Ph. D., C. Psych.

Professor Rivest conducts research in the field of visual perception and neuropsychology. Among other things, she studies visual attention in different populations (eg: elderly, bilingual, etc.). In addition, she provides clinical neuropsychology services (cognitive testing, psychoeducation and rehabilitation) for those suffering from brain damage to the visual cortex.

### York's Experiential Education

This workshop was developed by Isha Dua and Mary-Jo Daher.

Isha Dua is a third-year student pursuing a Specialized Honours in Psychology at York University. Outside of her studies, she is also a writer and shows deep interests in the field of music.

Mary-Jo is a third-year student pursuing a B.Sc. in Psychology at the Glendon campus of York University. She is very interested in clinical psychology, as well as visual arts.

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# ✘ Overview

DEBUNKING PSYCHOLOGY	
<b>Learning objectives:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address common misconceptions about psychology</li><li>• Discover what it is like to study psychology</li><li>• Discover the kinds of professions psychology students go into</li><li>• Gain a better idea of whether studying psychology might interest you</li></ul>
<b>Materials Required:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participant package</li><li>• Access to a computer or tablet with internet connection (if workshop offered online)</li></ul>
<b>Running Time:</b> 1 hour 15 minutes	

# ✘ Agenda

TIME	ACTIVITY
5 minutes	<b>Introduction</b>
10 minutes	<b>Part 1:</b> Myths and Facts About Psychology
15 minutes	<b>Part 2:</b> Designing Psychology Experiments
25 minutes	<b>Part 3:</b> Psychology in Action
15 minutes	<b>Part 4:</b> Jobs in Psychology
5 minutes	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>Running Time:</b> 1 hour 15 minutes	

# Workshop Outline

## **INTRODUCTION: 5 minutes**

The facilitator will introduce themselves and go over the workshop's contents.

## **PART 1 – MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT PSYCHOLOGY: 10 minutes**

You will answer a series of questions about what you already know about the field of psychology using the online platform Mentimeter. The facilitator will also address some of the major misconceptions that exist around the field of psychology.

## **PART 2 – DESIGNING PSYCHOLOGY EXPERIMENTS: 15 minutes**

The facilitator will provide an overview of the scientific method as it is applied in the field of psychology. As you will see in this section, one of the key elements in designing a sound psychology experiment is to define what you are studying in observable and measurable terms – what we call “operational definitions”. After the facilitator describes how to create an operation definition, you will practice formulating your own.

## **PART 3 – PSYCHOLOGY IN ACTION: 25 minutes**

You will participate in a classic psychology experiment on the subject of “inattentional bias” – a concept related attention and perception. Afterwards, you will identify the variables from the experiment and determine how those variables were operationally defined in the context of the study. Lastly, you will discuss some potential real-world implications of inattentional bias.

## **PART 4 – JOBS IN PSYCHOLOGY: 15 minutes**

The facilitator will describe the skills that psychology students develop through their studies and explore the different professions and graduate programs that psychology undergraduates most commonly go on to pursue. They will also clarify the differences between various professions in the field of psychology, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, and therapists, which are often poorly understood or conflated.

## **CONCLUSION: 5 minutes**

The facilitator will summarize the workshop and invite you to share any last thoughts or questions. You will be asked to complete a participation survey.

# Additional Resources and Information

**Crash Course Psychology:** Hosted by Hank Green, this is a series of short videos that cover a wide range of psychology topics in an engaging and informative way.

- <https://thecrashcourse.com/topic/psychology/> (English)

**Psychology Department, Glendon, York University:** the home page for Glendon's Psychology Department, where there are descriptions of the programs offered and other useful information for current and prospective students.

- <https://www.yorku.ca/glendon/psychology/> (English)
- <https://www.yorku.ca/glendon/psychology/?lang=fr> (French)

**Simply Psychology:** This website offers a wealth of information on various topics in psychology, ranging from developmental psychology to social psychology, and includes many real-world examples. It's a great place to get an overview of different psychological concepts.

- <https://www.simplypsychology.org/> (English)

**TED Talks on Psychology:** TED Talks are a fantastic resource for any subject, and psychology is no exception. There are many talks on various topics in psychology, presented by professionals in the field in a way that's accessible and engaging to people without a background in the subject.

- <https://ed.ted.com/lessons?category=psychology> (English with option for French subtitles)

**The Brain from Top to Bottom:** This is an excellent resource that explains different levels of brain function, from the molecular to the societal. It's very interactive and can help students understand the complexity of the brain.

- <https://thebrain.mcgill.ca/> (English)
- <https://lecerveau.mcgill.ca/> (French)

# Glossary

**Inattentional blindness:** the failure to notice a stimulus or event when your attention is focused on something else.

**Operational definition:** the description of a variable or concept in a way that is observable and measurable. For example, the concept of “stress” could be operationally defined as the level of cortisol in a person’s saliva at a given time.

**Reliability:** the consistency of the results of a test or experiments. For example, if I have a reliable thermometer and my body’s temperature is constant, then each time I take my temperature, the reading should be identical or almost identical.

**Replication:** repetition of an earlier study, using a similar method, under similar conditions.

**Science:** the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment.

**Validity:** the degree to which a test, questionnaire or study accurately reflects the phenomenon it purports to measure.

# References

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Our programming can be delivered to Francophone or Anglophone students in their mother tongue, or to Francophone and Anglophone students seeking to improve their second language learning (FSL or ESL).

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