

Spectra II: Psychology Module

Name: Psychosis

Theme: *The Golden Age of Psychology—1960s-1970s*

Title: *The Human Condition: Experiments of Obedience and Control*

Time Period: 1960s–1970s — the golden yet haunting age of psychological experimentation. This era saw the rise of **social psychology experiments** like *Milgram's Obedience Study* (1961), *Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment* (1971), and *Rosenhan's "Being Sane in Insane Places"* (1973), which questioned ethics, obedience, and the fragility of the human mind.

Setting: A **post-experiment rehabilitation ward** inside a 1970s psychiatric institution. The module takes place shortly after these infamous experiments have ended. The world is reeling from their consequences — subjects are traumatized, institutions are under scrutiny, and a new generation of psychologists (the participants) are tasked with finding out what went wrong and how to heal the human psyche.

THEME OVERVIEW

"What happens when the study of the mind breaks it?"

Participants are transported to the 1970s, where they must investigate and heal victims of unethical experiments. Across two days, they will:

1. **Diagnose and treat** individuals suffering from post-experimental trauma.
2. **Design new therapies** inspired by real psychological schools.
3. **Test** those therapies for **validity and reliability** using experimental design.

The experience blends **roleplay**, **investigation**, and **theory-based creativity**.

DECOR & ATMOSPHERE

Overall Mood:

Retro, clinical, unsettling — reflecting a 1970s psychiatric ward with undertones of ethical decay and human suffering.

Visuals & Props:

- Faded yellow lighting, greenish walls, “mental ward” signage.
- Clipboards, typewriters, old telephones, vintage furniture.
- Old posters on behaviorism, Freudian diagrams, Rorschach charts.
- Soundtrack: typewriter clicks, faint classical music, muffled crying or echoing footsteps (ambient sound loop).
- Volunteers in hospital gowns, lab coats, and period-appropriate attire.
- Optional: include “classified experiment files,” therapy rooms, and bulletin boards labeled *“Ethics Committee Reports – Confidential.”*

Moodboard



LOGISTICS

Volunteers Needed

| Role | Description | Number |
|----------------------------|--|--------|
| Patients (Subjects) | Act as traumatized victims of unethical experiments (each) | 8–10 |

| | | |
|---------------------|---|-----|
| | with unique symptoms or delusions). | |
| Red Herrings | Pretend patients seeking money or sympathy — no real disorders. | 2–3 |

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Printed case files for each “patient” (symptoms, backstory, experiment name, ethical context).
- Clipboards, pens, and diagnostic sheets.
- Props: bandages, fake experiment notes, old photographs, hospital gowns.
- Decor: posters, warning signs (“Obedience Lab – Restricted Access”), dim lamps, beds, chairs.
- Sound setup (speaker with ambient background).
- Recording setup or props for therapy demonstrations (camera or phone tripod).
- Stationery and chart paper for experiment design on Day 2.
- Name tags and role cards (Patient, Therapist, Observer, etc.).

MODULE STRUCTURE

DAY ONE – “AFTERMATH”

Objective: Diagnose the victims of psychological experiments and design a therapy for them.

Duration: 2–3 hours

Round 1: The Ward Investigation

- Participants enter the “1970s psych ward.”
- They receive **classified case files** of former participants in experiments (Milgram’s Obedience, Stanford Prison, etc.).
- They interact with *patients* (volunteers acting with specific symptoms: paranoia, guilt, identity loss, aggression, etc.).
- They must **observe, question, and diagnose** using psychological reasoning.
- Red herrings will attempt to mislead them with inconsistent symptoms.

Evaluation:

Participants’ ability to diagnose accurately using psychological logic and evidence.

Round 2: The Cure

- Participants are told to create a **new therapy model** inspired by existing schools of thought (e.g., Humanistic, Cognitive Behavioral, Gestalt, Psychodynamic).
- They must **present or roleplay** how their therapy would work on one chosen patient.
 - Option A: Live roleplay with patient volunteers.
 - Option B: Pre-recorded short video presentation.
- Judges assess **creativity, theoretical grounding, empathy, and feasibility.**

(needs to be more hands on, so requires input from the team)

DAY TWO – “THE ETHICAL SCIENTIST”

Objective: Test the validity and reliability of their newly designed therapies.

Duration: 2 hours

Round 3: The Experiment Reimagined

- Participants now become psychologists designing a study to **test** if their therapy works.
- They must create an **ethical experiment** that measures effectiveness, avoiding the ethical violations of the 1960s–70s.
- They will outline:
 1. Hypothesis
 2. Variables (independent, dependent, control)
 3. Procedure
 4. Sample
 5. Ethical safeguards
 6. Data collection methods

Evaluation:

Judges score based on:

- Creativity
- Ethical awareness
- Feasibility
- Understanding of research design principles

EVALUATION CRITERIA

| Criteria | Weight |
|-----------------|---------------|
|-----------------|---------------|

| | |
|---|-----|
| Diagnostic accuracy | 25% |
| Theoretical grounding | 25% |
| Usefulness and validity | 25% |
| Ethical awareness & experimental design | 25% |