The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

THE PHILOS. FOUNDATIONS OF COGNITIVE SCIENCE - 6110

Last update 09-08-2017

HU Credits: *3*

Degree/Cycle: *1st degree (Bachelor)*

Responsible Department: *cognitive science*

Academic year: *0*

Semester: *2nd Semester*

Teaching Languages: *Hebrew*

Campus: *Mt. Scopus*

Course/Module Coordinator: *Oron Shagrir*

Coordinator Email: *oron.shagrir@gmail.com*

Coordinator Office Hours: *Sunday 16:00-17:00*

Teaching Staff:
Prof Oron Shagrir

Course/Module description:
The aim of the course is to introduce first year undergraduates to the general theoretical underpinnings of contemporary cognitive science. The course begins with a overview of the mind-body problem, then with the computational approach to cognition and concludes with debates on cognitive theory.

Course/Module aims:
This course will encourage students to think critically about the relationship between neuroscience and the philosophy of mind. Students will be challenged to draw connections between empirical findings and both traditional philosophical questions and theoretical questions within the brain sciences. We will focus on evidence that illuminates and challenges our pre-theoretic notions of the mind and findings that fall short of their claims to shed light on such notions.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
• Students will be able to describe and discuss philosophical approaches to a variety of topics raised in contemporary debates about the mind.
• Students will learn to appreciate the significance of neuroscientific and psychological approaches to understanding philosophical problems.
• Students will gain an understanding of the relationship between particular empirical findings in neuroscience and relevant philosophical questions.
• Students will be able to construct and reconstruct philosophical arguments.
• Students will be able to assess philosophical arguments for validity and soundness.
• Students will learn to raise and answer objections to philosophical arguments.
• Students will become familiar with various theories that attempt to solve the mind-body problem and the challenges associated with each of them.
• Students will come to understand why consciousness is thought to be a problem for a scientific theory of the mind.

Attendance requirements(%):
None. But the final exam will also be based on the material presented in lectures.

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture and weekly exercise.

Course/Module Content:
Topics to be covered:

1 Philosophy of Mind -- The main views

2. The computational approach

3. The architecture of the mind.

4. Cognitive theory

Required Reading:
See Hebrew version

Additional Reading Material:
Background Texts:
Anthologies
Brian Beakley and Peter Ludlow (eds.) 2006: Philosophy of Mind: Classical Problems/Contemporary Issues. 2nd Edition, MIT.
Ned Block (ed.) 1980: Readings in Philosophy of Psychology, vol. 1-2. Harvard.

General Introductions
José Luis Bermúdez 2010: Cognitive Science: An Introduction to the Science of the Mind. Cambridge University Press.
Andy Clark 2001: Mindware: an introduction to the philosophy of cognitive science. Oxford University Press.
Robert Harnish 2001: Minds, Brains, Computers. Blackwell.
Jaegwon Kim 1996: Philosophy of Mind. Westview.
Encyclopedias and Digital Resources
The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences. http://cognet.mit.edu/library/erefs/mitecs/
Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. http://plato.stanford.edu/

Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 90 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 10 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information: