



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Cognitive Foundation of Cognitive and Affective Processes

2122-2-F5105P012-F5105P013M

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#### Learning area

Applied Experimental Psychological Sciences

#### Learning objectives

##### *Knowledge and understanding*

- Knowing the cognitive, neurobiological and functional bases of social and affective mental processes.
- Understanding the genesis and dynamics of alterations and disorders of cognitive, communicative, emotional-motivational and social activity

##### *Applying knowledge and understanding*

- Acquisition of the ability to apply the acquired knowledge in order to design and carry out empirical studies in the field of social and affective neuroscience.
- Acquisition of the ability to apply the acquired knowledge in order to personally design and carry out clinical interventions focused on specific patients with socio- affective disorders.

## **Contents**

This course provides essential knowledge concerning the main cognitive models of social and emotional-motivational processes in humans, in order to promote the understanding of socio-emotional and behavioral functions, both in healthy people and patients with specific social or affective disorders.

## **Detailed program**

Perception of causality, biological motion and animacy

Mentalizing

Face and gaze perception

Social attention and gaze following

Attentional biases towards social and emotional stimuli.

Embodied cognition

Neural bases of social cognition and self-referential processes

Mirror neurons, empathy, intention understanding, Autism

## **Prerequisites**

This course requires a basic knowledge of anatomy and physiology of the nervous system and its cognitive functions.

The understanding of textbook and scientific article in English.

## **Teaching methods**

Frontal lessons with slides and audio/video presentations. Presentation and discussion of ongoing data and research articles.

Lessons will be held in presence, unless further COVID-19 related restrictions are imposed.

## **Assessment methods**

Written exam with an oral interview on demand (either by the student or by the lecturers). The written examination consists of open questions on textbooks and handouts of the lectures; part of the exam can be substituted with an oral presentation of a scientific article, or a brief essay, to be completed during the course, testing the critical thinking skills.

Erasmus students are admitted to the course and take the exam in English.

## **Textbooks and Reading Materials**

Ward, J. (2012). The Student's Guide to Social Neuroscience. Hove and New York: Psychological Press. (cap. 5, 6).

Scientific papers that will be uploaded here by the teacher.

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