UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Cognitive Foundation of Cognitive and Affective Processes

2627-2-F5109P019-F5109P019001

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 abillity to apply the acquired knowledge in order to personally design and carry out studies focused on specific patients with socio- affective disorders.

Making judgements
Enhancement of critical thinking and personal reflection relating to the course subjects the will be acquired through active exchange among the lecturer and the peers, class discussion, and oral presentation of scientific articles by the students as part of their exam. In a similar vein, this skill can be achieved also through the possibility to make written essay on central and debated issues of the arguments presented in the course as part of the exam.

Communication skills
This skill will be reinforced through orally presented scientific articles and written essay on the main subjects presented in the course.

Learning skills

Theoretical and methodological knowledge will be provided through frontal lectures and active interaction allowing the acquisition of self-learning skills thanks also to the extra course material that will be provided to deepen the knowledge of the topics presented in the course.

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

Biological motion, causality and agency

Face and gaze perception

Social attention and gaze following

Attentional biases towards social and emotional stimuli

Mentalizing

Embodied cognition

Mirror neurons, empathy, action and intention understanding

Pathological and atypical aspects of Social Cognition

Autism Spectrum Condition.and other conditions

Prerequisites

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

The understanding of English textbook and scientific articles.

Teaching methods

Frontal lessons with slides and audio/video presentations. Presentation and discussion of ongoing data and research articles.
The course will be held in presence and in English. Teaching will consist of lecture-based lessons, and also interactive classwork, discussion on scientific papers, and assignments. All lessons will contain at least a part of

interaction with students.

Assessment methods

The exam is only written. The written examination consists of two open ended questions (essay-like) on textbooks and slides of the lectures; part of the exam (one question) can be substituted with an oral presentation of a scientific article, or a brief essay, to be completed during the course and agreed with the lecturer, testing both the knowledge on a topic presented in the course and the student's critical thinking skills.

The final grade is based on the overall score obtained across the different sections of the examination, according to the following grading scale:
18: Barely sufficient knowledge; minimal theoretical and interpretative skills.
19–22: Sufficient knowledge of the fundamental content, with some uncertainty in its application.
23–26: Fair knowledge, with good conceptual skills despite some inaccuracies.
27–30: Solid knowledge, strong command of the subject matter, and good to excellent critical thinking skills.
30 with honors: Thoroughly adequate knowledge, complete mastery of the subject matter, and excellent command of academic language.

No interim assessments are scheduled.

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

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Course slides and scientific papers will be uploaded on the course website by the lecturer.

Detailed information about reading material will be given on course start, and published on the course webpage.

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION