Syllabus - Psychology of Consciousness

Summer Pre-session Semester, 2010

Course #: Psychology 358

Course Title: Psychology of Consciousness

Time: Monday to Friday, 9:00-11:50 am

Place: Room 314, Atmospheric Sciences

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: PSY 290A or PSY 290B. Satisfaction of the Mid-Career Writing Assessment (MCWA).

Instructor: Dev Ashish, M.A.

Office: Room 236, Psychology Building

Email Address: dashish@email.arizona.edu

Office Hours: Monday, 1:30 am to 2:30 pm or by appointment.


Other Required Reading: Articles provided during the class.


General Description: Introduction to theory and research on both normal and altered states of consciousness, from both neuroscientific and contemplative viewpoints. Topics reviewed include philosophical foundations, brain systems and consciousness, introspection, sleep and dreaming, hypnosis, meditation, and psychedelic drugs.

Rationale and Objectives:

In the past decade, a flood of scientific studies have tried to explore the age old topic of consciousness. The new understanding about consciousness though brain sciences has not only provided with some answers but raised more questions. The objective of this course is to explore consciousness through scientific perspective and first person experiences. The course will introduce upper division undergraduates to the psychology of consciousness, primarily (although not exclusively) from the viewpoint of natural science.
and cognitive psychology. The course will offer a review of research and theory concerning both normal and altered states of consciousness. Although the focus of the course will be upon systematic research and theoretical interpretations, relevant discussions of clinical and practical applications will also be included.

**Course Requirements:** Regular class attendance and participation through daily questions; Completion of all assigned readings; Presentation of a topic; Completion of a final term paper.

**Class structure:** Most classes will start with a brief breath focused mindfulness attention practice. A general discussion of the topic of the day will follow. Instructor and students may present additional information about the topic through articles and/or videos. Break. Students will present individual questions based on the topic and we will think-pair-share-discuss the question. The classes will end with a brief compassionate focus practice.

**Grading:** Based on daily-questions (30%), topic presentation (30%), final paper (40%)

**Lecture/Discussion Schedule and Reading Assignments**

5/17 Introduction, Organization and Requirements.

5/18 What is consciousness and what does it do?

**Reading:**


5/19 How did consciousness arise?

**Reading:**


5/20 Where is consciousness?

**Reading:**


5/21 Presentations I

5/24 How to study consciousness?

**Readings:**


5/25 Attention and consciousness

**Reading:**


5/26 Consciousness and self

**Reading:**


5/27 Can consciousness be created?

**Reading:**


5/28 Presentations II

5/31 What is unconsciousness?

**Reading:**


6/1 How to change consciousness?

**Reading:**


6/2 Meditation and consciousness

**Reading:**


6/3 Global consciousness
Suggested Readings:


6/4 Presentations III

**Term Papers due**

**Final Term Paper:**

This assignment requires you to carefully design a study to understand consciousness better. You will be required to review at least three articles base your study question. In no more than 10 printed pages (12 point, double-spaced, APA format) you will introduce your study by describing the reason behind your study and developing the hypothesis of your study; present the method in detail that you may utilize to test your hypothesis; and discuss the potential outcome of the study with limitations of your chosen methodology and suggestions for possible future research. Grading of the paper will be based on how well you can designed and describe the study.