THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Course Outline

Part I

Programme Title : All full-time Undergraduate programmes
Programme QF Level : 5
Course Title : The Mysteries of the Human Mind
Course Code : GEH2038
Department : Department of Special Education and Counselling
Credit Points : 3
Contact Hours : 39
Pre-requisite(s) : Nil
Medium of Instruction : EMI
Level : 2

Part II

The University's Graduate Attributes and seven Generic Intended Learning Outcomes (GILOs) represent the attributes of ideal EdUHK graduates and their expected qualities respectively. Learning outcomes work coherently at the University (GILOs), programme (Programme Intended Learning Outcomes) and course (Course Intended Learning Outcomes) levels to achieve the goal of nurturing students with important graduate attributes.

In gist, the Graduate Attributes for Undergraduate, Taught Postgraduate and Research Postgraduate students consist of the following three domains (i.e. in short "PEER & I"):

- **P**rofessional **E**xcellence;
- **E**thical **R**esponsibility; **&**
- **I**nnovation.

The descriptors under these three domains are different for the three groups of students in order to reflect the respective level of Graduate Attributes.

The seven GILOs are:

1. Problem Solving Skills
2. Critical Thinking Skills
3. Creative Thinking Skills

4a. Oral Communication Skills

4b. Written Communication Skills

5. Social Interaction Skills
6. Ethical Decision Making
7. Global Perspectives

1. Course Synopsis:

How the mind works? This is a question that has been asked by human being for centuries. In the past, philosophers argued whether our physical body can give rise to the soul, the entity that lets us experience pleasure, pain and love. The technological advancement in the recent years enables humans to examine the functions of the brain in more details and to simulate a number of mental processes with artificial intelligence in computers (e.g. reasoning, language comprehension and learning). However, we still don't know how (whether) the physical brain gives us the conscious experience of being ourselves. In this course, we will introduce the human mind from philosophical, psychological and biological perspectives and discuss how new technologies may give us a better understanding about the human mind. We will also review some updated research work in the field of neurosciences to understand how new knowledge in human mind or brain functions is generated. Throughout the course, students are encouraged to explore their own answers about the origin of consciousness and to develop a better understanding of themselves through a more in-depth understanding about the mind. *(This is not a biology course and does not require a background in science).*

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- $CILO_1$ Illustrate different perspectives and questions about the philosophy of mind
- $CILO_2$ Discuss the values of state-of-the-art technology in understanding human brain functions
- $CILO_3$ Appraise the latest global research in examining the function of the brain
- $CILO_4$ Formulate a hypothesis about the question "How the mind works" based on research evidence in the field of philosophy, psychology and neurosciences.

3. Content, CILOs and Teaching & Learning Activities

Course Content	CILOs	Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities
Philosophy of mind: Different philosophical theories with an attempt to explain the human mind, such as Dualism, Physicalism and Monism, will be introduced.	$CILO_{1,4}$	Lecture, group discussion, debate, video
Technology and the brain: The state-of-the-art technologies, e.g. magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), electroencephalography (EEG), transcranial direct-current stimulation (tDCS), and how these could help us understand more about the brain functions from the biological perspective, will be introduced.	$CILO_{2,3,4}$	Lecture, literature review, video, group discussion
Consciousness: Different states of consciousness, e.g. anesthesia, out-of-body experience, vegetative state, dream theories, and how do language and visual perception relate to our consciousness will be discussed to address the psychological perspective of the human mind.	$CILO_{1,2,4}$	Lecture, literature review, experiment, case study, video, group discussion

The emotional life of the brain: Questions like how is emotion generated in our mind; how could emotion influence our cognitive function; what is an abnormal mind look like, and how can we manipulate our emotion via mindful training and technologies, will be discussed.	$CILO_{2,3,4}$	Lecture, literature review, case study, video, group discussion

4. Assessment

Assessment Tasks	Weighting (%)	CILO
a. Group project Students will identify a specific philosophical question about the human mind. They will have to show their stand point and provide evidence from the literature or daily life examples to support or against the idea in a 20 mins debate. The assessment criteria will be based on students' understanding about the specific philosophical question and the ability to apply research findings in answering philosophical and real-life problems. - Presentation (35%) - Peer evaluation (5%)	40%	$CILO_{1,2,3,4}$
b. An individual learning journal Students will write a self-reflective journal on the topic "How my mind works". Students will make use of the lecture materials and online resources to help them to gain a better understanding about their own mental process and formulate a hypothesis on how their brain works to conclude the learning journal. The learning journal will be assessed based on the students' ability in integrating the arguments from different perspectives with their own ideas about the function of human mind. The learning journal should be about 1200 words.	40%	$CILO_{1,2,3,4}$
c. In-class participation There will be a number of in-class activities, e.g. experiment, worksheet and group discussion. Students are encouraged to actively participate in them. Students will be evaluated by their quality and quantity of their participation to those in-class activities.	20%	$CILO_{1,2,3}$

5. Required Text(s)

Nil

6. Recommended Readings

Damasio, A. (1994). *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain,* Putnam Publishing.

Feser, E. (2006). *Philosophy of mind: a beginner's guide.* Oxford : Oneworld.

Gazzaniga, M.S., Ivry, R. B., & Mangun, G. R. (2009). *Cognitive Neuroscience: The Biology*

of Mind. (3rd ed.). New York: W.W. Norton
Pinker, S. (2009). *How the Mind Works?*. W. W. Norton & Company.
Pinker, S. (2013). *So How Does the Mind Work?*. Oxford University Press.
Thagard, Paul (1996). *Mind : Introduction to Cognitive Science* Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
Verhaeghen, P. (2017). Presence: *How Mindfulness and Meditation Shape Your Brain, Mind, and Life*. Oxford University Press.
Wilson, R. A., & Keil, F. C. (1999). *The MIT encyclopedia of the cognitive sciences / edited by Robert A.* Wilson and Frank C. Keil. Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press

7. Related Web Resources

https://sites.google.com/site/minddict/
http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cognitive-science/
https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/what-does-mindfulness-meditation-do-to-your-brain/

8. Related Journals

Nil

9. Academic Honesty

The University adopts a zero tolerance policy to plagiarism. For the University's policy on plagiarism, please refer to the *Policy on Academic Honesty, Responsibility and Integrity with Specific Reference to the Avoidance of Plagiarism by Students* (https://www.eduhk.hk/re/modules/downloads/visit.php?cid=9&lid=89). Students should familiarize themselves with the Policy.

10. Others

Nil