



COURSE UNIT INFORMATION SHEET (SYLLABUS)

2020/2021

Name Epistemology and History of Psychology
Teaching staff Prof. Rodrigo de Sá-Nogueira Saraiba
ECTS 6
Functioning Semestral
Learning goals The main objective is to make students understand that each present day perspective in psychology has deep roots in the intellectual threads of western thought. It is expected that students understand the genealogy of present day theoretical positions and therefore realize the origin and reason for the characteristics (what is to be explained, accepted explicative concepts, methods) of modern psychological science which are usually presented as facts and without any rationale.
Skills to be developed Students should be able to: Know the nature of the species' untutored thought about the mind Know the outline of the history of western thought about the mind



Identify the parameters that differentiate different thought traditions and know the origin of the differences

Know and identify the genealogy of current thought about the mind, their postulates, the kind of language in which they express themselves and the accepted validation criteria they propose

Prerequisites (precedences) *

Contents

1. The world of the invisible: concepts of mind in primitive cultures
2. The discovery of the concept of Mind in Greece
3. The medieval Mind: Augustine, Aquinas, Ockham and the nominalist critique
4. Pirronism and the solution to doubt: Bacon, Gomez Pereira, Descartes, Espinosa
5. The epicurean connexion: Gassendi, Boyle and Locke; Hume, Hartley and associationism
6. Thomas Hobbes.
7. Kant and the restatement that perception fails as a means to reach truth: the transcendental method
8. Newton and Vico, their epistemologies.
9. Positivism, physiology, darwinism
10. The idea of the unconscious
11. Gestalt, Uexküll and Lorenz
12. Piaget
13. Psychology in the USA: Dewey, James, behaviourism, cognitivism
14. The main structures of western thought about the mind and the differentiation between the main traditions

Bibliography

Teaching methods

In the lectures the ideas of the most influential thinkers are presented and care is taken to characterize their epistemology, even when it is not explicitly stated by the authors. In the practicals the students are given an assignment, specified one week in advance. This assignment consists of a problem to be discussed, which contains one of the central questions that keep appearing in the history of the theorizing of the human mind (e.g.: first or third person perspectives, active/passive mind, determinism and freedom). Both knowledge and critical thinking are targeted.



Evaluation Regimes (General and/or Alternative)
Evaluation Elements
There are two possibilities to be defined by the professor at the beginning of the semester. Either the final grade is given by the exam alone or, the exam will contribute 70% of the final grade and essays done by groups of three to four students will contribute with 30%. In this second possibility the student has to gain approval in both elements, final exam and essay.
Rules for grade improvement
Only the final exam may be repeated for grade betterment, although students who fail in the essay may, in the second phase, repeat it.
Rules for students having previously failed the course unit *
Requirements on attendance and punctuality
This year presence will not be required
Rules for special students
(workers, elite athletes, student body leaders, military, fathers/mothers, with special needs) *
Language of instruction
Portuguese, but essays may be presented in English, French, Castilian and Italian.
Disciplinary violations and penalties



According to the Evaluation of Learning Regulation of the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Lisbon, the following behaviors are considered as disciplinary offenses subject to disciplinary action:

- a) To use or attempt to use materials, information, notes, study resources or other objects and equipment not authorized in academic exercises;
- b) To help or try to help a colleague in committing a disciplinary offense;
- c) To submit the same written work for evaluation in different course units without permission from the instructors, even if with minor changes;
- d) To present someone else's work as one's own;
- e) To forge, or change without permission from the author, any information or citation in an academic work;
- f) To interfere, change or attempt to change grades;
- g) To try to prevent or interfere with the proper functioning of classes, research or other academic activities;
- h) To make false accusations regarding instructors, governance bodies, other students or non-teaching staff of the FPUL;
- i) To falsify signatures in attendance sheets, documents relating to evaluation elements or in any official document relating to an academic process or status.

Disciplinary offenses committed in any assessment element can lead to its annulment, and must be reported to the Pedagogical Council or, considering their gravity and repetition, may lead to other penalties, to be determined by the Rector of the University of Lisbon.

* If applicable