

## SYLLABUS

### 1. Program details

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1.1 Higher education institution  | West University of Timișoara                   |
| 1.2 Faculty / Department          | Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences |
| 1.3 Department                    | Psychology                                     |
| 1.4 Field of study                | Psychology                                     |
| 1.5 Cycle of studies              | Bachelor's degree                              |
| 1.6 Study program / Qualification | Psychology - Cognitive science                 |

### 2. Discipline details

|   |   |              |   |                        |   |                       |    |
|---|---|--------------|---|------------------------|---|-----------------------|----|
| 2.1 Discipline name                                   | <b>Philosophy of mind and consciousness</b> |              |   |                        |   |                       |    |
| 2.2 Tenured teacher - course activities               | Professor Florin LOBONȚ, PhD                |              |   |                        |   |                       |    |
| 2.3 Tenured teacher – seminar / laboratory activities | N/A   |              |   |                        |   |                       |    |
| 2.4 Study year  | 2   | 2.5 Semester | 1 | 2.6 Type of assessment | E | 2.7 Discipline regime | DO |
| 2.8 Google classroom code                             | <b>xqtj6u5k</b>                             |              |   |                        |   |                       |    |

### 3. Estimated total time (hours per semester) of teaching activities

|  |           |                      |        |                        |       |
|--|-----------|----------------------|--------|------------------------|-------|
| 3.1 Number of hours per semester   | 2         | Of which: 3.2 course | 2      | 3.3 seminar/laboratory | -     |
| 3.4 Total hours from the curriculum  | 2<br>8    | Of which: 3.5 course | 2<br>8 | 3.6 seminar/laboratory | -     |
| Time fund distribution:  |           |                      |        |                        | hours |
| Study based on the textbook, course material, bibliography, and notes                      |           |                      |        |                        | 10    |
| Additional documentation in the library, on specialist electronic platforms / in the field |           |                      |        |                        | 5     |
| Preparing seminars/labs, homework, papers, portfolios, and essays                          |           |                      |        |                        | 5     |
| Tutoring   |           |                      |        |                        |       |
| Examinations   |           |                      |        |                        | 2     |
| Other activities   |           |                      |        |                        | -     |
| 3.7 Total hours of individual study  | <b>22</b> |                      |        |                        |       |
| 3.8 Total hours per semester   | <b>50</b> |                      |        |                        |       |
| 3.9 Number of credits (ECTS)   | <b>2</b>  |                      |        |                        |       |

### 4. Prerequisites (where necessary)

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| 4.1 for curriculum   | • N/A |
| 4.2 for competencies | • N/A |

### 5. Conditions (where necessary)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 5.1 for conducting the course   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Room with projector (for face-to-face activities)</li> <li>For online activities: Material means: terminal for connection to the Google suite (PC / laptop / tablet), internet connection;</li> <li>Group management: all participants in the video conference must have the video camera activated, attendance at the beginning of each course.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.2 for conducting the seminar/laboratory   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>  |
| 4.3 Conduct regarding the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (genAI) tools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within this course, the use of genAI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Copilot etc.) is allowed only under the conditions set by the course/seminar instructor and in compliance with academic integrity standards.</li> <li>Permitted uses: brainstorming ideas, support for writing and structuring, translations, language revisions, generation of images, charts, diagrams, illustrations, video or audio materials, avatars, and other digital objects, exclusively for educational purposes.</li> <li>Prohibited uses: fully generating assignments (essays, reports, projects) or presenting content created by genAI as being solely one's own work.</li> <li>Failure to declare the use of genAI is considered a breach of academic integrity standards and will be handled in accordance with UVT regulations.</li> <li>Students are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-verifying the accuracy and relevance of the generated content,</li> <li>-respecting confidentiality and copyright,</li> <li>-critically and personally integrating the results obtained with genAI.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

### 6. Discipline objectives - expected learning outcomes to which the discipline's study and promotion contributes

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and describe fundamental concepts and theories in philosophy of mind and consciousness.</li> <li>Analyze, evaluate, and interpret major philosophical accounts of the nature of mind and consciousness.</li> <li>Distinguish and verify the arguments advanced across competing theories of mind and consciousness.</li> </ul> |
|-----------|--|

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Skills                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply logical analysis to solve theoretical problems in philosophy of mind and consciousness.</li> <li>• Develop and justify new solutions grounded in core concepts and theories of philosophy of mind.</li> <li>• Formulate well-supported conclusions through analyzing and evaluating relevant arguments.</li> </ul>   |
| Responsibility and autonomy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debate alternative positions respectfully within the theoretical framework of philosophy of mind and argue for claims with appropriate reasons.</li> <li>• Decide among competing viewpoints and justify the selected position using discipline-specific arguments.</li> <li>• Express and defend one's own standpoint responsibly, adhere to academic integrity, and collaborate constructively.</li> </ul> |

## 7. Contents

| 7.1 Course   | Teaching methods    | Observations  |
|--|---------------------|---|
|  |                     | Themes and materials for presentations and projects will be posted on the Google Classroom platform / suite Classroom code: <b>xqtj6u5k</b>   |
| 1.The body-mind problem; main concepts of philosophy of mind; reason and rationality; The Representational Theory of Mind (RTM)                      | Interactive lecture | Tim Crane – <i>The Mechanical Mind: a philosophical introduction to Minds, Machines and Mental Representation</i> ; David Chalmers (ed) <i>Philosophy of Mind: Classic and Contemporary Readings</i>  |
| 2.The mind-body problem for sense-experience; The mind-body problem for thought; The mind body problem for the will                                  | Interactive lecture | U.T. Place – Is Consciousness a Brain Process? and Herbert Feigl – The “Mental” and the “Physical”, în David Chalmers (ed) <i>Philosophy of Mind: Classic and Contemporary Readings</i> , Ch. 8 & 10. |
| 3.Types of dualism; Causal interaction between mind and body; Physicalism; Identity theory; Reductionism; Materialism and the body-mind problem      | Interactive lecture | Tim Crane – <i>The Mechanical Mind</i> , ch.2 pp.49-62<br>D.M. Armstrong – “The Causal Theory of Mind” în David Chalmers (ed) <i>Philosophy of Mind</i> , ch. 12.                                     |
| 4.Naturalism; Representational theory of mind; Propositional attitudes; Psychological behaviorism; Philosophical behaviorism; Causal theory of mind; | Interactive lecture | Tim Crane, <i>The Mechanical Mind</i> ch. 3 & 4   |

|  |                     |   |
|--|---------------------|---|
| Functionalism and physicalism; Computer theory of mind   |                     |   |
| 5.Symbolic representations; Logical reasoning as computation; Computer theory of mind and commonsense psychology; Frame problem; Connectionist models of mind; Thinking in neural nets; Materialist eliminativism                          | Interactive lecture | Tim Crane <i>The Mechanical Mind</i> – ch. 8.4 Brainy Computers; Daniel Dennett - Mother Nature vs the Walking Encyclopaedia: a Western Drama<br>Downloadable from:<br><a href="http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/papers/motherna.htm">http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/papers/motherna.htm</a> ; Jackson, F. 1982. Epiphenomenal qualia. <i>Philosophical Quarterly</i> 32:127-136. |
| 6.Subjectivity and objectivity of conscious experience; Limits of objectivity; Qualia; The knowledge argument; The Ability hypothesis; Epiphenomenal dualism; Interactionist dualism; Type F monism  | Interactive lecture | D. Chalmers (ed) <i>Philosophy of Mind</i> , ch. 60, Derik Parfit – Reductionism and Personal Identity  |
| 7.What are selves? – Individuality and soul; Self as unified consciousness; Psychological connectedness; Self as fiction; Comparison with robot; Autonomy and responsibility; Determinism and free will; compatibilism and incompatibilism | Interactive lecture | D. Chalmers (ed) <i>Philosophy of Mind</i> ch. 61, J. Ayer, Freedom and necessity   |
| 8.Rational agents; Body-mind problem and commonsense psychology; Anomalous monism; functionalism; Theory of mind; Simulation theory; Mirror neurons; Mind as embodied and situated; Body Neglect in Philosophy; Mind-body dualism          | Interactive lecture | D. Chalmers (ed) <i>Philosophy of Mind</i> ch. 63, John Searle, Can computers think?<br>Gregory McCulloch: <i>Mind and its World</i> (ch.1, pp.11-23); Francisco J. Varela et al., <i>The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience</i> , ch. 1 & 3.  |

|  |                        |   |
|--|------------------------|---|
| 9.The Embodied Mind<br>Cartesianism in<br>Cognitive<br>Science; Computer<br>theory of mind;<br>Cognitivism; The<br>mechanical mind; AI;<br>The divided self  | Interactive<br>lecture | Andy Clark, <i>Mindware</i> , ch 1 & 6  |
| 10.The mind-mind<br>problem; embodied<br>cognitive science;<br>Subject-object divide;<br>Representationalism   | Interactive<br>lecture | Michael Wheeler, <i>Reconstructing the Cognitive World: The Next Step</i> , Ch. 1; Rene Descartes, <i>Treatise on man</i> , <a href="https://www.coretexts.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/DescartesTreatiseMnfin.pdf">https://www.coretexts.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/DescartesTreatiseMnfin.pdf</a> |
| 11.Emergence,<br>Dynamical systems<br>and the mind-body<br>problem; Functionalism;<br>Cognitivism;<br>Connectionism;<br>Emergence  | Interactive<br>lecture | Andy Clark, <i>Being There</i> , pp. 103-119.   |
| 12.Mind as dynamical<br>system; Cognitive vs.<br>representational<br>theories of mind  | Interactive<br>lecture | Andy Clark, <i>Being There</i> , pp. 12-21; Francisco J. Varela et al., <i>The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience</i> , ch. 7.   |
| 13.Situated cognition;<br>Extended cognition;<br>Neural plasticity;<br>Evolution and cognition<br>(nativism vs.<br>empiricism); Extended<br>mind and sociobiology  | Interactive<br>lecture | Robert Wilson, <i>Boundaries of the Mind</i> , ch. 8; Andy Clark, <i>Natural-Born Cyborgs</i> , ch. 5; Patricia S. Churchland, <i>Neurophilosophy: Toward a Unified Science of the Mind/Brain</i> , General Introduction & ch. 10.  |
| 14.Extending the mind<br>through language;<br>Consciousness;<br>Subjective experience;<br>Functional explanation;<br>The self; Bodily<br>consciousness.  | Interactive<br>lecture | Daniel Dennett, <i>Kinds of Minds</i> , ch. 6; Alva Noë, <i>Action in Perception</i> , MIT Press, 2004, ch. 1, 6 & 7; Andy Clark, <i>Natural-Born Cyborgs</i> , ch. 5.  |
| <p>References:</p> <p>Brentano, Franz (2015). <i>Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint</i>. With a new foreword by Tim Crane. Routledge [Routledge](<a href="https://www.routledge.com/Psychology-from-An-Empirical-Standpoint/Brentano/p/book/9781138019171">https://www.routledge.com/Psychology-from-An-Empirical-Standpoint/Brentano/p/book/9781138019171</a>).</p> <p>Chalmers, David (ed.), (2021). <i>Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings</i>. 2nd Edition. Oxford University Press).</p> <p>Churchland, Patricia S. (1989). <i>Neurophilosophy: Toward a Unified Science of the Mind/Brain</i>. MIT Press.</p> <p>Clark, Andy (1998)., <i>Being There</i>. MIT Press.</p> <p>Clark, Andy (2004)., <i>Natural-Born Cyborgs</i>, Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Clark, Andy (2014), <i>Mindware: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Cognitive Science</i>. Oxford</p> |                        |   |

University Press.  
Clark, Andy (2015), *Surfing Uncertainty: Prediction, Action, and the Embodied Mind*. Oxford University Press  
Crane, Tim (2016), *The Mechanical Mind: A Philosophical Introduction to Minds, Machines, and Mental Representation*. 3rd edition. Routledge.  
Dennett, Daniel (2008). *Kinds of Minds*, Basic Books.  
Descartes, René (2010)., *Treatise on man*, <https://www.coretexts.org/wp-content/uploads/>  
Descartes, René (2017). *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Translated and edited by John Cottingham. MIT Press.  
Frankish, Keith & Ramsey, William (eds.), 2014, *The Cambridge Handbook of Artificial Intelligence*. 2nd Edition. Cambridge University Press.  
Jackson, F. (1982), Epiphenomenal qualia. *Philosophical Quarterly* 32:127-136.  
Kiverstein, Julian (ed.), (2016), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of the Social Mind*. Routledge.  
McCulloch, Gregory (1995)., *Mind and its World*, London, Routledge.  
Noë, Alva. (2004), *Action in Perception*. MIT Press.  
Varela, Francisco; Thompson, Evan; Rosch, Eleanor (2017). *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*. MIT Press.  
Wheeler, Michael (2005)., *Reconstructing the Cognitive World: The Next Step*. MIT Press.  
Wilson, Robert (2004)., *Boundaries of the Mind*, Cambridge University Press.

## 8. Correlation of discipline contents with the expectations of the representatives of the epistemic community, professional associations and representative employers in the field related to the program

As specified in the curriculum.

## 9. Assessment

| Activity type   | 9.1 Assessment criteria  | 9.2 Assessment methods   | 9.3 Weight of final mark                         |
|---|--|--|--|
| 9.4 Course  | Midterm AI-enabled case-study assignment: generate, document, and submit an original case study (2–3 pages) that applies a theory from the course to a concrete scenario; explicitly use an AI tool to help generate the case materials and reasoning trail, and include an AI-use appendix (tool, prompts, and your critical evaluation), in line with the Course Policy on AI Use.<br>Final essay paper on a topic from a short list of subject choices. | Written examination (final essay) and documented AI-enabled case-study assignment. | 50% (AI-enabled case study) + 50% (final essay). |
| 9.5 Seminar / laboratory  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  |
| 9.6 Minimum performance standard  |  |  |  |
| 1. Midterm AI-Supported Case-Study Generation: delivers (a) one original case study (500-700 words) that pose concrete problems in philosophy of mind and is generated with AI and subsequently revised by the student; (b) a critical analysis memo (1,000–1,200 words) that interprets, evaluates, and argues |  |  |  |

for the philosophical relevance of the case using course readings; and (c) an AI-use appendix documenting tools, prompts/iterations, and a brief reflection on limitations/biases, in accordance with the Course Policy on AI Use.

2. Essay (1,500 words): analyzes/evaluates a topic from the approved list; applies core theoretical paradigms; uses information and arguments from lectures and/or the recommended bibliography.

#### **Re-enrollment in the subject and re-examination**

Students who have not met the minimum standards specified in the course syllabus will re-enroll in the subject and complete the associated activities in the following academic year.

Students who do not take or pass the final evaluation in any exam session will be re-examined in the next academic year, without the obligation to redo the activities associated with the subject.

#### **Course Policy on AI Use**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming an important tool in education, research, and professional practice. In this course, AI is *encouraged* as a possible strategy designed to support your learning, help you generate ideas, and refine your work. At the same time, your grade should reflect your **own knowledge, skills, and critical thinking**. For this reason, any use of AI must be acknowledged. Being transparent about when and how you use AI is not a disadvantage—it shows that you are able to use modern tools responsibly and ethically, while still making your personal contribution.

#### **Permitted Uses**

You may use AI tools in this course for purposes such as:

- Generating thought experiments
- Developing case conceptualizations
- Refining writing (improving clarity, grammar, and style)
- Generating new ideas or conceptual frameworks
- Creating images, diagrams, or graphs for assignments or presentations
- Organizing information or enhancing presentations

Important: AI is meant to *support* your work, not replace your own effort, creativity, or critical thinking.

#### **Documentation Requirements**

To maintain transparency and academic integrity, you must explicitly acknowledge any use of AI in your submitted work. This can be done:

1. In a footnote, or
2. In a separate section (e.g., after the References).

Your acknowledgment must include:

- The *type of AI tool used*
- The *role it played* in your assignment
- (If possible) the *prompt(s)* used and a *link or screenshot* of the AI interaction
- Examples:
  - “The images in this assignment were generated using [AI system name] to illustrate the concept of ...”
  - “The text was refined using [AI system name] to improve grammar and clarity of arguments.”

#### **Consequences of Improper Use**

AI use is considered *improper* if it replaces, rather than supports, your personal contribution. Specifically:

- If your work is completed almost entirely by AI, or shows little evidence of personal effort, it will be considered *non-compliant* with academic requirements. More exactly, if, after verification, it is found that your work was mostly (>60%) completed with the help of AI tools or by copying, it will be considered *non-compliant* with academic requirements. In such a case you will be required to attend a one-on-one evaluation meeting with the instructor and defend

your work to demonstrate personal contribution and understanding of the material. If the student does not attend or is unable to answer questions regarding the paper, the work will be canceled, and the student will be allowed to participate in the evaluation again only in the next exam session.

Date of completion

15.09.2025

Tenure teacher

Florin LOBONȚ, PhD

Professor

Date of approval in department

Head of Department

Delia VÎRGĂ, PhD

Professor