



# Human nature

Key studies in psychology

*COURSE INFORMATION*

# Course Description

- ▣ **Introduction to some of the most exciting research in psychology**
- ▣ *Lectures on Mondays of ODD weeks*
- ▣ **6 lectures:**
- ▣ *Feb 24 – Biases in decision-making and reasoning*
- ▣ *Mar 9 – Motivation, emotion, and regulation of behaviour*
- ▣ *Mar 23 – The power of beliefs and social perceptions*
- ▣ *Apr 6 – Social influence*
- ▣ *Apr 20 – Perception, memory, and thought*
- ▣ *May 4 – Development of personality and pathology*
- ▣ **May 18 – colloquium ?**

# Course Requirements

- ▣ Interactive syllabus in the IS:
- ▣ *Student → Study Materials → Interactive Syllabi*

**3 basic requirements:**

- ▣ **ATTENDANCE (3 lectures out of 6)**
- ▣ **QUIZZES**
- ▣ **FINAL “EXAM” (Colloquium)**

# QUIZZES

- ▣ *Accessible through the interactive syllabus after each lecture **until Sunday before another lecture** (i.e., available for 2 weeks)*
- ▣ *To test your understanding of presented research*
- ▣ *Can be attempted any time, anywhere, up to **three times***
- ▣ *Simple multiple choice questions – some (no more than 50%) might differ in the subsequent attempts*
- ▣ *You must score an average of **75%** (of all highest scores); each quiz must be seriously attempted at least once*
  
- ▣ **ALL MUST BE COMPLETED IN TIME!!!** (*only extreme case exceptions possible*)
- ▣ *Contact us if having problems accessing/ completing a quiz*

# COLLOQUIUM

- ▣ *Oral discussion-like “exam” in small groups*
- ▣ *I will provide a set of questions (ca. 20) after the last lecture – descriptions of various life situations, examples of people’s behaviour, etc.*
- ▣ **Make sure you can respond to EVERY question using information presented in the lectures**
- ▣ *During the oral exam (in 2 weeks or more), each student will draw ONE question from the provided list and respond to it*
- ▣ **Brief comments and discussion may follow regarding the topic with all students joining in**
- ▣ **Students unable to respond to their question will have to retake the colloquium!!!**

# COLLOQUIUM

- ▣ **Example question:** *Maria wishes to reduce her sugar intake to lose some weight. However, whenever she enters the neighbourhood store she cannot resist the temptation to stop along the candy aisle and buy her favourite candy bar. Finally, when she moves to another neighbourhood, she suddenly finds it much easier to give up the candy bar – the urge she feels when walking along the candy aisle in the new store seems much weaker. Can you explain why this happens?*

# COLLOQUIUM

- ▣ **Example answer:** *Research on classical conditioning has shown that we can associate various clues and environments with emotional and motivational states that follow, so that next time we enter that environment or see that clue our brains remember how we felt and start to anticipate the same reward. This increases our need for that reward – our entire body and mind are automatically getting ready to get it, which makes it hard to resist. But when the environment is new and unfamiliar, although it may provide the same reward, we will not be automatically “reminded” of that reward, so we will not feel the urge to buy that candy bar unless we really feel like having one from the start.*

# COLLOQUIUM

- ▣ **Example discussion questions:** *Have you ever experienced a similar situation? What would you recommend to a friend who wants to stop smoking? Can you think of some examples when going to another store would not help to decrease the urge to buy candy bars? Does this mechanism also apply to negative stimuli and experience? Can you think of some examples? Etc.*



# COLLOQUIUM

- ▣ **Other example:**
- ▣ *Why do so many things in the shops cost 19.90? Why don't sellers make the prices nice and round when it literally makes no difference for the buyers' wallets?*

# Requests & recommendations

- ▣ *If you are having problems with a quiz (technical issues, mistyped questions, etc.), contact me **immediately**.*
- ▣ *The quizzes are short and simple. I recommend you take them right after the lectures if possible. **Do NOT wait with the first attempt until the last minute!!!** Internet connection failures, health issues, etc., will not be accepted as excuses shortly before or after the deadline.*
- ▣ *If you expect problems with completing a quiz in the following weeks for serious reasons (e.g. very limited internet access), let me know **in advance** or as soon as possible.*
- ▣ *You are welcome to contact me if you have any questions regarding the presented materials.*