



Bachelor's courses Faculty of Humanities

VU University Amsterdam - Student- & Onderwijszaken - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2018-2019

BRAIN AND BEHAVIOR

Academic year	2018-2019
Semester	2
Period	4
Day(s)	Mondays and Tuesdays
Time	18.15-21.30
Number of meetings	6 lectures, 4 work groups, 1 exam
Dates of all meetings	4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26 February, 4, 5 March 2019
Location	Vrije Universiteit, De Boelelaan 1105, 1081HV Amsterdam
Room	will be announced later
Exam	tba
Credits	6
Lecturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Richard Godijn, Psychology VU (Coordinator)• Dr. Dirk Heslenfeld, Psychology VU (Brain Imaging)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is concerned with human behavior and its underlying neural structure. The course is relevant to students majoring in biology, business, law, sociology, criminology, movement sciences, artificial intelligence, medicine, health sciences, and other disciplines in which human behavior is important.

Main course elements and concepts

Brain and Behavior is a course that is specifically designed to permit integration of information derived experimentally from many disciplines to gain a better understanding of human behavior and how this behavior is linked to brain functioning. Through this course you will learn how we perceive the world, how we learn and think, how our emotions and motives influence our behavior, and how behavior can be linked to the functioning of our brain. The course consists of eight lectures an excursion and an

exam. Below is outlined the content of the meetings.

- Introduction to Brain and Behavior
- Brain imaging techniques (Heslenfeld): Which tools do we have to measure brain activity?
- Excursion to the brain imaging facilities and EEG lab (Heslenfeld)
- Lesion studies and Perception: How do we perceive the world and what can we learn from brain lesions?
- Attention and Action: What determines what we attend and how we act?
- Memory: How does our memory work and why do we forget things?
- Language: How can we speak and understand one another?
- Decision-making: How do we make decisions and what kind of decision errors do we tend to make?
- Social and Emotional Cognition: What is the neural basis of social interaction and emotion?
- Exam on the lectures, textbook and papers.

Course readings

We will use *The Student's Guide to Cognitive Neuroscience* (3rd edition) by J. Ward for a background into each topic. In addition, a number of research papers will be provided for group presentations and further discussion on the topics.

Working formats and activities

This course is an introduction to the science of experimental psychology - the investigation of how people perceive, attend, learn, remember, and think. Specific topics include: attention, perception, memory, and decision-making. Students are expected to actively participate in discussions. There will be an excursion to the VU imaging facilities. Students will learn how they can apply knowledge of brain and behavior to solve every-day life problems. Applications will be discussed such as driver distraction and multitasking, decision-making in real life situations, eye-witness testimony, and psychological issues in judicial reasoning.

Assessment methods

Students are evaluated by means of an exam and a group presentation