EMOTION PSYCHOLOGY AND AFFECTIVE NEUROSCIENCE (PSMT56)

Date: Study period 4 (Fall 2019)

Location: Department of Psychology, Stockholm University

Organizer: Petri Laukka (petri.laukka@psychology.su.se)

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Important: The course will be offered only if enough students register

Course Description
This is a master and postgraduate course on emotion psychology and the systems-level brain bases of emotion. Each week, students will read and discuss empirical and review articles germane to understanding basic emotional processes and how the brain enables us to perceive motivationally significant stimuli and experience, express, and regulate our emotional responses. Both human and animal literatures will be surveyed. Various research areas are covered, including for example: emotion theories (incl. basic emotions, constructivism, and appraisal theories), emotion expression, emotion regulation, impact of emotion of cognitive processes (e.g., attention, memory, decision making), fear and anxiety, stress, reward, emotion and social behavior, musical and aesthetic emotions, and genetic approaches to emotion. The topics may vary slightly each semester.

Course Objectives.
After completing the course:
- Students should be able to describe, analyze and critically reflect on theoretical and empirical issues in emotion psychology with a focus on some of the central research areas, as well as on individual differences in these research areas.

- Students should be able to describe, analyze, and critically reflect on the biological basis of emotional functions in the research areas covered in the course.

- Students should able to describe, analyze and critically reflect on the development of emotions and their biological basis over the life cycle in the above mentioned research areas.

Readings. Readings and other course materials for this course will be made available on Athena. There is no assigned textbook.

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Examination
To reach the course goals, students need to attend and participate in all seminars. Student tasks related to the seminars are described below.

1. *Contribution to class*. Contribution to class will be worth 70% of your final grade. This part of your grade will be based on the instructor’s assessment of the extent and quality of your participation in class discussions. As part of this, students will generate 3-5 discussion questions prior to each class and send them to the responsible instructor. Students should specify the reading(s) that inspired the question, and give a motivation for why the chosen issue merits discussion. The purpose of these questions is to ensure that you've actually read the papers that have been assigned (it’s hard to discuss something you haven’t read!), and to help raise issues for discussion. Your discussion questions are due by noon the day before the class, and should be turned in whether or not you will be able to attend the class session to which they apply.

2. *Leading the discussion*. Students will each take responsibility for leading the discussion with partners in their respective group (2-3 students) for 2 class periods during the course period, altogether worth 30% of your final grade. Leading the discussion will entail the following: 1) summarizing key points to be gleaned from the articles we’ve read for that class period, 2) Discuss the questions from the members of the group (Note that everyone is responsible for keeping the conversation going but having someone throw new balls in the air once the old ones have fallen to the ground is very helpful, and this is the Discussion Leader’s job.) The discussion leaders do not need to submit their discussion questions to the instructor for that class period.