COURSE DETAIL

THE PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROSCIENCE OF SPONTANEOUS THOUGHT
Country Ireland
Host Institution Trinity College Dublin
Program(s) Trinity College Dublin
UCEAP Course Level Upper Division
UCEAP Subject Area(s) Psychology
UCEAP Course Number 151
UCEAP Course Suffix
UCEAP Official Title THE PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROSCIENCE OF SPONTANEOUS THOUGHT
UCEAP Transcript Title SPONTANEOUS THOUGHT
UCEAP Quarter Units 5.00
UCEAP Semester Units 3.30

Course Description

Mental experience is not always anchored to the present moment; instead, when the constraints of cognitive control are released, the mind is free to transition from one mental state to the next. Spontaneous thought encompasses a range of mental phenomena that are an intrinsic part of the human experience. These include mind-wandering, daydreams, vivid fantasy, inner speech, creative insights and the nightly manifestations of dreaming. There are also negative ramifications of an excessively wandering mind including distractibility in disorders of attention, obsessive thoughts in OCD, uncontrolled ruminations in depression, and disinhibited traumatic imagery in PTSD. This course asks, what are these various unconstrained modes of thought? How are they generated and instantiated in the brain? Why does the mind and brain devote time and energy to generating these spontaneous mental states? Moreover, this course considers how we can guard against unwarranted mind-wandering by reflecting on techniques such as meditation, mindfulness and their philosophical origins, and how altered states of consciousness can shed light on the content and dynamics of spontaneous thought.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
PSU3476V

Host Institution Course Title
THE PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROSCIENCE OF SPONTANEOUS THOUGHT

Host Institution Course Details
https://www.tcd.ie/students/orientation/visiting-exchange/module-directory/Psyc...

Host Institution Campus
Trinity College Dublin

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree
Host Institution Department Psychology
Course Last Reviewed 2024-2025

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