COURSE DETAIL

THE THINKING BODY
Country Netherlands
Host Institution Utrecht University
Program(s) Utrecht University
UCEAP Course Level Upper Division
UCEAP Subject Area(s) Psychology
UCEAP Course Number 125
UCEAP Course Suffix
UCEAP Official Title THE THINKING BODY
UCEAP Transcript Title THE THINKING BODY
UCEAP Quarter Units 6.00
UCEAP Semester Units 4.00

Course Description

This course examines the role of the body in human cognition, through what has come to be known as the 4E (embodied, enactive, embedded and extended) approach to cognition. 4E cognition theories are radically opposed to dualism – the binary division between mind and body, prominent over millennia of Western philosophy – and view the currently dominant computational models of cognition as problematically preserving some aspects of it. From this perspective, the brain is now understood as a part of a broader system: physical, embodied interaction with our environment is a crucial and inseparable part of how thought and meaning making take place. Embodied approaches to cognition see thought, perception, and action as interwoven. They suggest an innovative approach to cognition as a dynamic process, emerging from the interaction between human minded-bodies (or bodyminds) and their lived environments. In addition to embodied and enactive, the mind is thus treated as extended beyond the brain and embedded in relationality to the outside world. Thinking is not something purely abstract that occurs with new 'sense data' entering the closed system of our heads, interpreted there and expressed in our behavior: it is a constant, multi-layered process, keenly involving our bodies and the world we inhabit, that is enacted in our consciousness and perceptual experience. This perspective has paved the way for new intersections and collaborations between cognitive science and the arts and humanities. 4E approaches shed new light on questions of experience and understanding in the arts and humanities, and vice versa: newly emerging collaborations between the arts and humanities and cognitive studies contribute to further understanding of the role of the body in how we experience, make sense and think. Art has long been a field where meaning is communicated, experienced, and explored through tangible images, bodies, objects, environments and movements, where understanding and inspiration are not purely mental and abstract but take place through embodied encounters with the world. Art is, therefore, of immense potential value for furthering our understanding of embodied aspects of the mind. In this course case studies from different forms of art and media as gateways to concretize and better grasp this theoretical perspective through are discussed.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
ME3V21007

Host Institution Course Title
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Host Institution Course Details
https://osiris-student.uu.nl/onderwijscatalogus/extern/cursussen

Host Institution Campus
Utrecht University

Host Institution Faculty
Humanities

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

Course Last Reviewed
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