

FTUC01, Flaws in Human Thinking: Cognitive and Social Bias, 7.5 credits

Brister i det mänskliga tänkandet: Kognitiv och social bias, 7,5 högskolepoäng
First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Pro Dean of First and Second Cycle Studies at The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology on 2025-11-14 (U 2025/177). The syllabus comes into effect 2026-01-01 and is valid from the autumn semester 2026.

General information

The course is compulsory within the Bachelor's Programme in Theoretical Philosophy: Critical Investigator.

The course is also offered as a freestanding course and can normally be included in a first or second-cycle degree.

Language of instruction: Swedish

<i>Main field of study</i>	<i>Specialisation</i>
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Theoretical Philosophy with specialization in G1N, First cycle, has only upper-Critical Investigation Method	secondary level entry requirements
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Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to

Knowledge and understanding

- explain how different forms of bias and error can be explained in terms of cognitive and social psychological theories,
- explain the key concepts of the theories and, superficially, the origins and development of the theories,

Competence and skills

- recognise common errors in reasoning and investigative texts,
- identify situations in which biases are commonly manifested and use strategies to avoid falling prey to them,

Judgement and approach

- generalise from how cognitive and social bias is manifested in an investigative situation to how the same mechanisms can affect everyday interaction and communication,
- explain why the different forms of bias constitute errors of judgement and how they deviate from norms of rationality, but at the same time be able to critically evaluate how these tendencies are used to explain human thinking.

Course content

The course aims to provide a theoretical and practical understanding of deficiencies in human thinking in the areas of probability judgements, valuations, information acquisition and integration, metacognitive judgements and implicit bias. During the course, the student will be given several smaller evaluation tasks and through these will gain a concrete understanding of their own and others' susceptibility to different types of bias and error. Interspersed with the assessment tasks and associated seminars, the course instructor will present the various cognitive and social explanations available for our knowledge processing abilities and how the tendencies that lead us to error and bias are also favourable to us. Students will also have the opportunity to discuss strategies to counteract these tendencies in situations where they should be avoided. In particular, the course focuses on how to better avoid various possible errors in your work as an investigator.

Course design

Teaching consists of lectures and three compulsory seminars.

If, due to circumstances beyond their control, such as accidents, sudden illness or similar, students are unable to carry out a compulsory component, the University is responsible for ensuring that an equivalent alternative or another time for the component is offered. This also applies to students who are carrying out an assignment as an elected student representative.

Assessment

The course is examined through three evaluation assignments (2.5 credits) and an invigilated exam (5 credits).

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction

The evaluation assignments are graded Fail or Pass. The exam can be graded Fail, Pass or Pass with Distinction. A Pass grade for the course requires at least a Pass in all parts of the assessment. For the grade of Pass with Distinction, students must also have been awarded this grade on the invigilated exam.

Entry requirements

General requirements

Further information

- The course is offered at the Department of Philosophy, Lund University.
- The credits allocated for course content that in whole or in part is commensurate with another course can only be credited once for a degree.
- For further details, see the current registration and information material.