**Course Title:** Theory of Mind: Psychology of Social Insights  
**Course Code:** PSYC 3008 CIEE  
**Programs offering course:** Online Summer  
**Language of instruction:** English  
**U.S. Semester Credits:** 3  
**Contact Hours:** 45  
**Term:** Summer 2020

### Course Description

The course will examine the psychological construct of the Theory of Mind. It will primarily focus on the construction of one’s thinking, including remembering, problem solving, and decision-making, from early childhood via adolescence through adulthood. Students will learn about the developmental stages of the Theory-of-Mind (ToM) acquisition, including social perception, thinking and reflection, construction of critical thought and about the current theories of the ToM acquisition. As the development of ToM lies inherently in an interaction between genetic and learned factors, the effect of social, communal and cultural influences will frequently resurface.

### Learning Objectives

Upon the completion of the course, students

- will demonstrate their insights into what constitutes one’s understanding of the social world around us;
- will acquire a basis for critical thinking and learn to form new perspectives to approach the problematic through informal environment facilitating the share of views and ideas;
- will develop reading-comprehension skills adequate for scholarly literature in the field through reading texts representing different research approaches and methodologies, and an ability to engage in an academic dialogue.

### Course Prerequisites

Although there are no prerequisites to the course, background in developmental science, psychology or language acquisition would be definite assets.

### Methods of Instruction

The course will be taught online consisting of informal lectures and seminars. The seminars will involve class debates, presentations and workshops on selected topics such as empathy, imitation, self-regulation, evolution and development of ToM, and cognitive and social abilities of typical and atypical populations. At least one guest teacher will be invited to class to add value to the realisation of the objectives of this course.
**Assessment and Final Grade**

1. Class Presentation 25%
2. Reflection Journal 25%
3. Quizzes 10%
4. Final Academic Essay 20%
5. Class Participation 20%

**Course Requirements**

**Class Presentation**
Each student is required to present and lead a discussion on one of the course themes of their own choice relating to the topic of the course and the students’ interests. Upon an agreement with the instructor, the student will present their topic on powerpoint or prezi to the class for about 10-20 minutes long during class 2.3. It will be followed by a 500-word critical analysis of each person’s work by another student.

Time on Task = 20hrs

**Reflection Journal**
A total of five reflection entries will be required from each student, each about 500-words long. The papers should reflect on the course topics, readings, discussions, etc. pertaining to the content of the class and should examine a theme beyond the reading and/or class discussion. The choice of the readings or themes is up to each student, although the instructor is ready to consult the topics with students. Intellectual queries are welcome but a reflection based on one’s own application of the knowledge gained on one’s personal experience will suffice.

Time on Task = 12hrs

**Quizzes**
Two short quizzes will test the students’ competence on concepts and constructs operationalized in class and the course readings.

Time on Task = 3hrs

**Final Academic Paper**
The final course work consists of writing a research paper in which an analysis of the constituent parts and their subsequent synthesis will be assessed. One of three topics suggested by the instructor will be graded as to whether the thesis of the paper is well defended and counterarguments are dealt with equally (Grade A), whether the thesis is supported sufficiently (Grade B), whether the thesis is clearly constructed without sufficient arguments presented for either the arguments or counter-arguments to the thesis (Grade C), or whether the paper only marginally touches on the theme of the course and at least some part of an argument is present
(Grade D). A total of 2000-2500 words with an adequate list of scholarly references will be required.

**Time on Task = 25hrs**

**Class Participation**

Participation is defined as meaningful contribution in the digital classroom, using the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to prepare in advance of each recorded session and regularly engage with the resources, discussions, reflective assignments, and all other online learning activities. Students are required to demonstrate engagement with course materials, for example, through insightful, constructive comments and by using subject-appropriate terminology in: online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after viewing the presentations of others), interaction with guest speakers, where available, and submissions related to other outside-of-class activities. Students should ensure that submitted commentary balances opinions, general impressions, and specific and thoughtful criticisms or contributions. Grades are based on the content, depth, and quality of the aforementioned types of meaningful contributions as measured per the Participation grading rubric in Canvas.

Students are also expected to use the Canvas inbox for communicating any clarifying questions they may want to ask about assessments or other course requirements.

**Technology Requirements**

Participation requires access to a computer with microphone (a headset and microphone are preferred over built-in sound devices) and webcam; a stable and strong internet connection; and a quiet and well-lit environment.

**Attendance Expectations:** In an asynchronous online learning format, attendance takes the form of active student engagement:

- in instructional activities, course content, course tools
- with the course instructor, other students, and
- by timely completion of all assessments.

“Attendance” is more than just logging into the course on Canvas. Students must establish a record of participation in academically related activities in order to comply with this requirement.

Academically related activities include, but are not limited to:

- submitting an academic assignment;
- taking an exam or quiz;
- attending a study group that is assigned by the instructor;
participating in an online discussion about academic matters, designed by the instructor; or

initiating contact in Canvas with the instructor to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

Academically related activities do NOT include activities where a student may be present, but not academically engaged, such as:

- logging into an online class without active participation
- contributing to or engaging in the CIEE Orientation or Community Course(s)

**First Week of Class:** Online courses officially commence on the first day of the term. Students must demonstrate engagement in class by no later than day 5 of the term, or risk being administratively dropped from the course with no opportunity to re-enroll. Students administratively dropped from the course for failure to engage will be considered withdrawn from the program and subject to CIEE financial withdrawal policies and fees.

**Duration of Course:** Continued, regular class engagement is required throughout the scheduled duration of the course, and disengagement will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for completing courses online, consistent failure to engage in the course on a weekly basis (defined as failing to engage for two or more weeks of online learning) will result in a formal written warning from the CIEE Center Director. CIEE instructors / staff will monitor student engagement on a weekly basis.

The weekly schedule below outlines due dates for asynchronous learning activities for this course.

_N.B. Please note the class schedule is subject to change if opportunities arise to enhance the curriculum._

**Daily Schedule (This is subject to change)**

Week 1
Class 1:1

*Course introduction*
Course content, course requirements introduced
Key concepts defined, presentation sign-up
*Journal 1*-Students will write and submit a reflective journal on the question, what is ToM? (submit journal 2 days after Class 1:1)

Time on task = 2 hour
Class 1:2  

**Psychological basis of ToM research**  
*Research methodologies and terminology overview*  
*Types of research*  
*Students will engage in an online discussion on the strengths and weaknesses in ToM research*  
**Reading:**  
Pillai et al. 2012.

Time on task = 2 hours

Class 1:3  

**Developmental milestones**  
*Empirical research*  
**Reading:**  
Wellman & Liu 2004, 523–541.

Quiz 1

Time on task =3 hours

Week 2  

Class 2:1  

**Infancy**  
*Early precursors of ToM abilities*  
*Film viewing*  
**Reading:**  
Brooks & Meltzoff 2015, 67-78

Journal 2  
Time on task = 2 hours

Class 2:2  

**Preschool and school years**  
*Early school years*  
*Later school years*  
**Reading:**  

Time on task =2.5 hours

Class 2:3  

Class Presentations on selected topics by students

Time on task=3 hours

Week 3
Class 3:1  
Guest Speaker:  
**Role of language in ToM acquisition**  
*Early linguistic competence and ToM*  
*Pragmatic competence and ToM*

**Readings:**  
Filippova & Astington 2008.  
*Journal 3*

Time on Task =3hours

Class 3:2  
**Role of executive functions in ToM acquisition**  
*Theories of ToM development*  
*Brain regions involved in ToM processing*

**Reading:**  
Carlson et al. 2015, 186-197.  
Quiz 2

Time on Task =2hours

Class 3:3  
**Adolescence**  
*Critical thinking and writing*  
*Theories of moral development*  
*Journal 4*

**Reading:**  
Hughes et al. 2015, 149-153

Time on Task =2hours

Week 4

Class 4:1  
**Adulthood**  
*ToM and aging*  
*Journal 5*

**Reading:**  
Dumontheil et al. 2010, 331-338.

Time on Task =2hours
Social insight in atypical development  
Autism, Schizophrenia, Deafness

Reading:
Peterson et al. 2012, 469-485.

Time on Task =2hours

Class 4:3  
Final Project-Students work on their final project to submit at a date to be determined by course instructor.

Course Materials

Course readings


Further scholarly literature


