



PS/NS363 ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY: SOCIAL COGNITION AND CLINICAL DISORDERS

IES Abroad SALAMANCA

DESCRIPTION:

Human beings are possibly the most social of animals. We work together in organized way, we gather for meals, we work towards common goals as well as compete with one another. At the same time, we differ in the ways in which we infer emotions, thoughts and actions of others, in how we connect emotionally to others, empathize, establish and maintain social networks or follow social norms. This heterogeneity in sociability is natural but can pose a challenge when it becomes abnormal. In this course students will have the opportunity to study the novel and emerging area of research in social cognition in intact functioning as well as in different disorders where social cognition is impaired such as schizophrenia, autism, bi-polar disorder, paranoia, substance abuse etc. We will deepen our understanding of specific psychological processes involved in core facets of social behavior in these disorders such as social and emotional information processing, theory of mind, attributional style, and social perception. Healthy social functioning relies on effective processing of social information. We will, therefore, also look at how social cognitive interventions target these core facets of social behavior to improve social functioning and well-being of individuals. Much of this course is hands-on. We will learn to apply different tools that measure social cognition using different clinical cases. We will also learn about interactive social neuroscience by observing research with cutting-edge neuroimaging equipment. *The topics and course related activities of this class are in line with the Proyecto Salamanca Sensible and Goal 3 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in that they aim at studying the promotion of well-being and healthy lives.*

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: One semester of coursework in Psychology, related discipline or instructor approval.

ADDITIONAL COST: none

OFFICE HOURS:

Office hours are on Monday 10-11 (online) and Tuesday 16:00 (in-person, in IES Faculty room).

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

A combination of the following methods will be used during classes: Lectures, experiential learning and discussion in seminar format. Most of the materials used in class, as well as any other relevant materials, will be available for students on the IES Abroad Salamanca Moodle platform (<https://moodle.iesabroad.org>). Most activities are *paper free, in line with the Climate Action Goal (13) and the Proyecto Salamanca Sensible*. Students' work will be evaluated using different rubrics for different assignments. The rubrics will be made available on Moodle.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course participation - 10%
- Midterm Exam - 20%
- Final Exam - 20%
- Written Work: Research Proposal Paper - 20%
- Oral Poster Presentation - 10%



- Journal -10%
- Course-Related Trips & Activities: brief video summarizing the course-related trip/activity -10%

Course Participation

Attendance and active participation in class are expected. The classes are very participative in nature, thus the students will be expected to participate in structured and semi-structured debates. For example, they will be asked to prepare in small groups short presentations on different topics. The course participation will be evaluated through Moodle rubrics.

Midterm Exam

For the exam, students will be asked to provide a written answer on one essay question related to the contents of the class (students will choose between 3). The duration of the exam will be 1 hour.

Final Exam

For the exam, students will be asked to provide a written answer on one essay question related to the contents of the class (students will choose between 3). The duration of the exam will be 1 hour.

Research Proposal Paper

Students will choose a topic themselves with the supervision of the professor. The format of written work will be a research proposal or intervention proposal (therapy) and will include the following: introduction, proposed method, expected results/impact and discussion/conclusion sections. It must be written in APA style (7th edition) and submitted online with 2,000-3,000 words length (8-10 pages approximately). The work will be submitted through Moodle (paper free).

Oral Poster Presentation

Each student will prepare and present a poster on their research proposal. They will be given a template and provided with practical advice on how to create a poster. The poster will be similar to the ones typically presented in psychology conferences where students will be asked to explain the contents of their research proposal to their fellow students. They will be required to include sections such as: title, author, affiliation, introduction, aim, methods, expected results/conclusions (with critical evaluation of presented work), and references. The poster will be submitted through Moodle (paper free) and presented in class on the screen.

Journal

Students will provide a written personal reflection of how they found the course content and activities relevant to their lives. They will back these reflections up with empirical evidence, (length: 500 words, frequency: due every two weeks). The reflection will typically include any thoughts the students might have had, ideas or interests regarding class content. A critical reflection on research is necessary. The work will be submitted through Moodle (paper free) and will not be shared in the class discussions.

Course-Related Trips & Activities

1. A guided visit to InFoAutismo at the University of Salamanca (the Department of Education)- an Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) multidisciplinary diagnosis and research center. The aim of this trip is to learn what the different steps in autism diagnosis are. A key aspect of the trip is to learn how social cognition is assessed by both psychometric tools, semi-structured interviews and through neuroimaging equipment. You will be able to visit the cutting-edge functional Near Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS) laboratory and learn how fNIRS works and how it is used in autism research. The use of fNIRS in social cognition will be emphasized.

2. **Guest Speaker from InFoAutismo** (a talk delivered at InFoAutismo). The talk is a follow-up to the visit where a professional will explain the different challenges that they face during the diagnostic process (e.g., comorbidity of autism with mental health disorders, variability of symptoms intensity and manifestation etc.).

Before the course-related activity, student will carry out in-class preparation related to understanding the core autism symptoms as stated by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders- 5th edition (DSM-V). They will also be encouraged to critically evaluate the DSM-V status by stating its strong and weak points.

During the visit, the students will participate in role play activities which aim to practice the application of different autism evaluation tools.

After the course-related activity and the guest speaker talk, you will be asked to record a video with a PowerPoint presentation in form of *Pechakucha*. The word *PechaKucha* is Japanese for “chit chat.” It is a very brief slide show where students have to present a given topic in very restricted space of time using primarily images and very little words. The *Pechakucha* will include:

- a) An outline of the steps in autism diagnosis (in adult OR child).
- b) A brief explanation of tools that are used in the diagnostic process.
- c) An outline of at least one challenge that professionals face when assessing social cognition.

The video will be submitted through Moodle.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Deepen the understanding of specific psychological processes involved in core facets of social behavior in intact functioning as well as in different disorders of interests.
- Identify and explain the manifestation of social cognition deficits in different disorders.
- Understand the recent findings in psychological, neural and genetic research into disorders which show social cognition impairments.
- Critically discuss the current therapies which aim to improve social cognition in disorders of interest.
- Understand the role of social support in improving social cognition in different disorders.
- Learn new ways of communicating experiences and research results using standard (poster) and novel (*Pechakucha*) forms of visual presentation.

IES ABROAD GLOBAL PILLARS – UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This course is framed within the **IES Abroad Global Pillars** which seek to bring the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) closer to IES Abroad students (Proyecto Salamanca Sensible).

NOTE: All topics and assignments relating to the Global Pillars and UN SDGs, will be identified in green font throughout the syllabus.

Overview:

The aim of this course is directly related to Sustainable Development Goal 3 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this is, to “ensure healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages”. More specifically, students will study the scientific advances in diagnosis and therapy that are directly linked to promoting individuals’ well-being. Also, using paper free formats addresses Sustainable Development Goal 13.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

As a member of our academic community, you are expected to be present and on time to class every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For this reason, attendance is required for all IES Abroad Salamanca classes, including course-related trips and activities. Each student will be allowed a number of unexcused absences for each course which will depend on the type of course (see chart below). For each unexcused absence beyond these numbers there will be a reduction of one third of a letter grade in the final grade (i.e., A to an A-). Students who are late to class on a regular basis may also receive a reduction in their final grade. Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled if the absence is excused by the Academic staff. Absences will only be excused for documented medical issues, family emergencies, specific religious observances or other extenuating circumstances. Students need to request approval for excused absences within ONE WEEK of the absence by sending all documentation to the Academic Coordinator (mtabarez@iesabroad.org). No approvals will be granted after the one-week deadline.

IES Abroad Salamanca Course	Maximum Number of Absences
Spanish Language – Orientation (15 contact hrs)	1 block
Spanish Language – Semester (60-90 contact hrs)	3
Spanish Language & Area Courses (45 contact hrs)	2
Workshops & Seminars (15-20 contact hrs)	1

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments and Readings
Week 1	About Social Cognition Session 1: The concept of Social Cognition: the processes involved in typical and atypical populations.	McDonald and Kumfor (2022). Introduction to Social Cognition, pp. 1-34
	Session 2. Social cognition assessment in children and adults: learning to use social cognition tools.	- Pineda-Alhucema, W. & Jiménez-Figueroa, G. (2021). Some considerations for social cognition assessment in children. <i>Infant and child Development</i> 31; e22993. - Kelly, M., McDonald, S., Chow, J. (2022) Assessing Social Cognition in adults in Clinical disorders of Social Cognition. In <i>Clinical Disorders of Social Cognition</i> (pp. 307-326).
Week 2	Session 3. Course-Related Activity to InFoAutismo 1.	Journal due on Monday Before the visit task: students will participate in an activity that aims at critically evaluating the DSM-V and its criteria for autism. During the visit task: students will practice on each other the application of selected parts of tests that are typically used in assessing social functioning and communication.
	Session 4. Course-Related Activity to InFoAutismo 2.	
Week 3	Session 5. Guest Speaker from InFoAutismo (delivered at InFoAutismo).	

		After visit and talk task: students will prepare a 3-minute long video using a fun Pechakucha presentation format in order to summarize their experience of InfoAutismo visit.
	Neural basis of social cognition Session 6. Neuroimaging of social cognition: the emergence of interactive social neuroscience.	• Rolison, M. J., Naples, A. J., & McPartland, J. C. (2015). Interactive social neuroscience to study autism spectrum disorder. <i>The Yale journal of biology and medicine</i>, 88(1), 17–24. • Minagawa, Y., Xu, M. and Morimoto, S. (2018), Toward Interactive Social Neuroscience: Neuroimaging Real-World Interactions in Various Populations. <i>Jpn Psychol Res</i>, 60: 196-224. https://doi.org/10.1111/jpr.12207
Week 4	Social Cognition Development Session 7. Early brain impairments and development of social competence.	Journal due on Monday • On, Z. X., Ryan, N. P., Konjarski, M., Catroppa, C., & Stargatt, R. (2022). Social Cognition in Paediatric Traumatic Brain Injury: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. <i>Neuropsychology review</i>, 32(1), 127–148. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11065-021-09488-2
	Session 8. Social cognition in adults with acquired brain injury.	• Abbott, J.D., Cumming, G., Fidler, F. & Lindell, A.K. (2013) The perception of positive and negative facial expressions in unilateral brain-damaged patients: A meta-analysis, <i>Laterality</i>, 18:4, 437-459, DOI: 10.1080/1357650X.2012.703206
Week 5	Social functioning in psychiatric disorders. Session 9. Social functioning in mood disorder.	• Weightman, M. J., Knight, M. J., & Baune, B. T. (2019). A systematic review of the impact of social cognitive deficits on psychosocial functioning in major depressive disorder and opportunities for therapeutic intervention. <i>Psychiatry research</i>, 274, 195-212.
	Session 10. Social cognitive deficit in neurodegenerative disorders.	• Bora, E., Velakoulis, D., & Walterfang, M. (2016). Social cognition in Huntington's disease: A meta-analysis. <i>Behavioural Brain Research</i> <i>SeeTestContent1</i>, 297, 131-140. • Wong, S., & Kumfor, F. (2021). Social cognition in dementia syndromes. In <i>Clinical Disorders of Social Cognition</i> (pp. 204-238). Routledge.
Week 6	Session 11. Tutorial Sessions	Journal due on Monday • Study for mid-term exam

	Session 12. Mid-term exam	Mid-term exam
Week 7	Social functioning in psychiatric disorders: Neurodevelopmental disorders. Session 13. Part 1: Social cognition: the case of autism and William syndrome, ADHD etc.	Bora, E., & Pantelis, C. (2016). Meta-analysis of social cognition in attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): comparison with healthy controls and autistic spectrum disorder. <i>Psychological medicine</i>, 46(4), 699–716. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291715002573
	Session 14. Part 2: Social cognition: the case of autism and William syndrome, ADHD etc.	van der Fluit F, Gaffrey MS, Klein-Tasman BP. Social Cognition in Williams Syndrome: Relations between Performance on the Social Attribution Task and Cognitive and Behavioral Characteristics. <i>Front Psychol</i>. 2012 Jun 25;3:197. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2012.00197. PMID: 22737137; PMCID: PMC3382409.
Week 8	Social functioning in psychiatric disorders: Schizotypy Session 15. Schizophrenia	Journal due on Monday Cowan, T., Le, T. P., & Cohen, A. S. (2019). Social cognition and schizotypy. In <i>Social cognition in psychosis</i> (pp. 71-88). Academic Press. How to prepare a research proposal: workshop.
	Session 16. Substance abuse and social cognition in psychosis.	Lannoy, S., Gilles, F., Benzerouk, F., Henry, A., Oker, A., Raucher-Chéné, D., ... & Gierski, F. (2020). Disentangling the role of social cognition processes at early steps of alcohol abuse: The influence of affective theory of mind. <i>Addictive behaviors</i>, 102, 106187.
Week 9	Social Cognitive interventions Session 17. Cognitive interventions: best evidence- based practice.	Fiszdone, J.M., Davidson, C.A. (2019). Social cognition interventions. In <i>Social cognition in psychosis</i> (pp. 269-292-88). Academic Press.
	Session 18. Cognitive interventions by clinical case.	Spikman, J.M., Westerhof-Evers, & Cassel, A. (2019). Remediating impairments in social cognition. In <i>Social cognition in psychosis</i> (pp. 327-349).
Week 10	Session 19. Visual presentation workshop: How to prepare a poster.	Journal due on Monday Hands on activity where students elaborate a poster using PowerPoint.

	Session 20. Visual presentation: How to make a <i>pechakucha</i> .	Hands on activity where students elaborate a <i>pechakucha</i> presentation using PowerPoint. Deadline for submitting write up of Research Proposal paper.
Week 11	Session 21. Social Cognition: Course recap, and future research. Improving ecological validity of research.	Hermans, K., Achterhof, R., Myin-Germeys, I., Kasanova, Z., Kirtley, O., & Schneider, M. (2019). Improving ecological validity in research on social cognition. In <i>Social cognition in psychosis</i> (pp. 249-268). Academic Press.
	Session 22. Research proposal poster session.	Poster presentation.
Week 12	Session 23. Research poster presentations	Journal due on Monday Poster presentations Deadline for submitting "Course related trip video summary"
	Session 24. Research poster presentations	Poster presentations
Week 13	Session 24. Final exam	Final exam

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS/ACTIVITIES:

- See descriptions under *Required Work and Form of Assessment*.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Abbott, J.D., Cumming, G., Fidler, F. & Lindell, A.K. (2013) The perception of positive and negative facial expressions in unilateral brain-damaged patients: A meta-analysis, *Laterality*, 18:4, 437-459, DOI: [10.1080/1357650X.2012.703206](https://doi.org/10.1080/1357650X.2012.703206)
- Bora, E., Velakoulis, D., & Walterfang, M. (2016). Social cognition in Huntington's disease: A meta-analysis. *Behavioural Brain Research* *311*, 131-140.
- Bora, E., & Pantelis, C. (2016). Meta-analysis of social cognition in attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): comparison with healthy controls and autistic spectrum disorder. *Psychological medicine*, 46(4), 699–716. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291715002573>
- Cowan, T., Le, T. P., & Cohen, A. S. (2019). Social cognition and schizotypy. In *Social cognition in psychosis* (pp. 71-88). Academic Press.

- Fiszdone, J.M., Davidson, C.A. (2019). Social cognition interventions. In *Social cognition in psychosis* (pp. 269-292-88). Academic Press.
- Hermans, K., Achterhof, R., Myin-Germeys, I., Kasanova, Z., Kirtley, O., & Schneider, M. (2019). Improving ecological validity in research on social cognition. In *Social cognition in psychosis* (pp. 249-268). Academic Press.
- Kelly, M., McDonald, S., Chow, J. (2022) Assessing Social Cognition in adults in Clinical disorders of Social Cognition. pp. 307-326. Interactive social neuroscience to study autism spectrum disorder. *The Yale journal of biology and medicine*, 88(1), 17–24.
- Lannoy, S., Gilles, F., Benzerouk, F., Henry, A., Oker, A., Raucher-Chéné, D., ... & Gierski, F. (2020). Disentangling the role of social cognition processes at early steps of alcohol abuse: The influence of affective theory of mind. *Addictive behaviors*, 102, 106187.
- McDonald and Kumfor (2022). Introduction to Social Cognition, pp. 1-34.
- Minagawa, Y., Xu, M. and Morimoto, S. (2018), Toward Interactive Social Neuroscience: Neuroimaging Real-World Interactions in Various Populations. *Jpn Psychol Res*, 60: 196-224. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpr.12207>
- On, Z. X., Ryan, N. P., Konjarski, M., Catroppa, C., & Stargatt, R. (2022). Social Cognition in Paediatric Traumatic Brain Injury: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *Neuropsychology review*, 32(1), 127–148. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11065-021-09488-2>
- Pineda-Alhucema, W. & Jiménez-Figueroa, G. (2021). Some considerations for social cognition assessment in children. *Infant and child Development* 31; e22993.
- Spikman, J.M., Westerhof-Evers, & Cassel, A. (2019). Remediating impairments in social cognition. In *Social cognition in psychosis* (pp. 327-349).
- Weightman, M. J., Knight, M. J., & Baune, B. T. (2019). A systematic review of the impact of social cognitive deficits on psychosocial functioning in major depressive disorder and opportunities for therapeutic intervention. *Psychiatry research*, 274, 195-212.
- Wong, S., & Kumfor, F. (2021). Social cognition in dementia syndromes. In *Clinical Disorders of Social Cognition* (pp. 204-238). Routledge.
- van der Fluit F, Gaffrey MS, Klein-Tasman BP. Social Cognition in Williams Syndrome: Relations between Performance on the Social Attribution Task and Cognitive and Behavioral Characteristics. *Front Psychol*. 2012 Jun 25;3:197. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2012.00197. PMID: 22737137; PMCID: PMC3382409.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Allain, P., Togher, L., & Azouvi, P. (2019). Social cognition and traumatic brain injury: Current knowledge. *Brain Injury*, 33(1), 1-3.
- Bora, E., & Yener, G. G. (2017). Meta-analysis of social cognition in mild cognitive impairment. *Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry and Neurology*, 30(4), 206-213.

- Bora, E., & Zorlu, N. (2017). Social cognition in alcohol use disorder: a meta-analysis. *Addiction*, 112(1), 40-48.
- Bora, E., & Meletti, S. (2016). Social cognition in temporal lobe epilepsy: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Epilepsy & Behavior*, 60, 50-57.
- neuropsychiatric patients: A meta-analysis. *Brain Impairment*, 18(1), 138-173.
- Haddon, M. (2014). *The curious incident of the dog in the night-time*. Red Fox.
- Roelofs, R., Wingbermühle, E., Egger, J., & Kessels, R. (2017). Social Cognitive Interventions in Neuropsychiatric Patients: A Meta-Analysis. *Brain Impairment*, 18(1), 138-173. doi:10.1017/BrImp.2016.31
- Sacks, Oliver, 1933-2015. *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales*. New York: Summit Books, 1985.
- Weightman, M. J., Air, T. M., & Baune, B. T. (2014). A review of the role of social cognition in major depressive disorder. *Frontiers in psychiatry*, 5, 179.