

Psychology: The Science of Psychedelics (PSYT40)



LUND UNIVERSITY

Course : Psychology: The Science of Psychedelics, Online, Canvas/Zoom, 5hp, 75%. Requirements Bachelor psychology, or student at psychology program. Lectures in English. 2nd Sep to 6th Oct, 2024

Course description: The course provides an academic general education introduction to the science of psychedelics. In particular, the neuroscience behind the influence of various psychedelic substances on consciousness, experiences, neurotransmitters and brain activity is part of the course. The course also covers approaches to psychedelic assisted therapy and its outcomes, as well as societal and ethical aspects of use. Working in public health, in care, with social work or police work, have a potential interest in educating yourself about psychedelics as awareness and use in society increases. (<https://www.lu.se/lubas/i-uoh-lu-PSYT40>)

Course content:

- The science of psychedelics
- Psychedelic states of consciousness, emotions, cognition and behavior
- The neuroscience behind psychedelic substances
- Research findings on psychedelic use and therapy.
- Psychedelics' ability to influence therapeutic outcomes
- Approaches to psychedelic assisted therapy and outcomes
- Risks, possibilities, and influence of psychedelic substances
- Ethical aspects surrounding the use of psychedelics

Course goals:

Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate basic knowledge of the science of psychedelics•
- Show basic knowledge in empirical and theory about how psychedelic substances affect states of consciousness, emotions, cognition and behaviour
- Show basic knowledge of psychedelics' ability to influence therapeutic outcome
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of the neuroscience behind psychedelics substances

Skills and abilities

- Show ability to discuss approaches to psychedelic assisted psychotherapy and outcome
- Demonstrate ability to discuss risks, opportunities and impact of psychedelics substances on the brain and cognition

Evaluation and approach

- Demonstrate ability to assess ethical aspects surrounding the use of psychedelia in research, psychotherapy, professional contexts, and in society
- Be able to critically evaluate research results regarding psychological aspects linked to the use of psychedelic substances
- Be able to critically evaluate anecdotal accounts of psychological aspects linked to the use of psychedelic substances

Course structure:

Week 36-37: Science of Psychedelics

Week 38: Psychedelic Neuroscience

Week 39: Psychedelic Therapy

Week 40: Exam week (portfolio assembly)



Course Schedule:

Date	Time	Teacher	Topic / Assignment
Week 1: Psychology of Psychedelics			
Mon 2 nd Sep	18-19	Petri	Course introduction: Requirements and Materials
			Watch TV4-interview https://www.tv4.se/artikel/5Xpa1UZByCztgnJS0APNV/ny-forskning-psykedeliska-droger-kan-oeka-folkhaelsan
Tue 3 rd Sep			Watch TED-talk https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81-v8ePXPd4 Course book Chap. 1, 2, 3, 8 (perspectives, modern, personality)
Wed 4 th Sep	18-20	Petri	Talk: Psychology of Psychedelics
Thurs 5 th Sep	17-19	Student Groups	Seminar: Discuss TED-talk and introductory week. Submit protocol
Sun 8 th Sep	23:59		Exam pt.1 Knowledge paper
Week 2: Science of Psychedelics			
Mon 9 th Sep	18-20	Sverker	Talk: Science of Psychedelics
Wed 10 th Sep			Watch Q&A M.Johnson (3h!) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICj8p5jPd3Y&t Course book Chap. 4, 6 (risks, experiences)
Thurs 12 th Sep	17-19	Student Groups	Seminar: Discuss Q&A with M.Johnson. Submit protocol
Sun 15 th Sep	23:59		Exam pt.2 Discussion paper
Week 3: Psychedelic Neuroscience			
Mon 16 th Sep	18-20	Sverker	Talk: Science of Psychedelics II
Wed 18 th Sep			Watch panel debate Stockholm 2024 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91n_uqnS9o0 Course book Chap. 9, 10 (take-home & society)
Thurs 19 th Sep	17-19	Student Groups	Seminar: Discuss panel debate and course material. Submit protocol

Sun 22 nd Sep	23:59		Exam pt.3 Personal reflection paper	
Week 4: Psychedelic Therapy				
Mon 23 rd Sep	18-20	Emma	Talk: Psychedelic Neuroscience/Pharmacology	
Tue 24 th Sep	18-20	David	Talk: Psychedelic Therapy	
Wed 25 th Sep			Read Kajonius, P., Sjöström, D., & Claesdotter-Knutsson, E. (in press). Reproducing the Psychedelic Experience: “One of the 5 Most Meaningful Experiences in Life”? Course book Chap. 5, 7 (Ego-resolution & brain and psychedelika)	
Thurs 26 th Sep	17-19	Student Groups	Seminar: Discuss Kajonius, Sjöström, Claesdotter paper. Submit protocol	
Sun 29 th Sep	23:59		Exam pt.4 Societal reflection paper	
Week 5: Exam week				
Thurs Oct	3 rd 16:00	Exam portfolio (pt1, pt2, pt3, pt4)	Finish, extend, rewrite, assemble, and submit portfolio	Course book Chap 1-10 + course papers

- Lectures are held on Canvas Zoom-link
- Seminars are held by students on Zoom-links
- All assignments submitted via Canvas

Course examination, and grades: The course is examined with a written portfolio exam, consisting of weekly assignments, such as mini-essays. Seminars require that students are active in preparing and reading course literature, contributing to discussions, and partaking in submitting the seminar protocol. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the course leader in case of absence. The course portfolio is examined and graded formally with honors (VG), pass (G), or fail (U).

Course Literature:

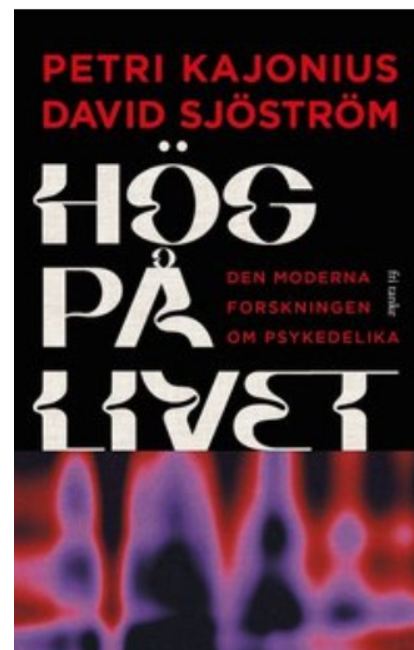
The main coursebook is the new “Hög på Livet! Den moderna forskningen om psykedelika.” (Kajonius & Sjöström, 2024. Fri Tanke Förlag, Stockholm). An English translation of this book will be provided on demand from Petri Kajonius <petri.kajonius@psy.lu.se>

Table of Contents

Prolog

Quick facts about psychedelics

1. New perspectives on psychedelics (PK)
2. The modern research on psychology. (PC)
3. One of the five greatest experiences in life?
4. What is a psychedelic experience? (SS)
5. Ego Dissolution (ECK)
6. Concerns and risks with psychedelics?
7. The Brain and Psychedelics (ECK)
8. Personality and change (PK)
9. Lessons learned from research (SS)
10. Society in change (SS)



The following papers are reading materials for assignments and portfolio exam:

Davis, A. K., Clifton, J. M., Weaver, E. G., Hurwitz, E. S., Johnson, M. W., & Griffiths, R. R. (2020). Survey of entity encounter experiences occasioned by inhaled N, N- dimethyltryptamine: Phenomenology, interpretation, and enduring effects. *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, 34(9), 1008-1020.

Johnson, M. W., Hendricks, P. S., Barrett, F. S., & Griffiths, R. R. (2019). Classic psychedelics: An integrative review of epidemiology, therapeutics, mystical experience, and brain network function. *Pharmacology & therapeutics*, 197, 83-102.

Kajonius, P., Sjöström, D., & Claesdotter-Knutsson, E. (in press). Reproducing the Psychedelic Experience: “One of the 5 Most Meaningful Experiences in Life”?

Nutt, D. and Carhart-Harris (2021). The Current Status of Psychedelics in Psychiatry. *JAMA Psychiatry*.

Nutt, D. J., King, L. A., & Phillips, L. D. (2010). Drug harms in the UK: a multicriteria decision analysis. *The Lancet*, 376(9752), 1558-1565.

Sjöström, D. K., Claesdotter-Knutsson, E., & Kajonius, P. J. (2024). Personality traits explain the relationship between psychedelic use and less depression in a comparative study. *Scientific Reports*, 14(1), 10195.

Yaden DB, Earp BD, Griffiths RR. Ethical Issues Regarding Nonsubjective Psychedelics as Standard of Care. *Camb Q Healthc Ethics*. 2022 Oct;31(4):464-471.

Extra material of suggested books

Handbook of Medical Hallucinogens. Grob, CS & Grigsby, J (2021). The Guilford Press. Unifying Theories of Psychedelic Drug Effects. Swanson (2018). *Frontiers in Pharmacology*

Higher Wisdom: Interviews with fourteen pioneers in psychedelic research. Walsh and Grob (2005).

Psychedelics. Nichols (2016). *Pharmacological Reviews*.

Human Hallucinogen Research: Guidelines for Safety. Johnson, Richards, Griffiths (2008). *Journal of Psychopharmacology*.

The Therapeutic Potential of Psychedelic Drugs: Past, Present, and Future. Carhart- Harris and Goodwin (2017). *Neuropsychopharmacology*.

Psychiatric Research with Hallucinogens: What have we learned? Grob (1998). *The Heffter Review of Psychedelic Research*.

The psychedelic experience. Savage, Stolaroff, Harman, & Fadiman (1963). *Journal of Neuropsychiatry*.

The Doors of Perception, by Aldous Huxley (1954)

Extra material of additional references

A review of the clinical effects of psychotomimetic agents. Osmond (1957). *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*.

Psychedelic agents in creative problem-solving: a pilot study. Harman and Fadiman et al (1966). *Psychological Reports*.

A review of 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)-Assisted Psychotherapy. Sessa et al (2019). *Frontiers in Psychiatry*.

Characterization and prediction of acute and sustained response to psychedelic psilocybin in a mindfulness group retreat. Smigielski et al (2019). *Scientific Reports*.

Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD) for Alcoholism: Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials. Krebs and Johansen (2012). *Journal of Psychopharmacology*.

Presentation by Roland Griffiths, PhD: Psilocybin & Mystical Experience: Implications for Healthy Psychological Functioning & Spirituality: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6g2PS_yp-nQ

The Psychedelics and Group Therapy. Duncan Blewett (Pages 342 –348, especially middle of page 345 – 348)

Handbook for the Therapeutic Use of Lysergic Acid Diethylamide-25: Individual and Group Procedures.

Weekly Assignments, for the Course portfolio:

All weekly assignments should follow APA-style format, including references and a reference list. There is no page limit, however 2-5 pages for each part is normal. Detailed instructions are deliberately left out, so feel free to enjoy selecting, thinking and writing, based on academic science.

Use the course book, course reading papers, scientific references, and structured and clear style of academic writing. Pretend you are answering a science journalist who will publish your answers. Precision and clarity are always to strive for.

Pt.1. Knowledge paper

Discuss, problematize, and explore the following questions:

- What is psychedelics, and what is its brief history (20th century and today)?
- Describe some of the psychological impacts of a psychedelic experience?

Pt 2. Discussion paper:

- Attempt to define and describe the risks and benefits of psychedelic use?
- What are the differences between psychedelic substances and other drugs?
- To what extent can people change after a psychedelic experience? How and why?

Pt 3. Personal reflection paper:

Write up a brief academic reflecting personal paper on how you intend to make use of the information in this course, in your private and/or professional life.

Pt 4. Societal reflection paper:

Write up a brief academic reflection paper on your societal and ethical approach to the science of psychedelics. Discuss, suggest, and explore alternatives for future integration of this knowledge into society.

For the final week of the course, finish, extend, rewrite, add references, and assemble and format all assignments into one pdf-portfolio in weekly order, and submit via Canvas. Add a final brief reflection on the course (which naturally is not part of the exam and grading).

We sincerely hope you enjoy the course!
/Sverker, Petri, David och Emma

The teachers:

- Sverker Sikström, Professor Cognitive Psychology
<https://scholar.google.se/citations?hl=sv&user=a9GHRP0AAAAJ>
- Petri Kajonius, Docent Personality Psychology, <http://goo.gl/8ZnTOC>
- David Sjöström, MD Psychiatry, Drs Clinical Research in Psychedelics
- Emma Claesdotter-Knutsson, MD Psychiatry and Adolescent Psychopathology