UNIVERSITY OF SKÖVDE

TRANSLATION FROM SWEDISH

COURSE SYLLABUS

Altered States of Consciousness G1N

7.5 credits

Course code: KU146G
Version number: 1
Valid from: 1 January 2027
Ratified by: Curriculum Committee for Bioscience
Date of ratification: 11 June 2026

1. General information about the course

The course is provided by the University of Skövde and is named Altered States of Consciousness G1N (Förändrade medvetandetillstånd G1N). It comprises 7.5 credits and is a first-cycle course. The level of progression is G1N.

The course is a part of the main field of study in Cognitive Neuroscience. The disciplinary domain of the course is Natural Sciences.

2. Entry requirements

General entry requirements (or the equivalent).

3. Course content

This course discusses the definition of an altered vs. a normal state of consciousness, and the typical phenomenological features and neural basis of different altered states of consciousness. As to empirical studies and research findings, the course touches on scientific investigations of naturally occuring altered states (sleep, dreaming), intentionally induced altered states (hypnosis, meditation, pharmacologically-induced altered states) and extraordinary (out-of-body and near-death) experiences and so-called higher states of consciousness (such as flow). Selected scientific theories will be discussed in relation to different altered states of consciousness. The course also incorporates philosophy of science and discusses the Demarcation problem, i. e., what distinguishes genuine science from pseudoscience or non-science, in relation to ASC and scientific publishing. The students will also learn what scientific publishing is, conduct a literature search utilizing relevant databases, and write a report on this search task. In addition, the students are offered the possibility to test their hypnotizability and to participate in a guided meditation session.

4. Objectives

After completion of the course the student should be able to:

- explain how an altered state of consciousness can be defined,
- describe what are the central phenomenological and neurobiological features of naturally occurring, intentionally induced as well as extraordinary states of consciousness,
- explain what distinguishes genuine science from pseudoscience in relation to scientific publishing, and how scientific publishing works in peer-reviewed journals, and
- conduct a literature search utilizing relevant databases to find new peer-reviewed scientific articles on altered states of consciousness, in order to read and analyse them.

5. Examination

The course is graded A (Excellent), B (Very good), C (Good), D (Satisfactory), E (Sufficient) or F (Fail).

The examinations of the course consist of the following modes of assessment:

- **On-campus supervised written examination**
  5 credits, grades: A/B/C/D/E/F (determines the final grade)
- **Written report**
  2.5 credits, grades: G/U

Students with a permanent disability who have been approved for directed educational support may be offered adapted modes of assessment.

6. Types of instruction and language of instruction

The teaching is comprised of lectures and seminars.

The teaching is conducted in English.

7. Course literature and other educational materials

Main literature

Blackmore, S. & Troscianko, E. T. (2024). *Consciousness: An introduction* (4th ed.). Routledge. ISBN 9781032292564.

Revonsuo, A. (2010). *Consciousness – The Science of Subjectivity*. Psychology Press. ISBN 9781841697260.

Scientific articles and other relevant material according to the teacher's instructions may be added.

8. Student influence

Student influence in the course is ensured by means of course evaluation. The students are informed about the results of the evaluation and potential measures that have been taken or are planned, based on the course evaluation.

9. Additional information

The content of the course corresponds completely or partially with the following course(s) and cannot be included in the required credits of a degree qualification:

- KU134G - Altered States of Consciousness G1N 7.5 credits

Further information about the course, as well as national and local governing documents for higher education, is available on the website of the University of Skövde.