



## Life, Soul and Consciousness (7,5 ECTS credits)

Level: 1st cycle

Discipline: THEOLOGY (systematic theology) or PHILOSOPHY

Course ID: 0330

### Admission requirements

General admission requirements for university studies. Students taking part in the course as a part of their Bachelor's degree program must have completed Course A, Introduction in Philosophy and Theology (30 ECTS credits).

### Educational goals

After completing the course, the student is expected to:

- Be able to give a general account of classical ideas of life, consciousness, and soul and how these concepts have been received in the modern period;
- Exhibit an understanding of theories of the soul and consciousness such as idealism, hylomorphism, and panpsychism;
- Show the ability to give an answer how the classical ideas of life, soul, and consciousness have been defended and why these ideas are still structuring contemporary debates on the nature of life and consciousness.

### Course content

The discussion on consciousness is changing. Leading neuro- and cognitive scientists have been driven by their research to turn to older, often dismissed, religious and metaphysical ideas. They have even used the concept of the soul which classically entailed both life and consciousness. In this course we will discuss classical and contemporary texts on life, soul, and consciousness. We will especially examine the return of panpsychism, the notion that nature is saturated by consciousness, idealist ideas, the thought that reality in its fundamental sense is mental, and hylomorphism, the Aristotelean idea that the soul is the form of the body, in the contemporary discussion on life and mind.

### Teaching and examination

Instruction will be in the form of lectures and discussion seminars (online and at the meetings). The examination consists in participation in online discussions and seminars, as well as a written essay at the end of the course (8-10 pages). This final paper may be written in English or Swedish. The course grade is based on the quality of the essay.

## **Bibliography**

- Aristotle, *De Anima*, trans. by Christopher Shields (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2016), 1-73; 72 pages.
- Aquinas, Thomas, *The Treatise on Human Nature* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc, 2002), 2-218; 216 pages.
- Hart, David Bentley, *The Experience of God: Being, Consciousness, Bliss* (New Haven : Yale University Press, 2014), 87-290; 203 pages.
- Hoffman, Donald D., *The Case against Reality: How Evolution Hid the Truth from Our Eyes* (London: Allen Lane, 2019), 205 pages.
- Koch, Christof, *The Feeling of Life Itself: Why Consciousness is Widespread But Can't Be Computed* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2019); 175 pages.
- Plato, "*Phaedo*" in *Euthyphro. Apology. Crito. Phaedo*, trans. by Harold North Fowler (Cambridge (Mass.: Harvard University Press/Loeb Classical Library, 2017), 100 pages.

Texts by David Chalmers, Benjamin Libet, Thomas Nagel, Galen Strawson, Giulio Tononi, Walter Freeman III available on Moodle. Around 100 pages.

See also "Kursplaner: allmänna bestämmelser" (Course plans: General rules)

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