

Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences



PSP1134 Ethology and compared Psychology

[30h] 3 credits

This course is taught in the 1st semester

Teacher(s): René Zayan
Language: French
Level: First cycle

Aims

- to teach the main principles of behavioural sciences in a biological perspective.
- to establish a link between human psychology and the concepts and methods of comparative ethology.

Main themes

Introduction: the status of comparative ethology in the context of the biological and psychological sciences. Animal, human and applied ethology.

Chap 1: basic concepts and main themes. Links with phylogeny and physiology.

Chap 2: evolution of the behavioural field: "Umwelt" of species, segmental determinism and structure of the subjective space. Links with the body structures.

Chap 3: Sensori-motor bases of behaviour. Sensory modalities. Sensori-motor control. Automatism and control. Reafferences.

Chap 4: Imprinting and its effects on the development of behaviours. Parental relationships. Sexual imprinting.

Chap 5: Sexual link and parental behaviour.

Chap 6: Communication and social behaviour in Invertebrates and Vertebrates. Symbolic language (particularly in primates and in humans)

Chap 7: Social hierarchy and aggressive regulation. Rhythms, migrations and applications in human ethology.

Content and teaching methods

- 1) Ethology and animal psychology: history and specificity of each field. Modern ethology (basic, applied and human) among the other natural and social sciences.
- 2) Ethological explanation of behaviour, mainly social: immediate causality (perception, motivation), ontogenetic development, adaptive function, phylogenetic evolution.
- 3) The processes of social recognition: imprinting and preprogrammed learning, mental and neuronal representation of familiar conspecifics, individual recognition.
- 4) Social structures (dominance hierarchies, territoriality, sexual preferences and kinship)
- 5) Primate political behaviour and human ethology (political leadership, sexual seduction, non verbal communication)
- 6) Relationships between man and domestic animals: animal welfare and social stress, ethical problems.

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

Written examination, assessing abilities to synthesise and critically analyse the contributions of ethology and of comparative psychology.

Other credits in programs

FSA12BA	Deuxième année de bachelier en sciences de l'ingénieur, orientation ingénieur civil	(3 credits)	
ISP22	Deuxième licence en philosophie	(3 credits)	
PSP11BA	Première année de bachelier en sciences psychologiques et de l'éducation	(3 credits)	Mandatory