



Announcement

F A L L 2 0 0 9 – Two Web-based Courses

CONSCIOUSNESS: THE WEBCOURSE

And

ADVANCED SEMINAR: MIND, BRAIN and CONSCIOUSNESS.

Both taught by Dr. Bernard J. Baars

**Sponsored by the University of Arizona, Tucson
Center for Consciousness Studies**

See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernard_Baars

Both the WebCourse and the Advanced Seminar will run over 10 weekends, with personal direct contact time in Discussion Groups, mp3 audio files with lectures, written lectures and demonstrations via the web.

Discussion Groups for the WebCourse will take place on Saturdays and Sundays, 10am and 12 noon Pacific Time. For students who cannot be available at that time we will have an “asynchronous” Discussion Group.

The Advanced Seminar will take place on Sundays at 2 pm Pacific times. It will be tailored for specific student needs and interests. It will be somewhat more demanding, with advanced readings and a college textbook.

Dates:

November 14, 2009 – February 7, 2010.

With a Winter Holiday Break from December 20, 2009 to January 7, 2010.

If you are interested in Continuing Education Credits
please check the relevant box on the Registration Forms below.

“Consciousness: The WebCourse” will meet in virtual webspace each Saturday and Sunday morning from 10am -12 noon, Pacific Time. The Advanced Seminar will meet virtually on Sunday afternoon from 2-4 pm. If you cannot be available in your time zone at those times, we will add an asynchronous Discussion Group. In previous years we have had graduate student volunteers to work with small Discussion Groups, and we will explore that option as well.

I will send you audio lectures (mp3) each week of the 10-week term, along with written lectures. We will have an “inner space lab” each week, to allow you to explore your own experiences in various ways.



Dr. Bernard J. Baars

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernard_Baars

Dear Friends,

As you know, human beings have explored consciousness for thousands of years. All the humanities, the arts and literature involve the expression and exploration of human feelings and thoughts --- conscious, unconscious and “fringe conscious” ones. Science is a late-comer to all that, but starting in the 1990s we began to see the first major brain imaging methods that really worked well. For the first time we could see the living brain while people were sensing, thinking, feeling and acting. We could therefore try to understand our mind-brain from two different points of view, both from the inside *and* the outside, and try to relate those two worlds of information to each other.

This is an extraordinary time of discovery, much like the first space explorations. It has taken years to understand brain images. We continue to get better information, and we are beginning to ask better questions. That is the newest subject for these two courses. We will also touch on some traditional topics that would have been familiar to Aristotle or the early Buddhists and Vedantists. A lot of people in a lot of times and places have thought very deeply about the mind-brain.

I have a commitment to studying and teaching about consciousness, but I want to do it scientifically. By that I mean supporting all the ideas and claims by good evidence and careful reasoning. It would not be honest for me to substitute my judgment for anyone else’s, unless I can point to some evidence you and I can both share.

I'm happy to use "subjective evidence" the way psychologists have done for centuries, really starting with Isaac Newton's discovery of (subjective) colors in. I'm also happy to use brain evidence. I like to learn from novelists and mystics, from the meditation traditions and from clinical psychology schools, Jung, Freud, anthropology, genetics, the wisdom traditions, whatever is available. I'm also interested in altered and higher states, as understood in the meditation traditions. It's all grist for the mill. This year I hope to add a lot of musical demonstrations, and I will ask you to tell us about your own favorite music, if it demonstrates something important about consciousness. (Music, art and literature ARE about human consciousness...)

I'm not going to ask you to believe anything just because some famous person, or a guru, or a Nobel Prize winner says so. I don't think it's a good idea to set myself up as an authority, unless I can cite evidence that anybody can observe. That's how we keep each other honest in the sciences and in other places. This is an open discourse, and every claim should be open to testing and logic. Obviously it is fine to discuss things that we can't prove, but then we just have to say so.

Having said that, I'm happy to discuss other people's ideas and experiences, and to take them seriously. At some point, however, I might end up saying ... hmmm... I wonder what the evidence is for that idea? Just consider it a personal quirk!

I will be teaching two courses via the web, as interactively as we can make it happen.

1. CONSCIOUSNESS: The WebCourse 2009-2010 (Fall), sponsored by the Center for Consciousness Studies of the University of Arizona (Tucson).

If you are interested in consciousness as a rich universe of personal experiences, as a root of the I-Thou encounter with others, or as a scientific subject, this is a state-of-the-art introduction to the field. We will also explore the evidence for altered and higher states of consciousness, hypnosis, dreams, and twilight states. But we will stay with the evidence as we can honestly understand it. There are many ideas about consciousness, and many of them may be true. But they are often based on individual experiences that cannot be shared by other people coming from different points of view. We can only try to understand evidence that is available to any well-informed observer, including sympathetic observations of our own experiences. Obviously we mean no disrespect to other viewpoints, which are often based on the personal experiences of highly dedicated, thoughtful and practiced individuals. Scientific evidence, as we understand it, does not rely on authority. Every bit of evidence and reasoning is available to everyone, to debate or question as they like. What comes out of that process is a residue of consensus that few would challenge on the facts.

We are applying for Continuing Education Units for this Webcourse through the University of Arizona. If CEU credits are approved, teachers and other professionals will be able to apply the course for Continuing Education. We will ask class members who want to receive CEU credits to receive passing scores on two to four quizzes given during the course, focusing on the most important objective points we will talk about.

We will focus on "the science of the first person" to connect everyday experiences with the brain evidence we have today. Each week will feature an "Inner Space Lab," designed to help you explore your own mind to help illuminate the principles we will be discussing. Starting from everyday "ordinary" conscious experiences, we will also touch on frontier issues in "higher states" of consciousness, out-of-body experiences, hypnosis and other non-ordinary states of mind.

We will have lectures and online discussions every weekend, with off-line discussions for those who cannot join in at the same time. Weekly lectures will be based on Bernard Baars' book, **In the Theater of Consciousness: The Workspace of the Mind.** (1997, Oxford University Press). Other readings and websites will be recommended as well. We will also encourage you to keep a Consciousness Diary, to help explore your own experiences.

Each week we also hope to send all participants a half hour of audio lecture (in mp3 or related format), to help make the course a more personal and meaningful experience. We will experiment with a wiki-based discussion site to increase everybody's chances to participate.

2. ADVANCED SEMINAR: MIND, BRAIN and CONSCIOUSNESS.

If enough of you are interested, we will have an advanced seminar running at the same time, an introduction to cognitive neuroscience. It will use **Baars & Gage's (2007) Cognition, Brain & Consciousness: An Introduction to Cognitive Neuroscience.** (From Elsevier/Academic Press.) I will also make instructional videos and audio lectures available.

Please join us!

Dr. Bernard Baars
Affiliated Research Fellow
The Neurosciences Institute, San Diego
www.nsi.edu/users/baars

The Center for Consciousness Studies Team



This is believed to be the most ancient known image of a meditator, thought to be a horned shaman wearing a mask or a three-faced deity, sitting in a yoga posture, with the hands held in apparent mudra postures and surrounded by animals. From a seal impressed on clay, found in an Indus Valley site and dated to 32 centuries BCE, five millennia ago. The theme of shamans, gurus or deities surrounded by animals is widespread across ancient traditions. Meditation and other mind-altering practices are also very

widespread, and almost certainly go back to hunter-gatherer cultures before human settlements began about 15,000 years ago. Mind-altering experiences can occur in many ways, and may arise spontaneously in normal or pathological conditions. Ancient traditions probably used psychoactive substances, but there is unresolved debate about which ones were used. Since the earliest symbolic grave decorations and shamanic figures date to 30,000 – 70,000 years ago, it seems likely that symbolic spirit journeys, communication with deities and the dead, and extraordinary conscious experiences have been pursued by human beings for tens of thousands of years.

General Overview:

We can explore our own consciousness from the First Person perspective); share our experiences with others (Second Person); and look at conscious beings from the outside (the Third Person or Public Point of View). These three basic perspectives organize our Course. Weekly Phenomenology Labs will adopt the First Person Perspective, using personal consciousness diaries and experiential demonstrations.

Our lectures will add new scientific findings about everyday consciousness, and explore what we know about altered conscious states. We expect to supplement the printed lectures with audio files, PowerPoint's, and demonstrations. The Second personal emerges in ethical relations to others, interpersonal experiences, and in the brain regions involved in romantic love and parent-child attachment. The three basic perspectives on consciousness are compatible with Global Workspace Theory, a well-known framework for thinking about consciousness.

Other theoretical views will also be included. We will not settle the philosophical question: What is Consciousness? But we will gain a better understanding of consciousness in modern science as well as in the great wisdom traditions.

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Please Note: We will send you the Course Syllabus as soon as we receive your Registration Information. You can also request the Course Syllabus separately by emailing center@u.arizona.edu.

Consciousness: The WebCourse 2009 - 2010

Registration Form

www.consciousness.arizona.edu



Center for CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES

www.consciousness.arizona.edu

FALL 2009 - 2010 ---- REGISTRATION FORM

I would like to participate in *CONSCIOUSNESS: THE WEBCOURSE* _____

(Notice: For the *Advanced Seminar* please use the Advanced Seminar Registration Form, below.)

Course dates: November 14, 2009 - February 7, 2010 (Winter Holiday Break, December 20 - January 7)

Times: Sundays 10am -12 noon, Pacific Time

YOUR INFORMATION

NAME: (LAST) _____ (FIRST) _____ TITLE: _____

EMAIL (required) _____ AFFILIATION: _____

BILLING ADDRESS: (Street Address) _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP _____ COUNTRY: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

Are you interested in Continuing Education Credits for this course?

Please indicate: _____

We will notify you as soon as CEU approval is received.

REGISTRATION FEES - CONSCIOUSNESS: THE WEBCOURSE *Fall, 2009*

(Note: This registration fee is payable to: The University of Arizona Foundation. This is not a tax-deductible charitable contribution).

STANDARD: \$350 _____ STUDENT: \$250 _____

PAYMENT METHOD

CREDIT CARD MasterCard Visa American Express TOTAL: \$ _____

Note that Continuing Education Credits are in the application process. If you want CEU's and we receive approval, a \$40.00 fee will apply.

If paying by credit card, please note that the UA Foundation will appear as the vendor on your credit card statement.

Billing Name _____

Billing Address (if different from above) Street Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province _____ Mail Code _____ Country _____

Card No. _____ Expiration _____

3-digit code _____

CHECK (Payable to: University of Arizona Foundation in US Dollars from a US Bank)

WIRE TRANSFER (please contact CCS for instructions) Email to center@u.arizona.edu

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PLEASE SEND YOUR REGISTRATION MATERIALS TO:

DIRECT FAX: 520-626-6416 BY MAIL : Center for Consciousness Studies
Direct Tel 520-621-9317 Dept. of Psychology, University of Arizona
POB 210068, Tucson, AZ 85721-0068 USA
Attn: Abi Montefiore

Refund Policy: refunds minus a \$40 processing fee if notification is received by Nov. 16.

Questions? Please direct any questions to the Center for Consciousness Studies
center@u.arizona.edu, Tel 520-621-9317 or Fax 520-626-6416

Advanced Seminar: Mind, Brain & Consciousness.

2009 - 2010

Registration Form



Center for CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES

www.consciousness.arizona.edu

F A L L 2 0 0 9 - 2 0 1 0 ---- ADVANCED SEMINAR REGISTRATION FORM

I would like to participate in the *ADVANCED SEMINAR: MIND, BRAIN & CONSCIOUSNESS* _____

Times: Sundays 2-4 pm, Pacific Time

(Notice: For *Consciousness: The WebCourse* please use the separate Registration Form above.)

Course dates: November 14, 2009 - February 7, 2010 (Winter Holiday Break, December 20 - January 7)

YOUR INFORMATION

NAME: (LAST) _____ (FIRST) _____ **TITLE:** _____

EMAIL (required) _____ **AFFILIATION:** _____

Please describe your educational background, previous coursework, personal reading, advanced activities and anything else you feel is relevant.

Feel free to tell us about yourself in detail, and add any additional pages you need.

Please don't be shy! The more we know about you, the more Dr. Baars can tailor the Advanced Seminar to your interests and background.

(Please add as much as you like).

