

Psychology of Sleep and Dreaming

Alex Randall

Course Information

Fridays from 10:00 a.m.–noon for eight weeks beginning March 1 through April 26.
(no class on March 29)

In-Person – Lecture/Discussion – Maximum 30

Course Description

You will spend 22 years of your life asleep. You will spend 8 years of your life dreaming... And so far no one has taught you ANYTHING about this huge part of your life. Now's your chance to learn about your mind at sleep.

This is the Psychology of Sleep and Dreaming; the only course ever where it is OK to sleep in class and (almost) all the assignments involve sleep. You will learn about how your brain behaves at night, the chemistry, physiology and biology of sleep. You'll find out how dreams have played a significant role in history and religion and the arts. You will hear about how other cultures treat their dreams and about people who guide their lives with their dreams.

You will learn how to keep a dream journal and how to remember your dreams. More importantly, you will learn dozens of methods that will help you make sense of your dreams. Are they meaningless or rich in deep meaning or just a left over part of our most primitive form of consciousness? What are they telling you?

Course Overview

The Psychology of Sleep and Dreaming presents a unique opportunity to explore one area of human psychology using tools from virtually all of the academic disciplines. The class will show students how to use a variety of scholarly approaches to a single subject.

We are going to learn how the mind and body behave during the night. First we have to understand the biology and chemistry of sleep, the stages of sleep and the way the body acts during the night. We will learn how the body repairs itself and the role sleep plays in your frame of mind, happy or depressed, and how dreams affect memory.

We will explore what has been said about sleep by religions, and philosophers and what can be learned from other cultures via cultural anthropology.

We will examine how the mind behaves at night and focus on the Dream time. We will examine the reporting of dreams and the way we write them down. We will study Ana-logic and metaphors, figures of speech and language to understand how the images in dreams arise.

We will then examine the theories of the dream scientists – what do they mean? What alternative meanings are there? We will examine the different theories about the meaning of dreams from the perspectives of many different psychological schools of thought - Freud, Jung, Adler, Reich, Perls, and the Gestalt School, humanistic and phenomenological thought.

All the while we will bring dreams to class and we will explore what they mean to us personally.

The goals of the class are: One is to gain insight into yourself. In sight. Second is to give you tools that will help you as a counselor, or psychologist to ask people their dreams and help them gain insight. I want you to open a window into the human mind and gain a fresh new vantage point from which you can see inside and understand it. In the end, I want you to be more whole and complete, able to draw on the depths of your mind to guide you to a better life and extend that to others who come into your care.

Readings

The Mind at Night – Andrea Rock

New Directions in Dream Interpretation, Gayle Delaney

Also:

Dream Theory in Malaya – Dr. Kilton Stewart www.dr-dream.com and on Blackboard

How to Remember your Dreams – www.dr-dream.com and on Blackboard

<http://www.webmd.com/alzheimers/news/20131021/could-a-good-nights-sleep-guard-against-alzheimers>

NY Times: Sleep Therapy – Role in Depression Treatment -

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/24/health/sleep-therapy-is-expected-to-gain-a-wider-role-in-depression-treatment.html>

Perchance to Prune - Scientific American – (Alex Scan and put on BB)