

PHI 4320: Philosophy of Mind
Mon. & Wed. 12:30–1:45, CPR 255
Fall 2007

Instructor: Professor Daniel Weiskopf
Office location: FAO 203
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Course description:

In this course we will investigate some classic and contemporary questions about the mind. Among other things, we will ask: Is the mind something nonphysical? If it is physical, is it anything over and above the brain? Could our minds be computers, and could we construct computers that have thoughts and feelings like ours? Do animals have minds? How could we tell? How do conscious sensations and experiences arise from unconscious matter? Can we reduce consciousness to physical terms? Can we have a science of conscious experience? Finally, what makes something a person or a unified self? How should we understand breakdowns of personhood, selfhood, and identity?

Course objectives:

The goal of the course is to acquaint students with core theories in the philosophy of mind, as well as the skills of philosophical analysis and argumentation. Students will be expected to know the contents of the readings and lectures, and able to explain and critique them in writing. The emphasis of this course is on learning to think and write philosophically about the material covered, not merely memorizing information.

Prerequisites:

None, although prior philosophy coursework would be helpful.

Readings:

The main text for the class, which is available at the University bookstore, is:

Morton, Peter A. (Ed.). (1997). *A Historical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind: Readings with Commentary*. Peterborough: Broadview Press.

The rest of the readings will be available on electronic reserve (ER). These readings will be available from the course webpage, which is located on Blackboard. Other course materials will also be available on Blackboard as the semester progresses.

You are expected to read all assigned material *before* class meetings. Many of the readings for this course are challenging. The lectures and discussions are intended to clarify and supplement the readings, but they presuppose that you have read them at least once. Guidelines on how to write and read philosophy papers, as well as other philosophical resources, can be found on the course webpage.

Assignments:

Five quizzes	10% total
Two papers (~3-5 pp)	50% (=25% each)
Midterm examination	20%
Final examination	20%

Some points about the assignments:

- Quizzes will be 1-3 questions long and will be administered without advance notice throughout the semester.
- No extra credit will be given in this class.

Lateness policy:

Late assignments will not be accepted without *prior* permission from the instructor. In case of illness, family medical emergency, or other major extenuating circumstances, arrangements can be made to reschedule papers or exams. *These arrangements must be made in advance, where possible.* You must also provide adequate documentation when you are requesting permission to turn in an assignment late. If you hand in an assignment late without requesting prior permission, or without providing adequate documentation, I reserve the right not to accept the assignment, or to reduce its grade by an arbitrary amount.

Attendance:

Attendance is required. We will meet for the entire scheduled time unless otherwise noted. Sale of recordings or transcripts of lectures and discussions is not permitted, although you may make such recordings for your own personal use. If you need to miss class for religious observances, you must notify the instructor in advance.

Special accommodations:

If you need special accommodations for lectures, papers, or examinations, please contact the instructor within the first week of class. You will need to provide a Memorandum of Accommodations from the Office of Student Disability Services. All efforts will be made to accommodate students with special needs, as long as sufficient notice is given.

Instructor availability:

Office hours are scheduled for your convenience. I strongly encourage you to make use of them if you have any questions about any of the course content or assignments. It's better to clear up confusion earlier rather than later. If you cannot come to the scheduled office hours, feel free either to email your question or comment, or to schedule a meeting at another time. *Email is the preferred means of getting in touch with me outside of class or office hours.* I will try to respond to email within a reasonable amount of time; however, immediate replies aren't guaranteed.

Academic integrity:

**** Read this section carefully! ****

Plagiarism and other violations of the University's code of academic integrity will not be tolerated. ***The penalty for plagiarism is failure of the course with a grade of FF.*** Similar penalties apply to other violations of academic integrity. If you are not certain what constitutes a violation of the code of academic integrity, it is *your responsibility* to consult the full text of the code, which is available at:

<http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs/0607/adadap.htm>.

Schedule of Readings		
M 8/27	Introductory lecture; Read the course syllabus	
W 8/29	Descartes, Selections from <i>Discourse on the Method</i>	
M 9/3	No class; Labor day	
W 9/5	Huxley, On the hypothesis that animals are automata (ER)	
M 9/10	Bennett, How to read minds in behavior (ER)	
W 9/12	Savage-Rumbaugh, Shanker, & Taylor, Apes with language (ER)	
M 9/17	Povinelli, Behind the ape's appearance (ER)	First paper topic distributed
W 9/19	Descartes, Selections from <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i>	
M 9/24	Arnauld, Objections to Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> Descartes, Reply to Antoine Arnauld	
W 9/26	Ryle, Selections from <i>The Concept of Mind</i>	First paper due
M 10/1	Smart, Sensations and brain processes	
W 10/3	Armstrong, The nature of mind	
M 10/8	Fodor, Selections from "Something on the state of the art" Putnam, The nature of mental states	
W 10/10	Block, Troubles with functionalism (ER)	
M 10/15	Catch-up and review; No readings	
W 10/17		Midterm exam
M 10/22	Turing, Computing machinery and intelligence	
W 10/24	Searle, Minds, brains, and programs	
M 10/29	Copeland, The curious case of the Chinese Room (ER)	
W 11/31	Nagel, What is it like to be a bat?	

M 11/5	Goldman, Science, publicity, and consciousness (ER)	
W 11/7	Jackson, Epiphenomenal qualia	
M 11/12	Flanagan, Selections from <i>Consciousness Reconsidered</i>	Second paper topic distributed
W 11/14	Clark & Chalmers, The extended mind (ER)	
M 11/19	Nagel, Brain bisection and the unity of consciousness (ER)	
W 11/21	Dennett, The self as a center of narrative gravity (ER)	Second paper due
M 11/26	Strawson, Against narrative (ER)	
W 11/28	Olson, There is no problem of the self (ER)	
M 12/3	Catch-up; No readings	
W 12/5	Review and wrap-up; No readings	
W 12/12		Final exam 1:00-3:00 pm