

University of Name | Semester Year

**COURSE CODE**

# **Philosophy of Mind**

## **(Introduction)**

Day Time | Classroom

**INSTRUCTOR:**

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Office | Office Hours

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to philosophy of mind. We will mostly look at what is usually known as the “mind-body problem.” How are the minds of humans and other animals related to their bodies? How are mental states and processes such as thoughts, beliefs, sensations, and emotions related to bodily events such as observable behavior and actions and internal states of the brain and nervous system? We will survey a number of different philosophical theories of these relations. We will be paying special attention to the important differences among various types of mental phenomena, and we will note at various points how certain accounts of the mind-body relation do a good job of accounting for some types of mentality but a poor job on others. We will also be concerned with how the different philosophical accounts make sense of such phenomena as self-knowledge, knowledge of other minds, conscious experience, the role of mental states in the explanation of human actions, and the content of our thoughts. Readings will mostly be from the work of major 20th century analytic philosophers of mind.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	STUDENT OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage critically with selected important debates, positions, and methods in Western philosophy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain debates and positions clearly and precisely in written and oral form.</li> <li>• Construct thought experiments and arguments against hypotheses presented in class.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand basic concepts and distinctions in the readings and theories.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply theories and concepts in new contexts.</li> <li>• Use introduced concepts and distinctions in your own arguments.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop original ideas on selected topics in philosophy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically engage with positions and arguments put forth in readings.</li> <li>• Write and present clear, precise, and moderately original argument on self-chosen topic.</li> </ul>

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 20% Reading
- 25% Midterm
- 20% Research Project
- 25% Final (cumulative)
- 10% Participation

### *Reading*

Reading will be graded based on student engagement with the readings on Perusall. For full credit, you must annotate throughout the entire reading, and respond to at least one other student's annotation, question, or comment in readings of at least **10 weeks**, each worth 2 points. You are expected to engage with the required readings in sufficient detail for annotating, commenting, and critical discussion, and be conversant with the material so that discussion is substantive and lively. Annotations, questions, or comments should be done by **the day before** the reading is scheduled at **11:59pm** to count towards your grade.

### *Midterm*

Midterm assignment will be a paper (5–7 pages) due on week 7. Paper prompt will be assigned on week 5.

### *Research Project*

This is a group activity. Each group will give a presentation and write a short report (2–3 pages) on a self-chosen topic (pending instructor’s approval) about real life implications of a theory discussed in this course. Some examples of topics are: Is physicalism incompatible with the claim that there is life after death? Is physicalism compatible with freewill? For full credit, students have to (1) submit a short report (2-3 pages), (2) give an in class presentation, and (3) ask questions to other groups.

### *Final*

The final exam will be cumulative and in short essay format. The questions will be posted online on the last day of classes, and it is due on DATE/TIME. You will have 4 days to complete this assignment.

### *Participation*

Participation grade will be based on student’s engagement in lecture and participation on in class activities throughout the course. Attendance will be taken but do not expect a perfect grade merely for being an organic body.

**NOTE:** Things change – the Fates are fickle. Consequently, information found on this syllabus is subject to revision as we progress through the quarter: Readings and content may be added (or cut) depending on our rate of progress, and it may be necessary to amend the due date of the assignments. Revisions will be announced in lecture and posted online. It is each student’s responsibility to keep informed of any changes.

## MATERIALS

All readings will be available on Perusall.

Students are expected to have done the readings and reading assignments *before* lecture.

## COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS

### ***WEEK 1: The Basics of Arguments (1 session)***

- Introduction & Arguments.

- Thought Experiments, “AITA, that if Jurassic Park were real, I would tell my husband that he cannot go.” [https://www.reddit.com/r/AmItheAsshole/comments/chzjl5/aita\\_that\\_if\\_jurassic\\_park\\_were\\_real\\_i\\_would\\_tell/](https://www.reddit.com/r/AmItheAsshole/comments/chzjl5/aita_that_if_jurassic_park_were_real_i_would_tell/).

**WEEK 1 - 2: Dualism (3 sessions)**

- Descartes, from *Meditations and Replies to Objections*, from B. Beakley and P. Ludlow (eds.), *Philosophy of Mind: Classical Problems/Contemporary Issues* (MIT Press, 1992).
- Margaret Wilson, “Descartes: The Epistemological Argument for Mind-Body Distinctness,” *Nous* v. 10 (1976).
- Letters between Descartes and Elizabeth of Bohemia, from G.E.M. Anscombe and P. Geach (eds.), *Descartes: Philosophical Writings* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1971).

**WEEK 3 - 4: Behaviorism and the Problem of Other Minds (3 sessions)**

- Gilbert Ryle, “Descartes’ Myth,” from Beakley and Ludlow (see above).
- Hilary Putnam, “Brains and Behavior,” from D. Chalmers (ed.), *Philosophy of Mind, Classical and Contemporary Readings* (Oxford, 2002).
- Alan Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence,” *Mind*, V. 59, No. 236 (1950).

**WEEK 4 - 5: Mind-Brain Identity (3 sessions)**

- Herbert Feigl, “Other Minds and the Egocentric Predicament,” *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 55, No. 23 (1958).
- J.J.C. Smart, “Sensations and Brain Processes,” *Philosophical Review* v. 68 (1959).
- Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, excerpts.

**WEEK 6 - 7: Turing Machine Functionalism (4 sessions)**

- Hilary Putnam, “The Nature of Mental States,” from Beakley and Ludlow.
- Ned Block and Jerry Fodor, “What Psychological States Are Not” *Philosophical Review* v. 81, 1972.
- David Lewis, ‘Mad Pain and Martian Pain’

**WEEK 7 - 8: Minds, Brains and Programs (2 sessions)**

- Zenon Pylyshyn, “What’s In Your Mind?” <http://www.linguistics.pomona.edu/lcs11fall04/readings/Pylyshyn99.pdf>

- John Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Programs,” from J. Haugeland (ed.) *Mind Design II: Philosophy, Psychology, AI* (MIT Press, 1997).

**WEEK 8 - 9: Eliminativism (2 sessions)**

- Paul Churchland, 'Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes'
- Stephen P. Stich, 'Autonomous Psychology and the Belief-Desire Thesis'

**WEEK 9 - 11: Content (3 sessions)**

- Bertrand Russell, *Principles of Philosophy*, excerpts
- Tyler Burge, 'Individualism and the Mental'
- Jerry Fodor, 'Why There Still Has to Be a Language Of Thought' (in his *Psychosemantics* (MIT Press, 1987) and in Lycan)
- Daniel Dennett, 'Brain Writing and Mind Reading'

**WEEK 11- 12: Consciousness (2 sessions)**

- Thomas Nagel, “What is it Like to Be a Bat?” *Philosophical Review* v. 83 (1974).
- Wilkes, Kathleen V. (1984). Is consciousness important? *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 35 (September):223-43.
- Frank Jackson, “Epiphenomenal Qualia,” *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 127 (1982).

**WEEK 13 - 14: Presentations**

**GRADING**

The usual grading scale will apply: 0-59% F, 60-62% D-, 63-66% D, 67-69% D+, 70-72% C-, 73-76% C, 77-79% C+, 80-82% B-, 83-86% B, 87-89% B+, 90-92% A-, 93-96% A, 97-100% A+.

Paper and exams will be graded based on the following **six** evaluation criteria:

**Bare minimum:** is the paper prompt or question addressed at all?

**Clarity:** Are the explanations of technical terms and arguments clear, understandable, and accessible to someone who is not taking the class?

**Correctness:** Are the explanations of technical terms, theories and arguments correct? Are the theories and arguments ascribed to the right philosophers?

**Originality:** Are there original cases, objections, or replies?

**Relevance:** Are there information, theses, cases, or arguments that are irrelevant to address the prompt? Is the paper lacking explanation of a relevant theory, thesis, case, or argument?

**Structure:** Does the paper have a clear structure, with introduction and conclusion? Are the theses, cases, and arguments presented in an organized way?

**NOTE:** While there is no evaluation criterion for grammar or typos, they may affect the grade if they are severe enough to compromise understanding. So, before submitting your paper or take home exam, make sure to ask a friend to proof read besides proof reading the paper yourself. Also take note of campus resources listed below that offer assistance with essay-writing.

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I take academic dishonesty in any form very seriously: I will prosecute any offenses, seeking penalties ranging up to and including expulsion from the university. The university's Academic guide to Integrity is available online: <http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/PDF/academicintegflyer.pdf>. It is every student's responsibility to be familiar with the university's policies. If you see anything there that you don't understand please contact me.

#### STUDENT SUPPORT AND CAMPUS RESOURCES

If you are facing a major medical or another major difficulty that is keeping you from doing well in the class, contact me as soon as you can. I am happy to work with you to find the best course of action and, if possible, to help you complete the course successfully. But I can't help if you don't let me know about your circumstances as soon as they arise.

\*\* Please, don't wait until after the final exam to let me know about your circumstances. At that point there is virtually nothing we can do to accommodate you.\*\*

1) **CAPS** (*Counseling & Psychological Services*)

If you're dealing with depression, anxiety, or are just feeling overwhelmed, CAPS is available to help. They offer individual and group counseling, as well as relaxation rooms and other resources to make the quarter more bearable.

- tel: (805) 893-4411
- <http://counseling.sa.ucsb.edu>

2) **CARE** (*Campus Advocacy Resources & Education*)

CARE provides resources related to sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence. They offer free and confidential counseling, medical and legal assistance, and help with referrals for long-term support for those who need it.

- tel: (805) 893-4613
- <http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/Care>

3) **RCSGD** (*Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity*)

The RCSGD provides resources for gender, sexual, romantic minorities such as: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, intersex, and otherwise gender/sexual/romantic nonconforming individuals.

They also collect reports of hate incidents and maintain a list of gender neutral bathrooms on campus.

- tel: (805) 893-5847
- <http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/sgd/>

4) **CLAS** (*Campus Learning Assistance Services*)

CLAS offers workshops on study skills like note-taking and time management; group tutorials on math, science, and economics; assistance with essay-writing, and other free services that will help you perform well in your classes.

- <http://clas.sa.ucsb.edu>

5) **DSP** (*Disabled Students Program*)

If you have any sort of disability - physical or mental, permanent or temporary – we strongly encourage you to register with DSP. They can then notify your instructors if you need certain accommodations during classes or during tests.

A disability can be something like difficulty seeing or hearing; difficulty attending class due to physical or emotional distress; chronic anxiety or depression; or anything else that interferes with your schoolwork.

There's no shame in seeking help for these sorts of things, but unfortunately UCSB requires that instructors receive confirmation from DSP before providing accommodation. Since DSP is often busy, contact them as soon as possible if you need or expect to need their support.

- tel: (805) 893-2668
- <http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu>