

Philosophy of Mind

UCI Philosophy 122, Spring 2012

Instructor: Aaron M. Griffith

Day/Time: Tuesday/Thursday 11:00am-12:20pm

Classroom: HICF 100F

Office Hours: HOB2 217 Tuesday 12:30-1:30pm; Thursday 12:30-1:30pm

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Course Webpage: <https://eee.uci.edu/12s/30460>

Course Description and Objectives:

Understanding the nature of the mind and its place in the world has been an enduring philosophical project. In this course we will be exploring the ways in which recent philosophers of mind have conceived of the relationship between the mind and the body. Some of the questions we will think about in this course include: What is the mind? Is it distinct from or identical to the brain? Does the mind somehow depend on or emerge from the brain and its activities? What are mental properties and how are they related to physical properties? Can a mental event cause a physical event? We will consider both materialist and non-materialist attempts to answer these questions, such as identity theory, functionalism, eliminativism, property/substance dualisms, non-reductive physicalism, and emergentism.

The objectives of the course are (1) to expose you to some of the central issues of contemporary philosophy of mind, (2) to provide you with an opportunity to engage in critical yet charitable analysis of complex philosophical texts, ideas, and arguments, (3) to engage (and enjoy!) your community of colleagues in discussion, both inside and outside the classroom, and (4) to develop and hone your philosophical writing skills.

Attendance:

Attendance in lecture is not strictly mandatory, but is *highly* recommended. You are responsible for all material covered in both lecture and the required readings.

Required Textbook:

Philosophy of Mind: A Guide and Anthology, Oxford UP (2004), ed. John Heil.

Requirements:

Your grade for the course will be determined by three factors:

Essay 1 (4-5 pgs): 40%

Essay 2 (7-8 pgs): 50%

Participation, improvement, etc.: 10%

Of Special Note:

Papers will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late. I am happy to help you get an early start on your written assignments. You are responsible for backing up texts composed on a computer, and failures of software or hardware are not acceptable reasons for a late assignment. I highly recommend using Dropbox to back up your files:

<http://www.dropbox.com/>

If you do not understand why you received the grade you did, please come see me. Under no conditions will your grade be lowered if you do come see me to discuss a grade you received.

However, if you do want clarification you must submit to me in writing your question or concern before we meet in person.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious matter and will be handled by the appropriate authorities. Turning in any work which is not your own and not properly acknowledged as such will result in a recommendation for failure in the course and subject you to further action by the university. Please review the university policy on academic dishonesty and speak to me if you have questions.

Class Behavior:

I ask that all members of the class conduct themselves in a respectful manner. Respect for others takes a number of forms in this class, and in academic life generally. In the first place, it means that we need to be sensitive to how our behavior in class affects others. In particular, we need to recognize that since we are dealing with controversial issues, some members of the class may have had something like this happen to them. At the very least, it is safe to assume that this is the case, and act accordingly. **I ask that you take conversations and phone calls outside, please. I also ask that you not text, chat online, or surf the net in class.** If your behavior becomes problematic or disruptive, I will ask you to leave. Lastly, in addition to the commonsensical considerations listed above, I ask that you have intellectual respect for others, as well. This means that if you disagree with a position that someone holds, you should assume that the person is at least as smart as you are, and that the person probably has good reasons for thinking as he or she does. Your job is to be a good listener and exchange ideas, not to attack and degrade others.

Schedule: The following schedule is may be *amended* during the course of the quarter.

Unless otherwise indicated by a designation of "PDF" all readings are in the Heil text. PDF readings are available from the course's webpage.

Week 1: Introduction and Identity Theory

Tuesday:

Introduction

Thursday:

Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes"

Week 2: Functionalism

Tuesday:

Lewis, "An Argument for the Identity Theory"
Fodor, "The Mind-Body Problem"

Thursday:

Block, "What is Functionalism?"

Optional Reading:

Putnam, "Psychological Predicates"

Week 3: Eliminativism

Tuesday:

Churchland, "Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes"

Thursday:

Baker, "Cognitive Suicide"

Week 4: Challenges to Reductive Physicalism

Tuesday:

Nagel, "What is it like to be a Bat?"
Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia"

Thursday:

Chalmers, "Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness"

Optional Reading:

Ned Block, "The Harder Problem of Consciousness" (PDF); Moreland, "Should a Naturalist be a Supervenience Physicalist?" (PDF);

Week 5: Non-Reductive Physicalism

Tuesday:

Searle, "The Irreducibility of Consciousness"

Thursday:

Catch-up

Optional Reading: Davidson, "Mental Events"

Essay 1 due Friday at Midnight in dropbox

Week 6: Non-Reductive Physicalism cont.

Tuesday:

Pereboom and Kornblith, "The Metaphysics of Irreducibility"

Thursday:

Kim, "Multiple Realization and the Metaphysics of Reduction"

Optional Reading:

Melnyk, "Can Physicalism be Non-Reductive?" (PDF); Crisp and Warfield, "Kim's Master Argument" (PDF); Horgan, "From Supervenience to Superdupervenience" (PDF); Kim, "'Strong' and 'Global' Supervenience Revisited" (PDF).

Week 7: Emergence and Dualism

Tuesday:

Chalmers, "Weak and Strong Emergence" (PDF)
Crane, "The Significance of Emergence" (PDF)

Thursday:

Forrest, "Difficulties with Physicalism, and a Programme for Dualists"

Optional Reading:

Kim, "Emergence: Core Ideas and Issues" (PDF)

Week 8: Dualism

Tuesday:

Swinburne, "Substance Dualism" (PDF)

Thursday:

Lowe, "Non-Cartesian Dualism"

Optional Reading:

Foster, "The Succinct Case for Idealism"; Wigner, "Remarks on the Mind-Body Question."

Week 9: Dualism cont.

Tuesday:

Zimmerman, "From Property Dualism to Substance Dualism" (PDF)

Thursday:

Lycan, "Giving Dualism its Due" (PDF)

Optional Reading:

Crane, "Dualism, Monism, and Physicalism" (PDF)

Week 10:

Tuesday:

Catch-up

Thursday:

Final Reflections

Final Paper due Friday at midnight in dropbox.