

**PHILOSOPHY OF MIND: FALL 2015
(5AANB012)**

Credits: 15 units

Tutor: Dr. Matthew Parrott

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Consultation Hours: Tuesday 5-6 & Wednesday 3:30-4:30

Lecture Hours: 1-2 pm Tuesday, Room S -3.20

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on questions in the philosophy of mind. We will approach this topic by thinking through some problems that arise from reflecting on the metaphysics and epistemology of the mind. What is the mind? How does the mind relate to the brain? What is consciousness? How do we know about our own thoughts, feelings, and desires and how do we know about those of other people? In addressing these questions, we will cover topics central to contemporary philosophical discussions of the mind, including consciousness, intentional content, mental causation, and self-knowledge.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Understand key issues in the philosophy of mind.
- 2) Develop the ability to think carefully and critically about philosophical questions.
- 3) Develop skills in critical reading, writing, analytical thinking and in written and oral communication.

ASSESSMENT

Formative Assessment: 2 x 1,500 word essays

First essay due 16:00 on Friday 30 October 2015

Second essay due: 16:00 on Friday 11 December 2015

Summative Assessment: 1 x 2 hour exam (100%)

Time and Location TBD

READING

The readings for the course are separated into the following two categories:

Core Reading: reading that everyone who wants proper coverage of the subject must read.

Further Reading: additional readings to help further develop your views on a particular subject.

Many of the readings for the course can be found either online (marked with a *) or in the following collection of essays:

D. Chalmers (ed.): *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Another useful collection is:

David Rosenthal (ed.): *The Nature of Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

The following are good introductory texts for anyone seeking background knowledge:

T. Crane: *The Elements of Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

J. Kim: *Philosophy of Mind* (3rd edition). Boulder: Westview Press.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: The Mark of Mentality

Core Reading

*T. Crane: 'Intentionality as the Mark of the Mental', in Anthony O'Hear (ed.), *Contemporary Issues in the Philosophy of Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*R. Rorty: *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Chapter 1. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Further Reading

J. Kim: 'Is there a "Mark of the Mental"?' from Chapter 1 of his *Philosophy of Mind* pp. 17-27.

F. Brentano: 'The Distinction between Mental and Physical Phenomenon', in Chalmers.

Week 2: Mind-Brain Identity

Core Reading

*Smart, J.J.C., 1959, 'Sensations and Brain Processes', *Philosophical Review*, 68: 141–156. Also in Chalmers.

*S. Kripke: *Naming and Necessity*, Lecture 3. London: Blackwell.

*P. Churchland: 'Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes' in Chalmers.

Further reading

*D. Stoljar: 'Physicalism', in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/physicalism/>)

*D. Papineau: *Thinking about Consciousness*, Chapter 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Week 3: Functionalism

Core Reading

- *J. Levin: 'Functionalism' in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/functionalism>)
- *H. Putnam: 'The Nature of Mental States', in Chalmers.
- *D. Lewis: 'Psycho-physical and Theoretical Identifications', in Chalmers.

Further reading

- *N. Block: 'Troubles with Functionalism', in his *Readings in Philosophy of Psychology*. Vol. 1. London: Methuen. Excerpt reprinted in Chalmers.
- *D. Lewis: 'Reduction of Mind', in S. Guttenplan (ed.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of Mind*. London: Blackwell.

Week 4: Mental Causation

- *K. Bennett: 'Mental Causation', *Philosophy Compass*, 2, no. 2 (2007): 316-37.
- *J. Kim: "Multiple Realization and the Metaphysics of Reduction", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 52:1-26.
- *S. Yablo: 'Mental Causation', in Chalmers.

Further reading

- *Antony, L. M., 1991, "The Causal Relevance of the Mental: More on the Mattering of Minds" *Mind & Language*, 6: 295–327.
- *D. Davidson: 'Mental Events', in Chalmers.

Week 5: Consciousness

Core Reading

- *N. Block: 'On a Confusion about the Concept of Consciousness', in Chalmers.
- *T. Nagel: 'What it is Like to Be a Bat?' in Chalmers.
- *D. Dennett: 'Quining Qualia', in Chalmers.

Further reading

- Hurley, S. 1998. *Consciousness in Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- *Wilkes, K. V. 1984. "Is consciousness important?" *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 35: 223–43.

Week 6: Consciousness

Core Reading

- *F. Jackson: 'Epiphenomenal Qualia', in Chalmers.
- *D. Lewis: 'What Experience Teaches', in Chalmers.
- *J. Levine: 'Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap', in Chalmers.

Further reading

- *B. Loar: 'Phenomenal States', in Chalmers.

*Gertler, B., 1999, "A Defense of the Knowledge Argument". *Philosophical Studies* 93: 317–336.

Week 7: Intentionality

Core reading

J. Fodor: 'A Theory of Content (I)', in his *A Theory of Content and Other Essays*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

*D. Dennett: 'Intentional Systems', *Journal of Philosophy*, 68 (1971): 87-106.

*R. Milliken: 'Biosemantics', in Chalmers.

Further reading

*Neander, K., 1995, "Misrepresenting and Malfunctioning," *Philosophical Studies*, 79: 109–141.

*F. Dretske: 'If you can't make one, you don't know how it works', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 19 (1):468-482 (1994)

Week 8: Intentionality

Core reading

*H. Putnam: 'The Meaning of Meaning', in his *Mind, Language and Reality*, *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Excerpt reprinted in Chalmers.

*A. Clark and D. Chalmers: 'The Extended Mind' in Chalmers.

Further reading

*K. Farkas: 'What Is Externalism?', *Philosophical Studies*, 112 (2003).

*F. Egan: How to Think About Mental Content. *Philosophical Studies* (2013)

Week 9: Self-Knowledge

Core reading

*B. Gertler: 'Self-Knowledge' in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/self-knowledge/>)

*J. Heal: 'On First-Person Authority', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (102): 1-21.

*G. Ryle: *The Concept of Mind*, Chapter 6. London: Penguin Books.

Further Reading

*S. Shoemaker: Self-Knowledge and 'Inner Sense', in his *The First-Person Perspective and Other Essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*A. Byrne: 'Introspection', *Philosophical Topics*, 33: 79-103.

Week 10: Knowledge of others' minds

Core reading

*F. Dretske: 'Perception and Other Minds', *Nous* 7(1973): 33-44.

*A. Gomes: 'Testimony and Other Minds', forthcoming in *Erkenntnis*.

*B. Russell: 'Analogy' in Rosenthal.

Further reading

A. Avramides: 'Other Minds', in B. McLaughlin, et. al., (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*J. Smith: 'The Phenomenology of Face-to-face Mindreading', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 87 (2013).

QUESTIONS FOR FORMATIVE ESSAYS

Essay 1

- 1) Are all of our concepts of mental states essentially functional concepts?
- 2) Is it right to think that pain, like every other mental state, exhibits intentionality?
- 3) If mental states supervene on physical states, does that mean that mental states do not really have any causal powers?
- 4) 'That everything should be explicable in terms of physics (together of course with descriptions of the ways in which the parts are put together-roughly biology is to physics as radio-engineering is to elector-magnetism) except the occurrence of sensations seems to me to be frankly unbelievable.' (Smart) Discuss.
- 5) Evaluate Dennett's argument for the conclusion that consciousness has no 'special' properties.

Essay 2

- 6) If a scientist can stimulate the brain in such a manner as to generate thoughts, can an externalist account of mental content be correct?
- 7) In what sense, if any, does a person have authority for her own mental states?
- 8) What role, if any, do 'consumer systems' play in connecting an intentional state to the thing that it represents?
- 9) Do we acquire knowledge of another person's mental state through testimony?
- 10) When Mary is let out of her black and white room, does she gain any 'phenomenal information'?