

## PHIL\*3180-01 PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

**Instructor:** A. Bailey

### **Brief Course Synopsis:**

This course will cover some of the more central issues and positions in contemporary philosophy of mind. In lectures and class discussions we will deal with the following topics:

- The ontology of the mind and its relation with the brain. Are mental states such as beliefs to be identified with states of the soul, chunks of brain-matter, with a certain pattern of brain processing, or what?
- The metaphysics of phenomenal consciousness experience. How can a grey soup of chemicals and electrically active cells produce sensations of pain, colour experience, the emotion of infatuation, or vivid memories of last summer's holiday in Costa Rica?
- The nature of mental content. How can a brain state be *about* the outside world? What is the structure of thought—is it, for example, structured just like a language, or more like a sequence of images, or what? What kind of access do we have to the contents of our own thoughts?

Our primary objectives are to:

- understand and critically evaluate some of the principal theses advanced by important contemporary philosophers of mind;
- acquire some overall understanding of the main issues in modern philosophy of mind—issues which are fairly complex and inter-connected, and which are best understood by thinking about a sequence of central problems; and to
- develop skills in reading and writing about complex and abstract ideas.

### **Textbook(s):**

David Chalmers (ed.), *Philosophy of Mind—Classical and Contemporary Readings* (Oxford University Press 2002, ISBN: 0-19-514581-X)

The assignments will include a final exam, a midterm exam, and essay work.