



Department of Philosophy

PHIL*3180 “Philosophy of Mind” Winter 2014 MWF 1:30–2:20, MINS 103

COURSE OUTLINE

Please read this outline carefully and retain it for future reference.

Instructor: Andrew Bailey
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Phone extension: 56389
E-mail: abailey@uoguelph.ca
Class web site: [CourseLink](#)
Office hours: Monday 3:00–4:00, or by appointment.

Course prerequisites: 1.50 credits in philosophy.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

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 Marrakesh?
- 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.

REQUIRED TEXT:

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

All of the required readings will be from this text. There are 34 readings assigned for this class, totalling about 325 pages (averaging 27–28 pages a week).

- Week 1: 13 pages
- Week 2: 32 pages
- Week 3: 25 pages
- Week 4: 19 pages
- Week 5: 23 pages
- Week 6: 36 pages
- Week 7: 13 pages
- Week 8: 54 pages
- Week 9: 28 pages
- Week 10: 40 pages
- Week 11: 30 pages
- Week 12: 14 pages

The main content for this course—the content that you will be examined on—is the readings from the textbook. Classes are intended to assist you in your engagement with the texts, rather than to summarize, supplement or replace them. I will be assuming that you will be devoting at least four or five hours a week *outside of class time* to reading and thinking about the texts (including time spent preparing for exams and writing the short essays).

RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND RESOURCES:

A strongly recommended additional text, which is available at the University Bookstore, is:

- Andrew Bailey (ed.), *The Philosophy of Mind: Key Thinkers* (Bloomsbury 2013, ISBN: 978-1-4411-4276-4)

Also recommended, and on reserve at the Library, are:

- Neil Campbell, *A Brief Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind* (Broadview Press 2005, ISBN: 978-1551116174)
- John Searle, *Mind: A Brief Introduction* (Oxford University Press 2004, ISBN: 978-0195157345)

The following resources are linked to in CourseLink:

- The *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*: <http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/V038>
- PhilPapers: <http://philpapers.org/browse/philosophy-of-mind>

There is also a one-chapter summary of philosophy of mind, written by myself, available on CourseLink.

EVALUATION:

The evaluation for this course will consist of two exams (a midterm worth 20% and a cumulative final exam worth 40%) and two short essays (each worth 20%).

A: Essays.

The essays will be due *in-class* on the following dates:

- Essay 1: Monday, February 3rd
- Essay 2: Monday, March 24th

Each of these essays is to be an exegesis and critique of one of the papers we will be reading for the class. They should be four to six pages long (or roughly 1,500 to 2,000 words). More detailed evaluation criteria and advice will be provided in a handout with the essay topics. Papers written on an unapproved subject will be considered ‘off-topic’ and graded accordingly.

In grading the essays, I will take into consideration your ability to use correctly and effectively the language appropriate to the assignment: in particular, you should strive to write grammatically, accurately, clearly, precisely and concisely.

Please note that essays cannot normally be submitted or returned via the department administrative office or through the campus mail system. Papers can be submitted by e-mail only in an emergency. Assistance with writing essays is also available from the Learning Commons (www.learningcommons.uoguelph.ca/) and from Writing Services (http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/assistance/writing_services/).

B: Exams.

The in-class midterm will take place on Wednesday, February 26th.

The registrar-scheduled final exam will take place on Tuesday, April 8th, from 8:30 to 10:30 AM, in a top-secret location to be announced (probably our usual classroom).

This course outline includes a list of twenty questions. None of these questions will appear on either exam; however, if you can answer all of these questions (in sufficient detail) you should be able to answer any question that may appear on the exams. The exams will not be open book, but you can bring a 'cheat sheet.' On both sides of a standard sheet of 8½"×11" paper you can write anything at all that you think might help you, and you can refer to that sheet (but nothing else) during the exams.

The assignments and exams will be graded using standards described in Section VIII of the Undergraduate Calendar (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-grds.shtml>). Information on Academic Consideration and Appeals appears in the same section.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION:

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

WHEN YOU CANNOT MEET A COURSE REQUIREMENT:

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, ID number, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>).

LATE PENALTIES:

Unless other arrangements are made, in writing, with the course instructor, late assignments will be penalized by 5% for the first day they are late and then 2% for every subsequent day. (For example, a grade that otherwise would have been 77% will be 68% for an essay that is three days late.) To 'stop the clock' for a late assignment, email it to me as soon as it is completed; then hand in a hard copy at the next soonest opportunity.

DROP DATE:

The last date to drop one-semester Winter 2014 courses without academic penalty is Friday March 7. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>).

COPIES OF OUT-OF-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights, which carry commensurate responsibilities that involve, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar

(<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c15/c14-strightsrespon.shtml>).

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar

(<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>).

RECORDING OF MATERIALS:

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

STUDENTS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT:

Resources are available to you if you require additional support in the course (e.g. if you have a learning disability or are dealing with other issues that are impacting on your ability to meet the course requirements). I encourage you to come and discuss this me, and to contact the appropriate university resource. The Centre for Students with Disabilities (which includes learning disabilities) is on Level 3 of the University Centre (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/csd/>), as is Counselling Services (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/counselling/>).

RESOURCES:

- a. The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations that apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>.
- b. The best resource for general academic counselling (e.g. about degree requirements, or for approval to add/drop a course) is your program counsellor: these are listed at <https://www.uoguelph.ca/uaic/programcounsellors>. The Philosophy Department's academic advisor for undergraduates is Prof. Omid Payrow Shabani, extension 53201, oshabani@uoguelph.ca.
- c. The Library and Learning Commons offer free services to help you succeed academically. You can meet with a peer helper to talk about study strategies or your writing assignments, get assistance finding journal articles and books, register for academic workshops, and lots more. Visit the Library website for more information: <http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/assistance/>.

PROVISIONAL Class Schedule, PHIL 3180, Winter 2014

	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
1	Jan. 6 th : Course Outline	Jan. 8 th : General Introduction [Bailey (Chap 1)]	Jan. 10 th : Dualism Descartes (1-A1, 1-A2)
2	Jan. 13 th : Dualism Huxley (1-A3), Smullyan (1-A4)	Jan. 15 th : Behaviourism Ryle (1-B5), Carnap (1-B6)	Jan. 17 th : Behaviourism Putnam (1-B7)
3	Jan. 20 th : Identity Theory Place (1-C8), Smart (1-C9)	Jan. 22 nd : Identity Theory Feigl (1-C10)	Jan. 24 th : Functionalism Putnam (1-D11)
4	Jan. 27 th : Functionalism Armstrong (1-D12)	Jan. 29 th : Functionalism Lewis (1-D13)	Jan 31 st : Functionalism Block (1-D14)
5	Feb. 3 rd : Functionalism Nida-R melin (1-D15) SHORT ESSAY 1 DUE	Feb. 5 th : Functionalism and AI Searle (4-63)	Feb. 7 th : Anomalous Monism Davidson (1-E17)
6	Feb. 10 th : Supervenience/ Reduction Fodor (1-D18), Kim (1-D19)	Feb. 12 th : Supervenience/ Reduction Kim (1-D19)	Feb. 14 th : Supervenience/ Reduction Horgan (1-D20)
	Feb. 17 th : READING WEEK	Feb. 19 th : READING WEEK	Feb. 21 st : READING WEEK
7	Feb. 24 th : Exam Review	Feb. 26 th : EXAM	Feb 28 th : Consciousness Block (2-A24)
8	Mar. 3 rd : Consciousness Nagel (2-A25)	Mar. 5 th : Consciousness Dennett (2-A26)	Mar. 7 th : Consciousness Chalmers (2-A27)
9	Mar. 10 th : Knowledge Argument Jackson (2-B28)	Mar. 12 th : Knowledge Argument Lewis (2-B29)	Mar. 14 th : Knowledge Argument Loar (2-B30)
10	Mar. 17 th : Explanatory Gap Levine (2-B35)	Mar. 19 th : Explanatory Gap Churchland (2-B36)	Mar. 21 st : Explanatory Gap Block and Stalnaker (2-B37)
11	Mar. 24 th : Intentionality Dretske (3-A46) SHORT ESSAY 2 DUE	Mar. 26 th : Intentionality Millikan (3-A47)	Mar. 28 th : Intentionality Brandom (3-A48)
12	Mar. 31 st : Intentionality Horgan and Tienson (3-A49)	Apr. 2 nd : Exam Review	Apr. 4 th : Last Class!

NOTE: Readings are to be done *by the class date indicated*.
Date of Final Exam: Tuesday, **April 8th, 8:30–10:30 AM**.

ONE-SENTENCE PAPER SUMMARIES

A. METAPHYSICS OF MIND

Descartes (1-A1, 1-A2)

Mind and matter are distinct substances that interact causally.

Huxley (1-A3)

Mind and matter are distinct substances, but while the mind is causally affected by the body it has no effect on the body (i.e. the mind is *epiphenomenal*).

Smullyan (1-A4)

If there are sufficient physical (e.g. neural) causes for all our behaviour, then if dualism is true the removal of the mind should make no difference at all to behaviour.

Ryle (1-B5)

Substance dualism is a myth based on a category mistake: the mind should not be seen as something distinct from the body and steering it 'from the inside,' but as an aspect of the body's own behaviour.

Carnap (1-B6)

All meaningful claims about the mind can be translated into—i.e. mean the same as—claims about observable behaviour.

Putnam (1-B7)

At least some mental states (e.g. pain) are distinct from any given behavioural disposition, so behaviourism cannot be true.

Place (1-C8)

Mental states are type-identical with brain states (in the same way as water is identical with H₂O); the objection that mental states have properties brain states could not have is dismissed as a 'phenomenological fallacy.'

Smart (1-C9)

Mental states are type-identical with brain states (in the same way as water is identical with H₂O); the objection that mental states have properties brain states could not have is dealt with by arguing that we can characterise mental concepts in a 'topic neutral' way.

Feigl (1-C10)

Mental states are type-identical with brain states (in the same way as water is identical with H₂O); the objection that mental states have properties brain states could not have is dealt with by arguing that physics characterises only the extrinsic properties of things, which allows the possibility that mental states are tied to the intrinsic aspect of some neural states.

Putnam (1-D11)

Neither behaviourism nor identity theory are empirically plausible, and instead mental states are best thought of as functional states of a computational machine.

Armstrong (1-D12)

Mental states are defined in terms of their causal role, and so functionalism is analytically true.

Lewis (1-D13)

Mental states are defined in terms of their causal role as theoretical entities of folk psychology, and so functionalism is analytically true.

Block (1-D14)

A system could have the same functional states as a conscious system while having no qualitative mental states at all, so functionalism is false.

Nida-R melin (1-D15)

Two systems could have the same relevant functional states as a conscious system while having different qualitative mental states, so functionalism is false.

Scarle (4-63)

Merely programming a computer in the right way will not suffice for a mind, since computers have syntax but no real semantics; so computational functionalism is false (and Strong AI is impossible).

Davidson (1-E17)

Any given mental event is identical to a physical event, but there are no strict laws that connect mental events to physical events, or mental events to each other; so although physicalism is true the mental cannot be reduced to the physical.

Fodor (1-D18)

Theories—laws and categories—of high-level sciences (such as psychology) are not reducible to the theories of a low-level science (such as physics).

Kim (1-D19)

Multiple realizability does not pose an obstacle to the reduction of psychology to physics at a species-specific level, so high-level sciences (such as psychology) might be reducible to the theories of a low-level science (such as physics).

Horgan (1-D20)

Horgan critically discusses the notion that the mental-physical relationship is best analyzed as one of supervenience rather than reduction, and concludes that in fact what is needed is superdupervenience.

B. THE PROBLEM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Block (2-A24)

There are multiple senses of 'consciousness': phenomenal consciousness, access consciousness, self-consciousness and monitoring consciousness.

Nagel (2-A25)

Phenomenal consciousness is particularly hard to explain because of its subjective nature (while standard explanations in science and philosophy are objective).

Dennett (2-A26)

Qualia do not exist: qualia are standardly taken to be ineffable, intrinsic, private and directly apprehensible, and there is no reason to believe that mental states have properties of this sort.

Chalmers (2-A27)

Chalmers distinguishes between the 'hard' and 'easy' problems of consciousness, and argues against physicalism about consciousness and in favour of something like property dualism.

Jackson (2-B28)

There are truths about consciousness that cannot be deduced from physical truths, and hence consciousness is non-physical and epiphenomenal.

Lewis (2-B29)

Mary, the scientist in Jackson's article, lacks no factual knowledge when she knows all the physical truths—all she gains when she sees colour for the first time are new abilities—and hence consciousness is physical.

Loar (2-B30)

Mary does learn something new when she sees colour for the first time, but this is not a new fact—it is a fact she already knew, apprehended in a new way—and hence consciousness is physical.

Levine (2-B35)

There is a deep explanatory gap between physical processes and consciousness; it seems we could never have a fully satisfying explanation of consciousness in physical terms.

Churchland (2-B36)

There is no deep explanatory gap between physical processes and consciousness; we can expect a fully satisfying explanation of consciousness in physical terms to emerge in due course.

Block and Stalnaker (2-B37)

A reductive explanation of consciousness in terms of physical processes is possible even if high-level concepts (phenomenal concepts) cannot be analyzed in terms of low-level (physical) descriptions, and so there is no need to worry about an explanatory gap.

C. MENTAL CONTENT

Dretske (3-A46)

The intentionality ('aboutness') of mental phenomena is not mysterious but is grounded in relatively simple non-psychological phenomena having to do with the 'natural function' of the system.

Millikan (3-A47)

The intentionality ('aboutness') of mental phenomena is not mysterious but is grounded in relatively simple non-psychological phenomena having to do with the proper functioning of a system within its evolutionarily 'normal' conditions.

Brandom (3-A48)

The intentionality ('aboutness') of mental phenomena is grounded in social practices of reasoning and inference.

Horgan and Tienson (3-A49)

The intentionality ('aboutness') of mental phenomena is grounded in the phenomenological character of conscious experience.

TWENTY QUESTIONS

- 1) Are mind and matter distinct substances? If so, do they causally interact? Also, how would we know about the mental states of others?
- 2) Can all meaningful claims about the mind be translated into claims about observable behaviour? If so, what does this show? How does Putnam argue that behaviourism cannot be true? Is he right?
- 3) Could consciousness be a brain process (and what exactly does this mean)? How do Place, Smart and Feigl argue that it might be? How does Putnam argue that it isn't? How good are these arguments?
- 4) What exactly is machine functionalism? How does Putnam argue for its empirical plausibility? Is he right?
- 5) Are mental concepts also causal concepts? If so, what would this show?
- 6) Are mental terms theoretical terms of 'folk psychology'? If so, what would this show?
- 7) How do arguments from absent and inverted qualia (Block, Nida-R melin, Searle) work to try and show functionalism is false? Are they effective?
- 8) What exactly is Davidson's anomalous monism? How does he argue for the truth of this theory? How good is this argument?
- 9) Is psychology reducible to physics? If so, what would this show? If not, what would this show?
- 10) What is supervenience? Is the mind-brain relationship best explained as a kind of supervenience? Why or why not?
- 11) What are the different senses of 'consciousness'? Is there an important difference between phenomenal consciousness and the other sorts (and if so what is it)? Is the problem of phenomenal consciousness particularly difficult?
- 12) What are qualia? Do they exist?
- 13) What is the 'knowledge argument' against physicalism? What are Lewis' and Loar's responses to this argument? Who wins?
- 14) What is the 'explanatory gap'? Does it exist? If so, what would this show?
- 15) What is naturalized semantics (Dretske, Millikan)? How plausible—i.e. philosophically well-defended—is it? Is it better or worse than other candidate theories of mental content?
- 16) What is Brandom's theory of propositional content? How plausible—i.e. philosophically well-defended—is it? Is it better or worse than other candidate theories of mental content?
- 17) What is Horgan and Tienson's theory of intentionality? How plausible—i.e. philosophically well-defended—is it? Is it better or worse than other candidate theories of mental content?
- 18) On the basis of the readings you have done for this course, what do you think is the most adequate account of the metaphysics of mind? Defend your answer.
- 19) On the basis of the readings you have done for this course, what do you think is the most adequate account of phenomenal consciousness? Defend your answer.
- 20) On the basis of the readings you have done for this course, what do you think is the most adequate account of mental content? Defend your answer.