University of Guelph tagline

PHIL\*3180

Philosophy of Mind

Term: Fall 2023

Section(s): 01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

**\*\*Please check Syllabus and Announcements on CourseLink for the most up-to-date information\*\***

# Course Details

## Calendar Description

This course is a survey of central issues and positions in contemporary philosophy of mind. Topics may include: the nature of the mind and its relation with the brain; the puzzle of conscious experience; and the problem of mental content.

## Detailed Course Description

This course will cover recent development at the intersections of philosophy of cognitive science and artificial intelligence. We will explore issues such as consciousness, animal minds, sentience, emotions, memory, belief, and attention.

## Timetable

In-person delivery (no remote option)

## T/Th 10:00 AM - 11:20 AM

## MCKN, 226

## Final Exam

There is no final exam for this course, only a final research paper, due **11:59PM Thursday, Dec 7**

# Instructional Support

Please see Web Advisor for instructor information.

Office Hours: By appointment, either in-person (MCKN 336) or Teams

### Teaching Assistants:

Name: April Marratto

Email: amarratt@uoguelph.ca

Office Hours: By appointment on Teams

# Resources

All required and recommended readings will be posted on Courselink.

# Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Analyze and evaluate major historical and/or conceptual developments in philosophy of mind;
2. Identify and critically evaluate the practical significance of major developments in philosophy of mind;
3. Read and comprehend complex original source materials in the history and problems of philosophy;
4. Write clearly and cogently on advanced problems in philosophy;
5. Be skilled in the use of key tools for sound justification and rational persuasion, including formal and informal logic, the gathering of empirical evidence, the discerning of implicit bias and the balanced judgment of conflicting interpretations

# Teaching and Learning Activities

\*\*SUBJECT TO CHANGE: Always check CourseLink for most up-to-date information on scheduling, readings, assignments, etc.\*\*

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| Date | Content |
| Week 1: Sept 7  **INTRODUCTION** | READ: “If AI becomes conscious, how will we know?” |
| Week 2: Sept 12, 14  **MEAT MACHINES** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 1 DUE 11:59PM Monday Sept 11**  READ:   * Clark (2001) “Introduction” * Clark (2001) “Appendix I and II” |
| Week 3: Sept 19, 21  **WHAT ITS LIKE** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 2 DUE 11:59PM Monday Sept 18**  **Group 1 presentation**  READ:   * Nagel (1974) What is it like to be a bat? * Akins (1993) What is it like to be boring and myopic? |
| Week 4: Sept 26, 28  **ANIMAL MINDS** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 3 DUE 11:59PM Monday Sept 26**  **Group 2 presentation**  READ:   * Andrews (2021) Animal cognition * WATCH: Ed Yong, The hidden world of animal sense with Ed Yong |
| Week 5: Oct 3, 5  **SENTIENCE** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 4 DUE 11:59PM Monday Oct 3**  **Group 3 presentation**  READ:   * Mason & Lavery (2022) What is it like to be a bass? * Birch et al (2021) - Review of evidence of sentience |
| Week 6: FALL BREAK | **NO CLASS, prepare for midterm** |
| Week 7: Oct 17,19  **MIDTERM** | **Tuesday, Oct 17: IN-PERSON MIDTERM EXAM**  Thursday, October 19, Read: de Waal, & Andrews (2022) The question of animal emotions. |
| Week 8: Oct 24, 26  **EMOTION** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 5 DUE 11:59PM Monday Oct 23**  **Groups 4,5 presentation**  READ:   * Scarantino (2018) - Emotion |
| Week 9: Oct 31, Nov 2  **MEMORY** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 6 DUE 11:59PM Monday Oct 30**  **Group 6 presentation**  READ:   * DeBrigard (2014) - The nature of memory traces * Loftus (2003) – Make-believe memories |
| Week 10: Nov 7 ONLY  **BELIEF** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 7 DUE 11:59PM Monday Nov 6**  **Group 7 presentation**  READ:   * Schwitzgebel (2022) - The nature of belief   NO CLASS on Thursday Nov 9 |
| Week 11: Nov 14,16  **ATTENTION** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 8 DUE 11:59PM Monday Nov 13**  **Group 8 presentation**  READ:   * Watzl (2011) – The nature of attention * Watzl (2011) – The philosophical significance of attention |
| Week 12: Nov 21, 23  **AI CONSCIOUSNESS** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 9 DUE 11:59PM Monday Nov 20**  **Group 9 presentation**  READ:   * Chalmers (2023) – Could an LLM be conscious? * OPTIONAL: Skim Butlin et al., (2023) – Consciousness in AI |
| Week 13: Nov 28, 30  **A GRAND UNIFIED THEORY?** | **WEEKLY RESPONSE 10 DUE 11:59PM Monday Nov 27**  **Group 10 presentation**  READ:   * Clark (2013) – Whatever next |
| **FINAL PAPER** | **DUE 11:59PM Thursday, Dec 7** |

# Assessments

1. **Weekly Writing Responses (15%)**
   1. Due most weeks (see syllabus above for specific dates). Each week, you will submit a Weekly Response **about the readings for the upcoming week**. The content of the response is up to you, but all responses should deal directly with the reading assigned for that week. You may want to choose a sentence or paragraph you found especially provocative, difficult, or remarkable, then explain why you found it provocative, difficult, or remarkable. Alternatively, you may want to argue that one of the authors is right or wrong in making some particular claim. Or you may wish to connect two passages in the reading that illuminate each other. You might relate a central concept from the reading to recent or current events. You may even just pick a passage and ask detailed questions about it. Your responses will *directly* guide what we address in class, and I will sometimes quote from them, so please take them seriously. In general, the responses should demonstrate that you have made a good effort to engage with the readings, and that you have raised a question worthy of consideration and discussion with your peers. In other words, they should go above and beyond the kind of thing that could be generated by ChatGPT. While there is no strict requirement for length, the responses should be at least a paragraph long but shorter than a full page. I will drop your lowest score.
2. **Group Presentation (25%)**
   1. At the beginning of the term, you will be assigned to a group and your group will be responsible for producing one in-class presentation. The presentations should summarize the assigned and/or recommended readings for the week to which your group is assigned. Like the Weekly Responses, you presentation should also raise question(s) for consideration and discussion. The idea is that we will have group presentation most weeks so that the presentations from your classmates can supplement the readings. The format of the presentation is up to your group. You might record a video of group members having a discussion about the readings, or you could do this in-person, in-class. You might stage a “debate” between group members where half of the group argues for one side of an issue from the reading, and the other half of the group defends the opposite side of the issue. Be creative! You could even make music, or a dance, or a skit, or anything else, so long as everyone in the group contributes in some in way, and helps your classmates to understand and think more deeply about the topic for the week. Please note that your group need not coordinate with other groups presenting on the same day. It’s okay if there is a bit of overlap between the different presentations.
3. **In-Person Midterm Exam (30%)**
   1. On **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17** you will take an in-person midterm essay exam, during the scheduled class time. You will be required to write the exam on your computer. The exam will consist a few short-answer/essay questions. The exam will be closed-note and closed-book, with no outside material permitted.
4. **Final Research Paper (30%)**
   1. The culmination of your work in the class is a final research paper. You will need to incorporate at least one peer-reviewed source from outside of the assigned readings. Your research paper should demonstrate high-level engagement with themes from the course. The paper should not be a mere summary of other people’s writing, but should also reflect your unique contribution to debates in philosophy of mind. The paper should be around five pages (~1,000 words). Strategies for successful writing will be discussed in class. The due date is **11:59PM Thursday, Dec 7**

# Late Policy

**Late work will not be accepted**. All of your assignments must be submitted through CourseLink. Assignments will not be accepted via e-mail. Assignment submissions will close at the deadline specified in the syllabus. When uploading assignments, you should leave yourself time to account for technical difficulties (e.g., don’t wait to submit your assignment two minutes before the deadline). “There was a problem with my internet” or “Courselink wasn’t working” are (almost never) acceptable excuses. That said, if you foresee a potential issue with turning in an assignment on time (such as an interview, wedding, funeral, etc.), let me know **in advance** and we can work out a mutually agreeable solution.

# AI Policy

A significant portion of this course is dedicated to understanding the impacts of AI and other emerging technologies. In order to do this, we need to understand the strengths and limitations of Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT. This, in turn, requires that we need to use these tools and collectively and critically evaluate them. When it comes to AI and education, it is difficult to formulate a one-size-fits-all policy. But in general, the use of AI tools is permitted in this course to ASSIST you with tasks such as: brainstorming, forming an outline, refining a research question or thesis statement, generating counterarguments/objections and checking spelling/grammar. In general, the use of AI tools is NOT permitted to be a SUBSTITUTE for you writing your Weekly Responses, Midterm, or Final Paper. Like most worthwhile things in life, you have to put in the work yourself.

CITATION: The general practice is that you cite anything that isn't your original thought or common knowledge, whether it is a peer-reviewed article, a news story, the lecture slides, or a conversation with a chatbot. As with the use of any other external sources used in your writing, you should cite the use of Generative AI tools like ChatGPT. There are no consensus standards on this yet, but I like the suggestion from the MLA that at the very least you should include the text of the prompt. For example, if you are writing about confirmation bias in your paper, and you used ChatGPT, then you would cite it like this: “Tell me about confirmation bias” prompt. *ChatGPT*, 12 Apr. version.

Additional strategies for citing and engaging with LLMs will be discussed in class.

All written assignments will be submitted through the TurnItIn plagiarism and AI detector.

# University Standard Statements

## Email 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#, and e-mail contact.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

## Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses [https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08- drop.shtml](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-%20drop.shtml)

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes [https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg- regchg.shtml](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-%20regchg.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.

## Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway. Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 14 days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer).Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time. More information: [www.uoguelph.ca/sas](http://www.uoguelph.ca/sas)

## Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of 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. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct [https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08- amisconduct.shtml](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-%20amisconduct.shtml)

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

## Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

## Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph’s procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

## Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings, changes in classroom protocols, and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via Courselink and/or class email. This includes on-campus scheduling during the semester, mid-terms and final examination schedules. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/) and circulated by email.

## Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

## COVID-19 Safety Protocols

For information on current safety protocols, follow these links:

* [https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your- safe-return/](https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your-%20safe-return/)
* <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/spaces/#ClassroomSpaces>

Please note, that these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving University, Public Health or government directives.