



# Philosophy of Mind (PHIL 235)

Bates College, Pettigrew 300

Professor William Seeley

M/W 1:10 – 2:30

Office Hours, M/W 11-12

## Course Description:

What is a mind? Are minds distinct from brains? If so, what is the relationship between minds and brains? Could a brain literally lose its mind? If it were possible, would the individual become a person without thoughts? Would it even be a person at all? Questions like these are the domain of philosophy of mind. In this field philosophers ask questions about the nature mind, the relationship between the mind and its environment, and the ability of anyone to know the contents of other minds. For instance, what is a belief, what is a desire, and how do these two types of mental states combine to form our human conception of the world. In this course we will examine these sorts of questions. The topics discussed will include: dualism, behaviorism, physicalism, the nature of psychological explanation, consciousness, and the nature of mental representation. This course is a good course for students who are also interested in cognitive science, philosophy of language, and philosophy of science.

## Course Goals:

The goals of this course are threefold. We will try to come to an understanding of what the philosophical distinction between minds and bodies is, and more importantly what it is not. In this context we will evaluate contemporary debates about *reduction*, *physicalism*, and *personhood*. These debates will be used to evaluate the philosophical conception of mind, the commonsense conception of a person, and their relation to scientific theories in psychology, cognitive science, and neuroscience.

## Requirements:

Students will be asked to write two 3-4 page papers (worth 15% of the final grade each), a 6-page midterm paper (worth 30% of the final grade), and a final paper (worth 40% of the final grade). Students will be given a choice between two assigned topics for each paper. Class participation is a requirement. Attendance is a minimum requirement for class participation. Therefore, absences will affect a student's final grade. Class participation will be factored in as +/- 10% of the final grade. I will also assign a range of short argument exercises as we move through the syllabus the average of which will count towards the class participation grade.

## Texts:

- David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). (C)
- Jaegwon Kim, *The Philosophy of Mind* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2011, 2005). (K)
- Eric R. Kandel, *In Search of Memory: The Emergence of a New Science of the Mind* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006). (K)
- Electronic resources and pdf files on LYCEUM. (L)

## Philosophy of Mind: syllabus

### **Some Miscellaneous Notes and Guidelines:**

Moral behavior is the grounds for, and the framework of, a healthy society. In this regard it is each of our responsibility as an individual within the community of our classroom to act responsibly. This includes following the rules and guidelines set out by the College for academic behavior. Plagiarism is a serious matter. It goes without saying that each of you is expected to do his or her own work and to cite EVERY text that is used to prepare a paper for this class. In general philosophy papers are NOT research papers. Your response papers should not involve any outside research and you should be able to manage your final papers using only material from the syllabus, assigned supplemental readings, and class discussion.

As a general rule, I ask that you not use the internet for your research except as assigned in class.

Response papers are designed to give students a chance to stretch their legs a bit with the material and give me a chance to assess your understanding of the material. These papers should offer a philosophical defense of your take on the issue at hand. But this does not mean that they are a free forum for opinions. Make sure that your papers set out the philosophical issues germane to the question and that your responses address the relative virtues and shortcomings of theoretical positions discussed in class.

Finally, the reading list for this class is arranged in topics as opposed to individual sessions. I will announce the particular readings for each class as we go along. This will allow us some flexibility in discussion so that we can spend more time on issues of interest to the class. Readings that we do not assign in class should be treated as supplemental readings. I will also occasionally upload supplementary materials to Edisk for students interested in pursuing particular issues beyond class discussion.

**Assignments:**

**All assignments are to be handed in hard copy in class the day that they are due *AND* in the dropbox on LYCEUM prior to class that day. I will not grade papers that have not been handed in both places.**

**First Paper (15%)** - Please write a 3-page (900 word) paper on one of the following topics. Your paper should be double spaced with one inch margins and in a 12 point font. The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your understanding of the arguments from Descartes that we have discussed in class. One way to think of a philosophy paper is as a critical analysis of a position expressed by an author. So, think of this as a critical analysis paper where your analysis of the argument is a position that you establish and defend.

Topics Distributed: 10/03/11

Due Date: 10/10/11 (hardcopy in class and in the dropbox on LYCEUM)

**Midterm Paper (30%)** - Write a 6 page paper (1800 word) on one of two topics to be announced on the distribution date for the midterm. Your paper should be double-spaced in 12 point font with 1" margins. The purpose of this paper is twofold: a) evaluate a standard argument in the literature; and b) demonstrate that you can synthesize the material covered in the 1st half of the semester into a coherent position.

Topics Distributed: 10/24/11

Due Date: 11/02/11 (hardcopy in class and in the dropbox on LYCEUM)

**Third Paper (10%)** - Please write a 3 page (900 word) paper on one of the following topics. Your paper should be double-spaced in 12 point font with 1" margins. The purpose of this assignment is to evaluate your understanding of the material introduced after the midterm.

Topics Distributed: 11/30/11

Due Date: 12/07/11 (hardcopy in class and in the dropbox on LYCEUM)

**Final Paper – cumulative (40%)**

Due Date: 12/15/11 @ 12:30pm (hardcopy in my mailbox in Hedge and in the dropbox on LYCEUM)

## Philosophy of Mind: syllabus

### Schedule of Readings: ( \* = suggested supplementary reading)

#### *Topic 1 : Introduction: What Is a Mind?*

##### *Dualism:*

Descartes	<i>Meditation II</i>
* Kim	Mind as Immaterial Substance

##### *Behaviorism:*

Ryle	Descartes' Myth
Putnam	Brains and Behavior
Kim	Mind as Behavior

##### *Identity Theory*

Place	Is Consciousness a Brain Process?
Smart	Sensations and Brain Processes
Kripke	<i>Naming and Necessity</i> (excerpts)
Kim	Mind as the Brain

##### *Functionalism, Reduction & Multiple Realizability:*

Putnam	The Nature of Mental States
Kim	Multiple Realization and the Metaphysics of Reduction
Bechtel & Mundale	Multiple Realizability Revisited
Kandel	<i>In Search of Memory</i> (excerpt)
Mayford & Kandel	Genetic Approaches to Memory Storage
Bickle	<i>Philosophy and Neuroscience</i> (excerpt)
*Lamprecht & LeDoux	Structural Plasticity and Memory

#### *Topic 3: Consciousness and Content*

Block	Concepts of Consciousness
Jackson	Epiphenomenal Qualia
Nagel	What Is It Like to Be a Bat?
Akins	What Is It Like to Be Boring and Myopic
Akins	A Bat Without Qualities
*Lewis	What Experience Teaches
Bechtel	Representations: From Neural Systems to Cognitive Systems
Norman et al	Beyond Mindreading
Hayes and Rees	Decoding Mental States from Brain Activity in Humans
* Piera et al	Machine Learning Classifiers and fMRI: A Tutorial Review

#### *Topic 4: The Nature of Intentionality*

Brentano	The Distinction between Mental and Physical Phenomena
Fred Dretske:	A Recipe for Thought
Ruth Millikan:	Biosemanantics
Kathleen Akins:	Of Sensation and the "Aboutness" of Mental States"

#### *Topic 5: Propositional Attitudes*

Sellars	Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind
Fodor	Propositional Attitudes
Churchland	Eliminative Materialism and Propositional Attitudes

#### *Topic 6: Internalism/Externalism*

Putnam	The Meaning of 'Meaning'
Clark and Chalmers	The Extended Mind

## Philosophy of Mind: syllabus

### Bibliography:

- Renee Descartes, Second Meditation: The Nature of the Human Mind and How It Is Better Known Than the Body," from *Meditations on First Philosophy*, reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 10-13.
- Jaegwon Kim, Chapter 3: Mind as Immaterial Substance, *Philosophy of Mind* (Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2011), 31-60.
- Gilbert Ryle, "Descartes' Myth," from *The Concept of Mind*, reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 32-38.
- Jaegwon Kim, Chapter 3: Mind as Behavior, *Philosophy of Mind* (Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2011), 61-90.
- Hilary Putnam, "Brains and Behavior," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 45-54.
- U. T. Place, Is Consciousness a Brain Process," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 55-60.
- J.J.C. Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press), 60-68.
- Jaegwon Kim, Chapter 4: Mind as Brain, *Philosophy of Mind* (Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2011), 91-128.
- Saul A. Kripke, from *Naming and Necessity*, reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 329-334.
- Hilary Putnam, "The Nature of Mental States," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 73-79.
- Jaegwon Kim, Multiple Realization and the Metaphysics of Reduction, reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 135-149.
- William Bechtel and Jennifer Mundale, "Multiple Realizability Revisted: Linking Cognitive and Neural States," *Philosophy of Science* 66(2), 1999: 175-207.
- Eric R. Kandel, *In Search of Memory: The Emergence of a New Science of the Mind* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006).
- Mark Mayford and Eric R. Kandel, "Genetic Approaches to Memory Storage," *Trends in Genetics*, 15(11), 1999: 463-470.
- John Bickle, *Philosophy and Neuroscience: A Ruthlessly Reductive Account* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003).
- William Bechtel, "Molecules, Systems, and Behavior: Another View of Memory Consolidation, in ed. John Bickle, *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Neuroscience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- Raphael Lamprecht and Joseph LeDoux, "Structural Plasticity and Memory," *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 5, 2004: 45-54.
- Ned Block, "Concepts of Consciousness," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 206-218.
- Frank Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 273-280.
- Thomas Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?" reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 119-226.
- David Lewis, "What Experience Teaches," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 281-294.
- Kathleen Akins, What Is It Like to Be Boring and Myopic?" in ed. Bo Dahlbom, *Dennett and His Critics: Demystifying the Mind* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 1993), 124-160.
- Kathleen Akins, "A Bat without Qualities," in ed. Martin Davies and Glyn W. Humphreys, *Consciousness: Psychological and Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1993), 345-358.
- William Bechtel, "Representations: From Neural Systems to Cognitive Systems," in eds. William Bechtel, Peter Mandik, Jennifer Mundale, and Robert S. Stufflebeam (eds.), *Philosophy and the Neurosciences: A Reader* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2001), 332-348.
- Kenneth A. Norman, Sean M. Polyn, Greg J. Detre, and James V. Haxby, Beyond Mindreading: Multi-Voxel pattern Analysis of fMRI Data," *TRENDS in Cognitive Sciences* 10(9), 2006: 424-430.
- John-Dylan Haynes and Geraint Rees, "Decoding Mental States from Brain Activity in Humans," *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 7, July 2006: 523-534.
- Francisco Pereira, Tom Mitchell, and Matthew Botvinick, "Machine Learning Classifiers and fMRI: A Tutorial Review," *NeuroImage* 45, 2009: S199-S209.
- Franz Brentano, "The Distinction between Mental and Physical Phenomena (excerpt)," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 479-484.
- Fred Dretske, "A Recipe for Thought," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 491-499.
- Ruth Garrett Milliken, "Biosemantics," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 500-509.
- Kathleen Akins, "Of Sensory Systems and the 'Aboutness' of Mental States," *The Journal of Philosophy* 93(7), 1996: 337-372.
- Wilfred Sellars, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (excerpt), reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 534-541.

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Jerry A. Fodor, "Propositional Attitudes," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 542-555.

Paul M. Churchland, "Eliminative Materialism and Propositional Attitudes," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 568-580.

Hilary Putnam, The Meaning of 'Meaning,' reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 581-597.

Andy Clark and David Chalmers, "The Extended Mind," reprinted in ed. David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 643-651.

Date	Readings ( * = suggested supplementary reading)	Assignments
09/07	Introduction: Varieties of philosophical theories of mind	
09/12	Descartes, Meditation II: 10-13. ( <i>C</i> )	
09/14	Ryle, The Concept of Mind: 32-38. ( <i>C</i> ) Kim, Ch. 3, Mind and Behavior: 61-90. ( <i>K</i> )	
09/19	Putnam, Brains and Behavior: 45-54. ( <i>C</i> )	
09/21	Smart, Sensations and Brain Processes: 60-62. ( <i>C</i> ) Place, Is Consciousness a Brain Process: 55-60. ( <i>C</i> ) Kim, Ch. 4, Mind as Brain: 91-128. ( <i>K</i> )	
09/26	Kripke, from Naming and Necessity: 329-333. ( <i>C</i> )	
09/28	Putnam, The Nature of Mental States: 73-79. ( <i>C</i> )	
10/03	Kim, Multiple Realization and the Metaphysics of Reduction: 135-149. ( <i>C</i> )	Topics assigned for 1 <sup>st</sup> paper
10/05	Bechtel & Mundale, Multiple Realizability Revisted: 175-207. ( <i>L</i> )	
10/10	Kandel, <i>In Search of Memory</i> : 135-316 ( <i>K</i> ) Mayford & Kandel, Genetic Approaches to Memory Storage: 463-470. ( <i>L</i> ) Bickle, <i>Philosophy and Neuroscience</i> : 149-161. ( <i>L</i> ) *Bechtel, Molecules, Systems, and Behaviors: 13-19 ( <i>L</i> ) *Lamprecht & LeDoux, Structural Plasticity and Memory ( <i>L</i> )	1st Paper Due
10/12	Block, Concepts of Consciousness: 206-218. ( <i>C</i> )	
10/17	Jackson, Epiphenomenal Qualia: 273-280. ( <i>C</i> ) Nagel, What Is It Like to Be a Bat?: 219-226. ( <i>C</i> )  * Lewis, What Experience Teaches: 281-294. ( <i>C</i> )	
10/19-10/23	!!FALL BREAK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!	
10/24	Akins, A Bat Without Qualities ( <i>L</i> )	Midterm Topics Assigned
10/26	Akins, What Is It Like to Be Boring and Myopic?: 124-159. ( <i>L</i> ) Hughes, <i>Sensory Exotica</i> (excerpts). ( <i>L</i> )	
10/31	Bechtel, Representations: From Neural Systems to Cognitive Systems: 332-348. ( <i>L</i> ) Norman et al, Beyond Mindreading: 424-430. ( <i>L</i> ) *Hayes & Rees, Decoding Mental States from Brain Activity in Humans: 523-534. ( <i>L</i> )	
11/02	Brentano, The Distinction between Mental and Physical Phenomena: 479-484. ( <i>C</i> )	Midterm Paper Due

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11/07	Dretske, A Recipe for Thought: 491-499. (C)	
11/09	Milliken, Biosemantics: 500-509. (C)	
11/14	Akins, Of Sensory Systems and the "Aboutness" of Mental States: 337-372. (L)	
11/16	Sellars, Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind (excerpt): 534-541. (C)	
11/19-11/27	!!Thanksgiving BREAK!!	
11/28	Fodor, Propositional Attitudes: 542-555. (C)	
11/30	Churchland, Eliminative Materialism and Propositional Attitudes: 560-580. (C)	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> paper topics assigned</b>
12/05	Putnam, The Meaning of Meaning: 581-596. (C)	
12/07	Clark and Chalmers, The Extended Mind: 643-651. (C)	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> paper due</b>