

Philosophy of Mind

Philosophy 435 – Section 01 – Div 01 – Fall Term 2007 – Purdue University
Instructor: Daniel Kelly

1. Course Description

The main goal of this course is to explore the nature of the mind. We will consider the relationship between the mind and the body, and the mental to the physical more generally. We'll ask, and look at some candidate answers to, questions like "What is a mind? How could we know about our own minds, or about the minds of others? How does the mind work? How is it related to the world around it? What is the nature of consciousness? Could other animals, aliens, or machines have mind, or be conscious? How could we ever know?" In the course of addressing these questions, we'll be reading and talking about immaterial spirits, futuristic computers and robots, fake computers with little people inside, Martians who behave like us but have an internal structure very different from ours, doppelgangers in parallel universes and brains in vats. We'll consider this strange parade of cases not just because it is fun, but to see what light each case can help shed on our own nature as beings with mental lives.

2. Class Meetings

Class meets Tuesday/Thursday, 3:00-4:15pm, in Room 1268 of Beering Hall.

435 (Lecture) 01 01 TTh 3:00-4:15pm Aug 20 - Dec 9, 2007 [BRNG 1268](#) ([Lec 01 - 01](#))

3. Office Hours and Contact Information

Office: 7126 Beering Hall
Office phone: 765-494-4290 (4-4290)
Email: dankelly@purdue.edu
Fall Term Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:00pm, or by appointment.

4. Course Requirements, Policies, and Grading

Grades on papers and exams will be given on the standard 0-100 point grading scale:

100-90: A
89-87: B+
86-80: B
79-77: C+
76-70: C
69-60: D
59-0: F

Final grades will be determined one of two ways. Students can elect to either write two 7-8 page papers, which will be due somewhere at the end of October and the last day of class respectively. Or students may choose to write a single 10-15 page term paper which will be due the last day of class. They will be weighted as follows:

Short Papers	45% each, or
Long Paper	90%
Class Participation	10%

EMAILED AND ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Papers not given to me by the end of class (4:15pm) the day they are due are LATE. For each day late, 7 points will be deducted.

There will be zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course. Plagiarized papers will receive a 0, the student will automatically fail the course, and their name will be handed given to the university authorities. For more on the Purdue University policy on plagiarism, see the following website:

http://www.purdue.edu/univregs/pages/stu_conduct/stu_regulations.html

Classes will be a mix of lecture and discussion focused on the topics raised by the readings. Students are encouraged to ask questions – this is usually the best way to understand philosophy. There is no mandatory attendance policy for this class, but lecture notes will not be posted online.

Class participation: I realize that not everyone is equally outgoing or talkative in class. While participation in class discussion almost always helps in learning philosophy and I highly encourage it, I do not penalize students for not speaking up – indeed, there is not even a formal attendance requirement for this course. However, a consistent record of participation and attendance will always help a student's final grade if it is on the borderline at the end of the semester. On the other hand, while I do not penalize for lack of participation, students who have not been present and engaged throughout the semester are much less likely to get the benefit of the doubt in similar borderline cases.

5. Texts

The only required text is *The Philosophy of Mind: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, edited by David Chalmers. It is (or should be) available at the bookstore, and can be easily bought online at a number of places, including amazon.com, though some sites are probably cheaper than others. Any additional required readings will be distributed via email or put on reserve.

An optional text is *The Mind's Eye*, edited by Douglas Hofstadter and Daniel Dennett. It is also easily available at amazon.com, but the full text (with many typos, alas) can be found here:

<http://themindi.blogspot.com/>

This book is a collection of philosophically oriented pieces, including papers, dialogues, and short stories. After each one, the editors draw out and comment upon the philosophically relevant themes in the piece. It is actually a sort of fun read.

A word on using external (i.e. not required) sources in your papers: that is fine, as long as they are to the point, and are properly cited. When in doubt, ***cite your sources!*** It is the best way to avoid being accused of plagiarism.

Wikipedia can be valuable for getting a very broad grasp of positions and debates, but when it gets into details, especially on philosophic topics, it is very often horrible – sketchy, convoluted, misinformed, and often simply wrong. If you wish to consult online resources, I suggest you use some of the other, much better sites. Most prominent is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, but others are useful as well:

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://plato.stanford.edu/>
The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>
Episteme Links <http://www.epistemelinks.com/Main/MainEncy.aspx>

6. Course Website

t.b.a. – details forthcoming, maybe.

7. Topics and Readings

Here is a tentative list of topics and readings. We'll pick and choose as we go, depending on how fast we are going, and what catches our collective imagination. Specific readings and dates will be announced in class, on the webpage and/or over the class email list. Since reminders and other information will be distributed of the email list, *make sure you check the website and your Purdue account on a fairly regular basis.*

A star (*) marks papers not available in the Chalmers book, and will be distributed via email or put on reserve.

Chapter I: The Mind/Body Problem and the Nature of Mental States

Some Readings:

Overview and Preliminaries:

Lycan “The Mind-Body Problem”*

Dualism:

René Descartes: excerpts from *The Meditations*

Thomas Huxley: ‘On the Hypothesis that Animals are Automata, and Its History’

Raymond Smullyan: ‘An Unfortunate Dualist’

Behaviorism:

Gilbert Ryle: ‘Descartes’ Myth’

Rudolph Carnap: excerpt from ‘Psychology in Physical Language’

Hilary Putnam: ‘Brains and Behavior’

The Identity Theory:

J.J.C. Smart, ‘Sensations and Brain Processes’

David Lewis, ‘Psychophysical and Theoretical Identifications’

Saul Kripke, excerpts from *Naming and Necessity**

Fodor, ‘Special Sciences’

Functionalism:

Hilary Putnam, ‘The Nature of Mental States’

David Lewis, ‘Mad Pain and Martian Pain’

Ned Block, ‘Troubles with Functionalism’

John R. Searle, ‘Minds, Brains and Programs’*

Eliminativism and the Status of Folk Psychology:

Fodor: “Three Cheers for the Propositional Attitudes”*

Dennett: “Real Patterns”*

Stich: "Autonomous Psychology and the Belief-Desire Thesis"*
The Theory of Mind Debate:
Stich & Nichols: "Folk Psychology"*
Robert Gordon: "Folk Psychology as Mental Simulation"* online at
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/folkpsych-simulation/>

Chapter II: Consciousness

Preliminaries: Qualia and the First Person Perspective:
Ned Block, 'Concepts of Consciousness'
Thomas Nagel, 'What Is It Like to Be a Bat?'
Chalmers, 'Consciousness and Its Place in Nature'
Daniel Dennett, 'Quining Qualia'
Consciousness and the Knowledge Argument
Frank Jackson: 'What Mary Didn't Know'
David Lewis: 'What Experience Teaches'
Brian Loar, 'Phenomenal States'
Consciousness and Zombies
Robert Kirk, 'Zombies'* online at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/zombies/>
David Chalmers: *The Conscious Mind* (excerpts)*
Daniel Dennett, 'The Unimagined Preposterousness of Zombies'*
The Explanatory Gap
Joseph Levine, 'Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap'
Colin McGinn, 'Can We Solve The Mind Body Problem?'

Chapter III: Mental Representation and Content

Preliminaries: Intentionality and The Language of Thought Hypothesis
Fodor: 'Why There Still Has to Be a Language Of Thought'* (in his *Psychosemantics*)
Daniel Dennett, 'Brain Writing and Mind Reading'* (in his *Brainstorms*)
Theories of Content
Bertrand Russell, excerpts from *Principles of Philosophy**
Dennett, 'True Believers'
Millikan, 'Biosemantics'
Stich and Laurence: 'Intentionality and Naturalism'*
Internalism and Externalism
Hilary Putnam, 'The Meaning of Meaning'
Tyler Burge, excerpts from 'Individualism and the Mental'