

Phil 201: Mind in the World

Fall 2019

Dr. Kenneth Silver, kmsilver@usc.edu

Class # TBD Time: TBD Place: TBD

Hopefully, part of the reason you are in college is to enrich your mind. But just what is your mind, and how is it related to that glob of firing neurons in your head? You have many thoughts, experiences, beliefs, desires, and so on; however, it's not so easy to reconcile these items with the apparent truth that you are a part of the physical world. This class provides a survey of how thinkers have conceived of the mind and its relation to the body, and the arguments for and against these positions.

Units

Unit 1: An early discussion about the mind

Unit 2: Does the mind even exist?

Unit 3: Are mental states identical to states of the brain? Are they even physical?

Unit 4: What view of the mind should we take if it is not identical to states of the brain?

Unit 5: Could the mind be *everywhere*, or at least farther than we thought?

Course objectives

- 1) Learn some of the most significant views and arguments in the philosophy of mind.
- 2) Develop analytical skills through critical reading and clear writing.
- 3) Cultivate speaking and listening skills through in-class discussion.

Books needed for the course

None. We will primarily be reading articles that can be obtained from the university's online catalogue or else from the course reader.

Schedule of readings and lectures

Make sure to do all of the readings listed for a day before that class.

Week 1

Tues. Aug. 23rd

Reading: No reading

Lecture: Introduction to the class and philosophical methodology

Thurs. Aug. 25th

Reading: Descartes, R. *Meditations*, Meditation II and VI

Lecture: Dualism

Week 2

Tues. Aug. 30th

Reading: Correspondence between Descartes and Princess Elizabeth, pg. 1-8.

(http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1643_1.pdf)

Lecture: Against dualism

Thurs. Sept. 1st

Reading: Ryle, G. (1949) *The Concept of Mind*. Ch.1: “Descartes’ Myth,” pg. 11-24.

Lecture: Behaviorism

Week 3

Tues. Sept. 6th

Reading: Byrne, A. (1994) “Behaviorism” in *A Companion to the Philosophy of Mind*, Ed. S.D. Guttenplan. Blackwell.

Lecture: Against behaviorism

Thurs. Sept. 8th

Reading: Churchland, P. M. (1981) “Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes,” *Journal of Philosophy*, 78, pg. 67–90.

Lecture: Eliminativism

Week 4

Tues. Sept. 13th

Reading: Horgan, T. and Woodward, J. (1985) “Folk Psychology is Here to Stay,” *The Philosophical Review*, 94:2, pg. 197-226.

Lecture: Against eliminativism

Thurs. Sept. 15th

Reading: Place, U. T. (1956) "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?" *British Journal of Psychology*, 47:1, pg. 44-50.

Lecture: Identity Theory

Week 5

Tues. Sept. 20th

Reading: Putnam, H. (1967) "Psychological Predicates," in W.H. Capitan and D.D. Merrill (eds.), *Art, Mind, and Religion*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 37-48.

Lecture: Against the Identity Theory

Thurs. Sept. 22nd

Reading: Fodor, J. (1974) "Special Sciences: Or the Disunity of Science as a Working Hypothesis," *Synthese*, 28: 97-115.

Lecture: More multiple realizability

Week 6

Tues. Sept. 27th

Reading: Jackson, F. (1982) "Epiphenomenal Qualia," *Philosophical Quarterly*, 32, pg. 127-136.

Lecture: Qualia, part I

Thurs. Sept. 29th

Reading: Nagel, T. (1974) "What is it like to be a Bat?" *Philosophical Review*, 83, pg. 435-456.

Lecture: Qualia, part II

Week 7

Tues. Oct. 4th

Reading: Dennett, D. (1988) "Quining Qualia," in *Consciousness in Modern Science*. Eds. Marcel, A. & Bisiach, E. Oxford University Press.

Lecture: Against Qualia

Thurs. Oct. 6th

Reading: Chalmers, D. (1996) *The Conscious Mind*. pg.30-35 and 83-88.

Lecture: Zombies, part I

Week 8

Tues. Oct. 11th

Reading: Levin, J. (2012) "Do Conceivability Arguments Against Physicalism Beg the Question?" *Philosophical Topics*, 40(2): 71-89.

Lecture: Zombies, part II

Thurs. Oct. 13th

Reading: Stoljar, D. (2005) "Physicalism and Phenomenological Concepts," *Mind & Language*, 20(5): 469-494.

Lecture: Zombies, part III

Week 9

Tues. Oct. 18th

Reading: Putnam, H. (1975) "The Nature of Mental States" in *Mind, Language, and Reality*, pg. 429-440.

Lecture: Functionalism

Thurs. Oct. 20th

Reading: Lewis, D. (1980) "Mad Pain and Martian Pain" *Readings in the Philosophy of Psychology Volumes 1 and 2*. pg. 216-222.

Lecture: Martian pain

Week 10

Tues. Oct. 25th

Reading: Block, N. (1980) "Troubles with Functionalism" in *Readings in the Philosophy of Psychology Volumes 1 and 2*. pg. 268-305.

Lecture: Against functionalism

Thurs. Oct. 27th

Reading: Davidson, D. (1980) "Mental Events" in *Essays on Actions and Events*.

Lecture: Anomalous monism

Week 11

Tues. Nov. 1st

Reading: Kim, J. (1998) *Mind in a Physical World*. ch.1, pg.1-15.

Lecture: Against anomalous monism

Thurs. Nov. 3rd

Reading: Chalmers, D. (1995) "Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness," *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 2:3, pg. 200-19.

Lecture: Emergentism

Week 12

Tues. Nov. 8th

Reading: Kim, J. (2005) *Physicalism or Something Near Enough*. ch.2, pg. 32-45.

Lecture: Against emergence: the causal exclusion problem

Thurs. Nov. 10th

Reading: Yablo, S. (1992) "Mental Causation," *The Philosophical Review*, 101:2, pg. 245-280.

Lecture: A possible solution to the exclusion argument

Week 13

Tues. Nov. 15th

Reading: Thomasson, A. (1998) "A Nonreductivist Solution to Mental Causation," *Philosophical Studies*, 89: 181-195.

Lecture: A different kind of solution to the exclusion problem

Thurs. Nov. 17th

Reading: Strawson, G. (2006) "Realistic Monism: Why Physicalism Entails Panpsychism" in *Consciousness and Its Place in Nature: Does Physicalism Entail Panpsychism?* Freeman, A. (ed.) UK: Imprint Academic: 3-31.

Lecture: Panpsychism

Week 14

Tues. Nov. 22nd

Reading: Section entitled '5. Arguments against Panpsychism' in Seager, W. and Allen-Hermanson, S. (2015) "Panpsychism" *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/panpsychism/>>.

Lecture: Against panpsychism

Thurs. Nov. 24th – **Thanksgiving**

Week 15

Tues. Nov. 29th

Reading: Clark, A. and Chalmers, D. (1998) “The Extended Mind,” *Analysis*, 58, pg. 10-23.

Allen-Hermanson, S. (2013) “Superdupsizing the Mind: Extended Cognition and the Persistence of Cognitive Bloat,” *Philosophical Studies*, 164(3): 791-806.

Lecture: Can the mind extend beyond the body?

Thurs. Dec. 1st

Reading: No reading.

Lecture: Review for exam

Final Exam: TBD

Course requirements

1. Regular attendance and participation at lectures. This counts for 15% of the course grade. Note: if there are more than three unexcused absences from discussion sections, the grade of 0 will be assigned for attendance and participation.
 2. Unannounced in-class 10 minute quizzes on the reading assigned for that class session (beginning of class) or on material covered in lecture (end of class). I will set six such quizzes during the term, and the average of the best five of the six grades will count for 15% of the course grade.
 3. Three or four short 4-5 page essays; the three papers earning the highest grade each counts for 15% of the course grade. You must submit at least three of these essays; submission of a fourth essay is optional.
 4. An in-class essay final examination. The final exam counts for 25% of the course grade. Approximately two weeks before the final exam I will distribute a list of five or six questions for the final exam; on the day of the exam I will designate three of the questions from the list as candidates for answering, and you will choose two questions from this list of three to answer.
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Course policies

Students with disabilities

Any student who has registered with the office of Disability Services and Programs (DSP) and who has been certified by DSP as needing specific accommodations will gladly be afforded those accommodations. Please meet with the instructor as early as possible in the semester to discuss the best ways of providing these accommodations. I am very glad to work with you to tailor the course requirements to your specific needs subject to considerations of general fairness for all students in the class.

Academic integrity

Be sure to familiarize yourself with Section 11 of *SCampus* (<http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>). If you are unsure about what constitutes a violation of academic integrity, please see me about it. Any violation of academic integrity standards will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs, and the recommended sanctions will be applied. As regards papers or other written work prepared outside of class, you need to submit full bibliographic information and proper citation of the use of any sources in the preparation of the paper.

Paper submission, deadlines and format

Please submit your papers through Blackboard. Please format your papers as follows: 12 point font, double-spaced, at least one inch margins all around, your name on the top right hand corner of the first page. All electronically submitted papers must have a filename of the format '<yourname> Phil160 paper topic <n>.doc' or where <yourname> is replaced by your name as it appears in the course roster and <n> is replaced by the number of the paper topic you have chosen. Do not include your student ID number or any other possibly sensitive identifying information on your papers or any other correspondence with instructors.

Late papers, if accepted, will have their grade reduced by 1/2 of a grade for each day beyond the due date.

Classroom protocol

During quizzes or examinations: All books, notes, and screened devices (including laptop computers, tablets, smartphones, and smartwatches) must be stowed away. If you do not have the means to stow these materials out of sight (e.g. in a backpack or other bag, or under a sweater, etc.) you may bring them to the front of the classroom and retrieve them at the end of the writing exercise. Additionally, no earphones may be worn during the period of the writing exercise. Violations of these prohibitions constitute an academic integrity violation.

Communication

I will strive to respond promptly to your e-mail inquiries, comments, etc. Given the volume of e-mail I receive, it will help us if you will begin the subject line of your messages with 'Mind in the World'. Examples: 'Mind in the World request for a meeting' or 'Mind in the World question'.