

PHILOSOPHY 3540: PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

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Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 5-6, 7:30-8:30PM, and by appointment

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I. Course Description

While the mind has been an object of philosophical inquiry for millennia, the recent advent of cognitive science has provided some novel perspectives on this most human of subject matters. In this course we seek the best of both traditions, drawing on historical and contemporary sources to explore central philosophical issues concerning the human mind.

Our inquiry focuses on the following topics: (1A) **the mind-body problem** (whether mind and some physical objects are the same, or if not how they're related); and (2) **innate ideas** and the related topic of mental **modularity**. Along the way we will consider related issues such as how (if at all) mental states and events exert **causal powers** on the world (specifically on the body); whether first-person, 'phenomenal' qualities of consciousness ("qualia") pose an obstacle to scientific or materialist concept of mind; and what "materialism" is anyway.

The schedule for the course will be somewhat loose; depending on how quickly we cover earlier topics, we may or may not skip over some of the authors listed below. The list of authors may therefore be somewhat ideal.

II. Readings

[BL] = Brian Beakley and Peter J. Ludlow, eds., **The Philosophy of Mind: Classical Problems/ Contemporary Issues** Second Edition (2006: MIT Press)

[HO] = Handout

Mind-Body Problem

1. Aristotle [BL 1, BL 42]

- 2A. Rene Descartes [BL 2]
- 2B. John Locke [BL 3]

- 3A. Benjamin Franklin on Lightning and Electricity [HO]
- 3B. Julien Offray DeLa Mettrie [BL 6]

- 4A. Rene Descartes [BL 31, HO]
- 4B. Nicolas Malebranche [BL 32]
- 4C. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz [BL 33]
- 4D. Immanuel Kant [BL 34]
- 4E. Thomas Henry Huxley [BL 35]
- 4F. William James, *Principles of Psychology* Ch. V [HO]

- 5A. Auguste Comte [BL 7]
- 5B. John Stuart Mill [BL 8]

6. James Rowland Angell [BL 10]

- 7A. Peirce, James, Russell, and Carnap on (Relational) Functionalism [HO]
- 7B. C.I. Lewis [BL 21, BL 50]

8. Gilbert Ryle [BL 11, HO]

9. Hilary Putnam [BL 13]

10. Paul Churchland [BL 16]

- 11A. Frank Jackson [BL 28]
- 11B. Laurence Nemirow [BL 30]

- 12. Bas C. van Fraassen [BL 20]

Innatism and Modularity

- 1. Plato [BL 59]
- 2. Aristotle [BL 60]
- 3. Rene Descartes [BL 61]
- 4. John Locke [BL 62]
- 5. Leibniz [BL 63]
- 6. J. G. Spurzheim [BL 64]
- 7. William James, *Principles of Psychology* Ch. V [HO]
- 8. Noam Chomsky [BL 69]
- 9. *Concepts from Computational Linguistics* [HO]
- 10. Steven Pinker [HO]
- 11. Jerry Fodor [BL 70]
- 12. Neil Smith [BL 73]

III. Assignments. On top of the reading, you will be required to complete in-class (closed book) **midterm and final exams**, and **6 quizzes**.

Making up a missed quiz will require **official documentation** that missing the assignment was for a **legitimate reason** that was unavoidable (for example: treated medical emergency, membership on official university team, military duty).

That applies all the moreso for exams: without documentation of an **unforeseeable medical emergency**, no makeup exam will be allowed, and the student should in that case drop the class.

IV. Important Dates:

Midterm: Thursday October 12, 2017

Final Exam: Tuesday December 12, 2017: 2:45-4:45 pm

Thanksgiving Break: November 20-24, 2017

Last day to withdraw from the course: Friday November 3, 2017

A. Course Description: (3-0-3) F-even-numbered years. A study of the major issues surrounding the concepts of mind and consciousness, and the nature of the intellectual faculties, as dealt with both historically and in contemporary theories of cognition. WI Credits: 3

B. Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

C. Students With Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

D. The Student Success Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.