

Nature of Mind

Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind

Philosophy 3

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Course description:

Human beings have minds, and probably so do many non-human animals. But things like rocks and rugs do not. Why are minds distributed throughout the world in this way? The course will explore different answers to this question.

In the first block, we will ask whether the mind is its own substance, distinct from the physical world; and we will subsequently consider what kinds of configurations of physical substance might be correctly identified with the mind. In particular, we will ask whether the mind is most plausibly identified with physical, behavioral, or functional states.

In the second block, we will first focus on questions of personal identity and its relation to the mind. Are you (just) your mind? What are the mind's identity conditions? Then we will discuss knowledge of other minds, looking at both practical and theoretical approaches to this question. The final topic will be animal minds; discussion will center around animal consciousness and reasoning.

Readings: Students should complete the readings before class. All of the readings are available online through bCourses.

Assignments and grading: 1/3 first paper; 1/3 second paper; 1/3 final exam¹

Attendance: It is mandatory to attend both lectures and sections. Part of attending is being on time to class.

Electronic use: The use of electronics is not permitted in this course. This is because a number of studies suggest that laptop use during lectures is detrimental to learning, both to the user and to surrounding students (see e.g. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/for-better-learning-in-college-lectures-lay-down-the-laptop-and-pick-up-a-pen/>)

Eating: No eating. Drinking OK.

Disabilities: If anyone has a disability that requires special accommodation, please discuss this with me (=Elek) as soon as possible, and we can figure out the best way to accommodate.

Plagiarism: Always use your own words. If you have any questions about what counts as plagiarism, such as which things must be cited and how, please ask. For the student, committing plagiarism means failing the course. For me, it means a lot of paperwork. We have a shared interest in avoiding these outcomes, so let's work together!

Sexual violence and harassment: There will be no tolerance for sexual violence or harassment in this classroom; harmful behavior will result in removal from the class and possibly the university. If you or

¹The final will be based on the in-class writing questions. So, hang onto those and use them as your study guide.

someone you know experiences sexual violence or harassment, there are options, rights, and resources, including assistance with academics, reporting, and medical care. Visit survivorsupport.berkeley.edu or call the 24/7 care line at 510-643-2005.

The baseline: The baseline expectation is that students follow course policies (detailed above) and actively participate in lecture and section. If a student falls below the baseline, their grade will be lowered at the discretion of the instructors.

Class schedule

Week 1—Dualism

Monday—*Introduction*

Tuesday—Descartes, “Meditations 1 and 2”

Wednesday—Descartes, “Meditation 6”; Elizabeth-Descartes letters (selections)

Thursday—Gertler, “In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism”

Friday—*Discussion section*

Week 2—Physicalism and behaviorism

Monday—Smart, “Sensations and Brain Processes”

Tuesday—Bennett, “Why the Exclusion Problem Seems Intractable and How, Just Maybe, to Tract It”

Wednesday—Montero, “The Body Problem”

Thursday—Putnam, “Brains and behavior”

Friday—*Discussion section*

Week 3—Functionalism

Monday—Pryor, “Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper” / *outline workshop*

Tuesday—Churchland, “Functionalism”

Wednesday—Levin, “Functionalism and the Argument from Conceivability”

Thursday—Lewis, “Mad Pain and Martian Pain”

Friday—*Discussion section*

Paper 1 due Saturday

Week 4—Personal identity

Monday—Locke, “Of Identity and Diversity” (selections)

Tuesday—Nagel, “Brain Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness”

Wednesday—Nagasena, “The Questions of King Milinda: Simile of the Chariot”

Thursday—Ganeri, “The Imperfect Reality of Persons”

Friday—*Discussion section*

Week 5—Other minds

Monday—Russell, “Analogy”

Tuesday—Noë, “Conscious life”

Wednesday—Avramides, “Other Minds, Autism, and Depth in Human Interaction”

Thursday—Senju, “Spontaneous Theory of Mind and Its Absence in Autism Spectrum Disorders”

Friday—*Discussion section*

Paper 2 due Saturday

Week 6—Animal minds

Monday—Godfrey-Smith, “The Evolution of Consciousness in Phylogenetic Context”

Tuesday—Matthen, “Novel Colours in Animal Perception”

Wednesday—Tye, “Do Fish Have Feelings?”

Thursday—Andrews, “Do Chimpanzees Reason about Belief?”

Friday—*Final exam*