

****Please note: this is a tentative course syllabus. It may change before the start of the semester in September 2023.****

PHIL 260 A01 - Fall 2023
Introduction to Philosophy of Mind

Instructor: Eric Hochstein

CRN: 12678

Time: Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday 1:30 pm – 2:20 pm.

Place: COR B129

Office Hours: (in Clearihue B330): Wednesday 3:00-5:00 pm; and by appointment

Email: ehochstein@uvic.ca

Description: This course will examine fundamental philosophical questions regarding the nature of the mind. Specifically: What is the relationship between the mind and the body? Is the mind nothing more than the brain, or is it something distinct? Is the brain a kind of computer? What is consciousness, and what is required for a scientific explanation of it?

Structure: The course comprises three lectures (50min) per week, the contents of which will be based on the course readings. The course will proceed primarily through lectures and discussions. Readings for the class will all be uploaded onto the course website.

Intellectual property of materials on the LMS website: Please note that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to the LMS website are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the Policy on Academic Integrity (https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V?bc=true&bcCurrent=08%20-%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity&bcGroup=Undergraduate%20Academic%20Regulations&bcItemType=policies). Any evidence you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.

Evaluation: The course will be graded as follows:

- 2 mid-terms, worth 15% and 25%
- A term paper 25% (3-10 double-spaced pages);
- A final examination worth 35%.

Policy on assignments, tests, and term papers: Late papers will receive a deduction of 5% per day until handed in. Any exam missed without documentation of illness or family emergency will receive a 0.

Important to Note: It is expected that students will prepare for and attend class regularly. Students are encouraged to consult the instructor with any problems or concerns about the course **early** in the semester.

Grading System:

| Percentages | Letter Grade | Grade Point |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| 90 – 100 | A+ | 9 |
| 85 – 89 | A | 8 |
| 80 – 84 | A- | 7 |

An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically **superior**, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students

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| 77 – 79 | B+ | 6 |
| 73 – 76 | B | 5 |
| 70 – 72 | B- | 4 |

A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a **good** comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material.

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| 65 – 69 | C+ | 3 |
| 60 – 64 | C | 2 |

A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an **adequate** comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.

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| 50 – 59 | D | 1 |
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A D is earned by work that indicates **minimal** command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.

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| 0 – 49 | F | 0 |
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F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is **inadequate** and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.

Interpretation of these grade definitions is up to the discretion of the instructor. If you receive a grade during the course that you believe is unfair, please begin by discussing the matter with the instructor (or TA) in a respectful, open-minded manner. Rest assured that if you still believe the grade you received is unfair you can appeal the matter to the chair of the department.

For additional information regarding grades, please see the most recent (September 2021) edition of the Uvic Undergraduate Calendar.

All evaluations of tests and assignments will be calculated according to percentage scores. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference.

Final examinations are the property of Uvic and are not returned. They are available for viewing at the Records Office according to Uvic procedures and regulations.

Uvic is committed to providing a safe, supportive learning environment for all members. Further information regarding Uvic policies on human rights, equity, discrimination and harassment are located in the Uvic calendar, but if you have any particular concerns in our course please do not hesitate to contact me.

Note on Avoidance of Academic Offenses:

All students registered in the course are expected to know what constitutes an academic offence, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, it will be acknowledged by disciplinary penalties. If you need help in learning how to avoid academic offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. You can find the university's Policy on Academic Integrity here:

https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V?bc=true&bcCurr ent=08%20-%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity&bcGroup=Undergraduate%20Academic%20Regulations&bcItemType=policies

If you are seeking editing help, please note that the university has recently adopted a strict view about seeking the help of others for editing. They say (this can be found in the link above):

An editor is an individual or service, other than the instructor or supervisory committee, who manipulates, revises, corrects or alters a student's written or non-written work.

The use of an editor, whether paid or unpaid, is prohibited unless the instructor grants explicit written authorization. The instructor should specify the extent of editing that is being authorized.

Review by fellow students and tutoring that do not include editing are normally permitted. In addition to consulting with their instructors, students are encouraged to seek review of and feedback on their work that prompts them to evaluate the work and make changes themselves.

Tentative Schedule of Readings:

Week 1 (Sept 6 & Sept 8): Introduction

No readings

Week 2 (Sept 12, Sept 13 & Sept 15): Substance Dualism

Readings:

- Descartes, R. "Meditations on First Philosophy"
- Descartes, R. "Passions of the Soul"

Week 3 (Sept 19, Sept 20 & Sept 22): Behaviourism

Readings:

- Ryle, G. "Descartes' Myth"
- Bermúdez, J. "The reaction against behaviorism in psychology"

Week 4 (Sept 26, Sept 27, Sept 29): Type-Identity Theory

Readings:

- Smart, J.J.C. "Sensations and Brain Processes"

Week 5 (Oct 3, Oct 4 & Oct 6): The Cognitive Revolution

Midterm 1: Oct 3rd

Readings:

- Bermúdez, J. "Algorithms and Turing Machines"
- Bermúdez, J. "The Physical Symbol System Hypothesis"

Week 6 (Oct 10, Oct 11 & Oct 13): Functionalism

Readings:

- Levin, J. "Functionalism" (Read Section: "1. What is Functionalism?").
- Fodor, J. "The Mind-Body Problem"

Week 7 (Oct 17, Oct 18 & Oct 20): Artificial Intelligence

Readings:

- Searle, J. "Minds, Brains, and Programs"
- Churchland, P.S., & Churchland, P.M. "Could A Machine Think?"

Week 8 (Oct 24, Oct 25 & Oct 27): Intentionality

Term Paper Assigned Oct 27

Readings:

- Millikan, R. "Naturalizing Intentionality"

Week 9 (Oct 31, Nov 1 & Nov 3): Eliminative Materialism

Midterm 2 Nov 3rd

Readings:

- Churchland, P.M. “Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes”

Week 10 (Nov 7, Nov 8 & Nov 10): Consciousness (Part 1)

Readings:

- Blackmore, S. “What is it like to be...?”

Week 11 (Nov 17): Consciousness (Part 2)

Classes Cancelled November 13th to 15 – Reading Break

Readings:

- Churchland, P. S. “The Hornswoggle Problem”.

Week 12 (Nov 21, Nov 22 & Nov 24): Dynamic Systems Theory

Term Paper Due Nov 24th

Readings:

- Van Gelder, T. “What Might Cognition Be, If Not Computation?”

Week 13 (Nov 28, Nov 29 & Dec 1): Spill Over and Review

No Readings

Note for students with disabilities:

The Centre for Accessible Learning (<https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>) is a fantastic resource that collaborates with all academic departments to help arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with them at the beginning of each academic term.