

PHIL 260 A01 - Spring 2020 Introduction to Philosophy of Mind

Instructor: Eric Hochstein

CRN: 22333

Time: Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday 11:30 PM – 12:20 PM

Place: Cornett Building A125

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.

Evaluation: The course will be graded as follows:

- 2 in-class mid-terms, worth 15% and 25%
- A term paper 25% (3-8 double-spaced pages);
- A final examination worth 35%.

Policy on assignments, tests, and term papers: The term paper is due in class, **in hard copy**, on the announced deadline. Your paper must be **stapled**, and not just held together by a paper clip, or bent corners. 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. Also: constant use of your phone during class can lead to a deduction in your course grade.

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

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. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.

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

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.

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 pp. 51-53 of the most recent (September 2018) 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 (pp. 49-51 of the calendar).

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 (p. 15), but if you have any particular concerns in our course please do not hesitate to contact me.

Tentative Schedule of Readings:

Week 1 (Jan 7, Jan 8, Jan 10): Substance Dualism

Readings:

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

Week 2: (Jan 14, Jan 15, Jan 17): Behaviourism

Readings:

- Ryle, G. "Descartes' Myth" p.32-39
- Bermúdez, J. "The reaction against behaviorism in psychology"

Week 3 (Jan 21, Jan 22, Jan 24): Type-Identity Theory

Midterm 1: Jan 31st

Readings:

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

Week 4 (Jan 28, Jan 29, Jan 31): The Cognitive Revolution

Readings:

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

Week 5 (Feb 4, Feb 5, Feb 7): Functionalism

Readings:

- Levin, J. "Functionalism"

Week 6 (Feb 11, Feb 12, Feb 14): Artificial Intelligence

Term Paper Assigned Feb 14

Readings:

- Searle, J. "Minds, Brains, and Programs"
- Patricia & Paul Churchland, "Could A Machine Think?"

Week 7 (Feb 18, Feb 19, Feb 21): Reading Week

No Classes

Week 8 (Feb 25, Feb 26, Feb 28): Intentionality

Readings:

- Dennett, D. “Intentional Systems Theory”

Week 9 (Mar 3, Mar 4, Mar 6): Eliminative Materialism

Readings:

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

Week 10 (Mar 10, Mar 11, Mar 13): Consciousness (Part 1)

Midterm 2: March 14th

Readings:

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

Week 11 (Mar 17, Mar 18, Mar 20): Consciousness (Part 2)

Term Paper Due March 21st

Readings:

- Churchland, P. S. (1996). “The Hornswoggle Problem”.

Week 12 (Mar 24, Mar 25, Mar 27): Embodied & Extended Cognition (Part 1)

Readings:

- Clark, A. & Chalmers, D., “The Extended Mind”

Week 13 (Mar 31, Apr 1, April 3): Dynamic Systems Theory

Readings:

- Gelder, T. “What might cognition be, if not computation?”

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:

<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html>

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.

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.