

# Philosophy of Mind

## COURSE SYLLABUS

PHIL 3375: T/TH, 2:40-3:55PM  
CRN 21697  
LOCATION: IRBY 307

FALL 2016

## Course Description

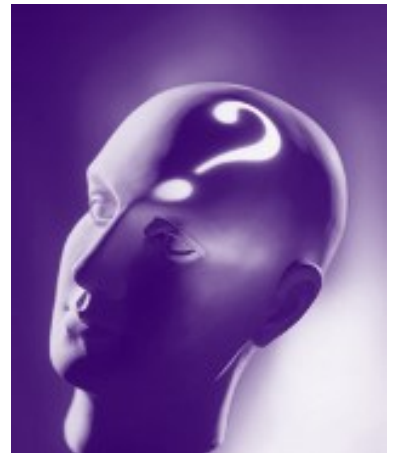
This course introduces students to the philosophy of mind.

Students who take this course can expect to:

- ◇ Become familiar with central debates in the philosophy of mind, focusing especially on the nature of mind/mentality, its relation to the body, and on consciousness. Some of the main questions we will address include:

- What is it to have a mind?
- How do mentality and mental properties relate to our physical bodies, especially our brains?
- How is my mind related to myself?
- How do conscious states arise from physical processes in the brain?
- What is thinking?
- Do animals have minds?
- What is the extended mind hypothesis?

- ◇ Understand and evaluate theories that address key problems in the philosophy of mind. We will focus on current research, but we will also keep an eye toward historical context.
- ◇ Recognize and appreciate the relation between science and philosophy, especially as it relates to the mind.
- ◇ Deepen one's understanding of oneself as both embodied and conscious, and of the relation between mind and self.
- ◇ Develop skill in reading comprehension, critical analysis, and effective communication in classroom discussion and through academic writing.



### Instructor:

Dr. Sharon Mason

### Contact Info:

- *Office: Irby 118c*
- *Office Hours:*  
*M/W 11a-12p*  
*T/Th 10a-12p*  
*And by appointment*
- *Office Phone:*  
*501-450-5590*
- *Email (preferred):*  
*smason@uca.edu*

This course fulfills 3 credit hours in the required "Epistemology & Metaphysics" area for philosophy majors and minors.

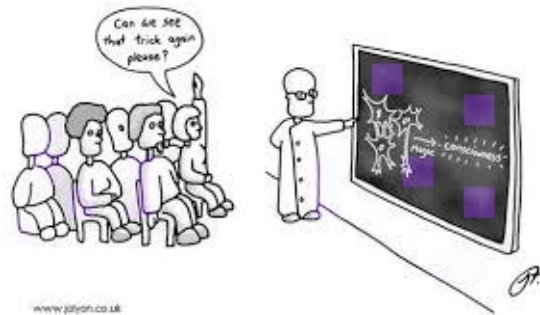
It also fulfills 3 credit hours in the cognitive neuroscience minor.

## Required Texts

There are two required textbooks for this course:

- ◇ Gertler, B. & Shapiro, L., (2007). *Arguing About the Mind*. Routledge, New York. ISBN: 9780415771627
- ◇ Heil, J. (2013). *Philosophy of Mind* (3rd. Edition). Routledge, New York. ISBN: 9780415891752

All other readings and course materials will be available online at our course site on Blackboard.



## Grading Overview

### GRADING SCHEME:

**A = 90-100%**

**B = 89-90%**

**C = 70-79%**

**D = 60-69%**

Attendance/Participation	10%
Assignments	25%
Essay	30%
Exams	35%

**“A philosophical problem has the form:**

**I don’t know my way about.”**

**- Wittgenstein**

## Attendance/Participation (10%)

Students who do not attend class regularly will not learn as much as those who attend regularly. Attendance and active participation in the class are, therefore, required.

Attendance: Each student may take up to 2 excused absences for any reason. Absences in excess of 2 will result in a deduction of 10% from your attendance/participation grade per absence. In cases of an emergency, sickness, death in the family, or other unforeseen event, I may grant additional excused absences provided that the student notifies me right away and provides appropriate documentation.

Participation: Participation refers to your active involvement in the class through being prepared for class and engaging in classroom discussion. Visits to my office hours will also count toward your participation grade. Distracting behavior (chronic tardiness, surfing the web on a laptop or mobile device, etc.) may result in points off your participation grade.

## Writing Assignments (25%)

You will need to complete five writing assignments during the semester.

Writing assignments are short 1-3 page exercises in which you will work on developing your critical writing skills. Each writing assignment may address any of the course material prior to the assignment's due date. You get to choose the topics that interest you most.

All assignments should be typed with standard academic-style formatting (your choice), and should be submitted online via our course website on Blackboard. Late work is not accepted unless an extension has been arranged in advance.

Assignments will include:

- 1) Identify an author's thesis and summarize the main argument for that thesis
- 2) Compare and contrast two opposing views
- 3) Write comments for an online conference blog
- 4) Critique an argument from one of the course readings
- 5) Explain and respond to an objection to one of the theories we will cover in class

Note: Assignments should not cover the same material twice.



## Essay (30%)

Your essay gives you the opportunity to do more in-depth research on a course-related topic. *Your essay may be based on one of your writing assignments* OR you may choose your own topic. The goal is for you to interact with a particular issue in more depth. All essays should be 2000 (+/- 250) words and should be submitted electronically on Blackboard.

A rough draft of the essay will be due two weeks before your final draft is due. I will be providing detailed comments on your drafts so that you can benefit from those as you write your final draft. **Submitting the rough draft in its entirety and on time counts as 10% of the total essay grade.**

## Exams (35%)



There will be two in-class exams: a midterm and a final exam. The exams will ask you to explain important concepts, compare and contrast theories, and to in other ways critically engage the course material. They will cover material from both the readings and the class lectures/discussions. The final exam will be cumulative and will be given during the scheduled final exam time.

## Classroom Conduct Statement

This course is designed to encourage you to think deeply about controversial issues, and as we go along you will almost certainly encounter viewpoints that challenge your own beliefs. I encourage you to view these challenges as opportunities to learn about perspectives that may differ widely from your own and to practice the skill of interacting respectfully and sympathetically with someone, despite the fact that you may strongly disagree with their point of view. Although debate and critical analysis are encouraged, it should be clear that we will not discriminate against or criticize members of this classroom community based on gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or religion. Everyone is welcome here.

## Course Schedule

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TUESDAY	THURSDAY
	August 18 — <i>Introduction</i> Read: - G&S, Intro (p. 5-11)
August 23 — <i>What is the mind? Historical background</i> Read: - Heil Ch. 1: Introduction (p. 1-6), [Opt.: p. 7-16] - Descartes, Meditation I (available on Blackboard), G&S Excerpts from Meditation II and Meditation VI (p. 164-169)	August 25 — <i>Substance Dualism, The Mind/Body Problem</i> Read: - Heil Ch. 2 “Cartesian Dualism” - McWeeny “Princess Elisabeth and the Mind-Body Problem” (available on Blackboard) <b>Assignment 1: Due on Blackboard <u>Sunday, 8/28</u> at 11:59pm</b>
August 30 — <i>Property dualism</i> Read: - G&S, Part 3 intro: “Is the Mind Physical?” (p. 110-116) - Chalmers, “Naturalistic Dualism” (Blackboard)	September 1 — <i>Consciousness: What is the Problem?</i> Read: - Chalmers & Clark “The Hard Problem”
September 6— <i>Mind as Brain / Identity Theory</i> Read: - Kim, Ch. 4 (Available through link on Blackboard) [Supplemental Reading: Heil Ch. 5]	September 8— <i>Behaviorism</i> Read: - Heil Ch. 4 <b>Assignment 2: Due on Blackboard <u>Sunday, 9/11</u> at 11:59pm</b>
September 13— <i>Moving toward Functionalism</i> Read: - Kim, Ch. 5, p. 129-138 (Available through link on Blackboard)	September 15— <i>Functionalism</i> Read: <a href="http://www.mind.ilstu.edu/curriculum/functionality_intro/functionality_intro.php">http://www.mind.ilstu.edu/curriculum/functionality_intro/functionality_intro.php</a> (Link also on Blackboard) -Heil, Ch. 6, 6.8-6.13
September 20— <i>The Extended Mind Thesis</i> (Sept. 22) Open 1 <sup>st</sup> 8-Week Evals. Read: - G&S, Ch. 16 Clark & Chalmers “The Extended Mind” (p. 180-191) [Supplemental Reading: G&S, Ch. 17 Gertler “Overextending the Mind?” (p. 192-206)]	September 22— <i>2016 Online Minds Conference, Extended mind</i> Read: - Karina Vold, “The what and where of mental states: A new argument for the extended mind thesis” (available online at <a href="http://mindsonline.philosophyofbrains.com/minds-online-2016-program/">http://mindsonline.philosophyofbrains.com/minds-online-2016-program/</a> ) <b>Assignment 3: Due on Blackboard <u>Sunday, 9/25</u> at 11:59pm</b>

## Course Schedule (continued)

Tuesday	Thursday
September 27— <i>The Turing test for intelligence</i> Read: - Heil, Ch. 7, 7.1-7.4 - [Supplemental reading: G&S, ch. 36: A. M. Turing “Computing Machinery and Intelligence”]	September 29— Mind as a computing machine Read: - Heil, Ch. 7, 7.5-7.10 - G&S, Ch. 38, Copeland “The Curious Case of the Chinese Room”
October 4— <i>Can machines think?</i> Read: - G&S, Ch. 39: Dennett “Can Machines Think?”	October 6— Catch-up day, review for exam
October 11— <b>In-Class Midterm Exam</b>	October 13 Release 1 <sup>st</sup> 8-Week Evals results <b>Fall Break—NO CLASS</b>
October 18— <i>Other minds</i> Read: - Reread Heil Ch. 4, Section 4.1-4.4 - Sober “Evolution and the Problem of Other Minds” (Blackboard) Read:	October 20— <i>Animal Minds</i> Read: - G&S “How can we know whether—and what—non-human animals think?” - G&S Ch. 30, Bennett “How to Read Minds in Behaviour: A suggestion from a philosopher” <b>Assignment 4: Due on Blackboard Sunday, 10/23 at 11:59pm</b>
October 25— <i>Anthropocentrism in the study of other minds</i> Read: - G&S, Ch. 35 Povinelli “Behind the Ape’s Appearance”	October 27— <i>Animal minds (continued)</i> Read: - Allen “Animal Pain” (Blackboard)
November 1— <i>Extraterrestrial intelligence</i> Read: - G&S, Ch. 46, Tennant, “The Decoding Problem”	November 3— <i>Intentionality</i> Read: Kim, Ch. 8 (first half) <b>Assignment 5: Due on Blackboard Sunday, 11/6 at 11:59pm</b>

### Course Schedule (continued)

Tuesday	Thursday
November 8— <i>Content externalism / internalism</i>  <i>Read:</i> - Continue Kim, Ch. 8	November 10— Catch up day  <b>Read: TBD</b>
November 15— <i>What is the self?</i>  <i>Read:</i> - G&S, “What is the self?” (p. 208-212) - G&S, Ch. 18: Nagel “Brain Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness” (p. 214-228)	November 17 — <i>Mind &amp; Self</i>  <i>Read:</i> - G&S, Ch. 19: Parfit “Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons”  <b><u>Essay Rough Draft Due on Blackboard Saturday, 11/19 at 11:59pm</u></b>
November 22— <i>Narrative Selves</i>  <i>Read:</i> - G&S, Ch. 20: Dennett “The Self as a Center of Narrative Gravity” (p. 237-247) [Supplemental Reading: G&S, Ch. 21]	November 24 <b>Thanksgiving Holiday—NO CLASS</b>
November 29  Special Topics: To be determined  (What autism shows us about the nature of the mind?)	December 1  Special Topics: To be determined  <b><u>Essay Final Draft Due on Blackboard Saturday, 12/3 at 11:59pm</u></b>
December 6— <i>Final Exam Week</i>  <b>No Class</b>	December 8  <b>Final Exam: Thurs, Dec. 8 <u>from 2-4pm</u></b>

## Important Notices required by UCA Administration

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◇ **Academic Integrity Statement:**

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the *Student Handbook*. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

◇ **Americans with Disabilities Act:**

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Disability Resource Center, 450-3613.

◇ **Building Emergency Plan:**

An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

◇ **Title IX Disclosure:**

If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs, and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on the specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>. *\*Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.*

◇ **Student Handbook:**

Students are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with all policies in the Student Handbook.