

Philosophy 136: Philosophy of Mind

Spring Quarter 2017. UCSD.

Time: Tu-Th 5:00-6:30

Room: WLH 2011

Instructor: Rick Grush ([r s grush at-symbol g mail com](mailto:rsgrush@gmail.com) -- <http://mind.ucsd.edu>)

Office Hours: Wed 2-3:30 at the Loft (Zanzibar) in the Price Center. (Except for 4/12, when they will be 3:30-5).

TA: Cami Koepke

Office Hours: Tu/Th 3:30-4:45pm in H&SS room 8004

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Short Description

What are minds? Humans have minds, but why? Is it because they have some sort of immaterial soul? It is because of computational properties of the brain? Could a machine have a mind? Could it ever be the case that a group of beings -- people, or a hive of bees or ants -- could collectively have a single mind? You'll know the answers to all these questions by the end of the quarter.

This course will provide students with an introduction to some of the main topics in Philosophy of Mind. All readings are available as PDFs from this syllabus. The course will be broken down into thirds, with descriptions below:

Part 1: Historical topics

In this part we will look mostly at a few historical approaches to philosophy of mind. Starting with Descartes and a discussion of substance dualism, we will move on to Locke and Hume, and then behaviorism, identity theory, and the initial formulations of functionalism.

Part 2: Contemporary topics

In this third we will examine some contemporary approaches to the nature of mind, including current views on functionalism, Dennett's intentional stance, Fodor's LOT/RTM, and eliminative materialism.

Part 3: Group minds

With some of the standard approaches covered in the first two parts, we will turn in the third part to a more specialized and speculative issue: the group mind. Is it possible for a single mind to be implemented in, and distributed across, multiple biological individuals?

Schedule and Readings:

THIS IS STILL IN PROGRESS, BUT IS PROBABLY MOSTLY RIGHT

Session 01 (April 4): Introduction

Session 02 (April 6): Dualism 1 (Q1)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY APRIL 5, 11:59 PM](#)

Churchland, *Matter and Consciousness*, Ch. 2 pp. 7-22 [[here](#)]

Rene Descartes, *Meditations* 1 and 2. [[here](#)]

Session 03 (April 11): Dualism 2 (Q2)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY APRIL 10, 11:59PM](#)

Bloom, 'Therefore I am' [[here](#)]

Jackson, 'Epiphenomenal Qualia' [[here](#)]

Session 04 (April 13): Identity Theory (Q3)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY APRIL 12, 11:59PM](#)

Smart, 'Sensations and Brain Processes' [[here](#)]

Churchland *MC* pp. 26-35. [link above under Session 02]

Session 05 (April 18): Behaviorism (Q4)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY APRIL 17, 11:59PM](#)

Churchland *MC* pp 23-25 [link above under Session 02]

Ryle *The Concept of Mind* (selections) [[here](#)]

Session 06 (April 20): Behaviorism (Q5)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY APRIL 19, 11:59PM](#)

Skinner *Science and Human Behavior* (selections) [[here](#)]

Exam Preview/Prep

Session 07 (April 25): **Exam 1**

Session 8 (April 27): Functionalism 1 (Q6)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY APRIL 26, 11:59PM](#)

Putnam, 'The nature of Mental States' [[here](#)]

Churchland *MC* pp 36-42 [link above under Session 02]

Session 9 (May 2): Functionalism 2 (Q7)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY May 1, 11:59PM](#)

Searle, 'Minds, brains and programs' [[here](#)]

Session 10 (May 4): Block Troubles with Functionalism (Q8)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY May 3, 11:59PM](#)

Block, 'Troubles with functionalism' [[here](#)]

Session 11 (May 9): Dennett (Q9)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY May 8, 11:59PM](#)

Dennett, 'True Believers' [[here](#)]

Session 12 (May 11): Fodor Psychosemantics (Q10)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY May 8, 11:59PM](#)

Fodor, *Psychosemantics*, Preface [[here](#)]

Fodor, *Psychosemantics*, Chapter 1 [[here](#)]

Session 13 (May 16): Eliminative Materialism (Q11)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY May 15, 11:59PM](#)

Churchland, 'Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes' [[here](#)]

Churchland, *MC*, pp 43-49 [link above under Session 02]

Session 14 (May 18): **Exam 2**

Session 15 (May 23): Social Insects (Q12)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY May 22, 11:59PM](#)

Seeley "Group decision making in honey bee swarms" [[here](#)]

Wegner "Transactive memory" pages 185-195 [[here](#)]

Session 16 (May 25): Group Minds (Q13)

NO MEETING

Session 17 (May 30): Corporate responsibility 1 (Q14)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY May 29, 11:59PM](#)

Wegner "Transactive memory" pages 195-208 (link above)

Riser, 'Collective Responsibility' [[here](#)]

Session 18 (June 1): Corporate responsibility 2 (Q15)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY May 31, 11:59PM](#)

Pettit "Responsibility Incorporated" [[here](#)]

Session 19 (June 6): Humans (Q16)

[POST QUESTIONS HERE BY June 5, 11:59PM](#)

Clark, 'Beliefs and desires incorporated' [[here](#)]

Session 20 (June 8): **Exam 3**

Grades

Grades will be based on the following components:

Quizzes: At the beginning of each regular class period (excluding exam days) there will be a 5 question multiple choice quiz on the readings for that session. These quizzes will be designed such that if you have just read the readings carefully you should be able to easily get 4 or 5 of the questions right. The questions won't presuppose deep understanding of every little point. The purpose is to give everyone a reason to stay on schedule with the readings, and to have the readings done BEFORE class, which will make our class time more productive. There will be five or six quizzes for each of the three parts of the course. Each question is worth 2 points, and so each quiz is worth 10 points.

Midterm exams:

At the end of each of the three parts of the course there will be an in-class midterm exam, consisting of 10 multiple choice questions, and 2 essays. The multiple choice questions will assume a little more sophisticated understanding than was assumed on the quizzes. Each multiple choice question will be worth 5 points, and so the total MC points on each midterm will be 50 points.

The essays will work as follows: around 2-5 days before the midterm exam, I will distribute 5 or 6 essay questions to the class. So you'll have access to the questions that could be asked beforehand. On the exam, I will choose 3 of these at random to put on the exam, and you can choose any 2 of those 3 to write on. How long they will be varies as a function of the writer's concision and mastery of the material, but around 3-4 written blue book pages per essay is a rough average. each essay will be worth 50 points.

The points available for everything are as follows:

In-class quizzes: 16 quizzes, each worth 10 points. We'll drop your worst quiz score, and replace your 2nd worse quiz score with your highest score. So there will be 150 points possible from the quizzes.

Midterm exam: 10 multiple-choice questions worth 5 points each for a total of 50 points. And two essays worth 50 points each. So each midterm is worth 150 points total.

Posts on readings:

Each student is responsible to post six questions on the readings throughout the quarter. Each post is worth 10 points, and we'll drop the lowest score. So 50 points possible. Students will be randomly assigned to post two questions for each of the three Parts in the course. The questions are a chance for you to draw attention to an idea in the text you find interesting or confusing, or both! Here are some tips to keep in mind for your post:

1. You only need to post one question for each day you're assigned. So, you'll write just six questions total.
2. If you are scheduled to post on a day when there is more than one reading, you only post on one. Either one, doesn't matter. But make sure it is on the reading assigned for that session! For instance, if a chapter of a book is assigned on a specific day, don't post a question about a different chapter that is assigned on another day.
3. The post is supposed to be something that expresses a question that will help you understand the reading. Ideally it would be specifically directed at something in the reading you don't understand, like a premise in an argument or a concept. It should be obvious to your reader which part of the text you're referring to. Don't feel like you need to make some clever insight to the reading, but make your question specific enough that it's clear exactly why you find the point you've decided to focus on so puzzling.
4. Questions will be graded on whether they show you've thought carefully about a specific aspect of the reading. Just remember, a good question is one that should occur to people when they are reading the material and trying to understand it. So writing that question down shouldn't take a lot of extra time. You're just writing down a question you had anyway. Thinking about and trying to answer your question will help others learn more about the ideas at issue in the specific text you're writing on.
5. Grammar and spelling are valuable to the extent that they help or hinder the clarity of your ideas. Always take a few moments to proof-read your post.
6. Of course, as with all the assignments and material in class, your professor and TA are available to talk about any questions you may have.

So overall, 150 points possible on the in-class quizzes, and 150 for each of 3 midterms = 600, and 50 points for posts on the readings = 650 points possible.

There are NO make-ups for the in-class quizzes. If you miss class, you miss the quiz, and get a 0. However, because we will drop your two lowest scores, this shouldn't be a problem for you, so long as you generally do well on the quizzes and don't miss more than 2 of them.

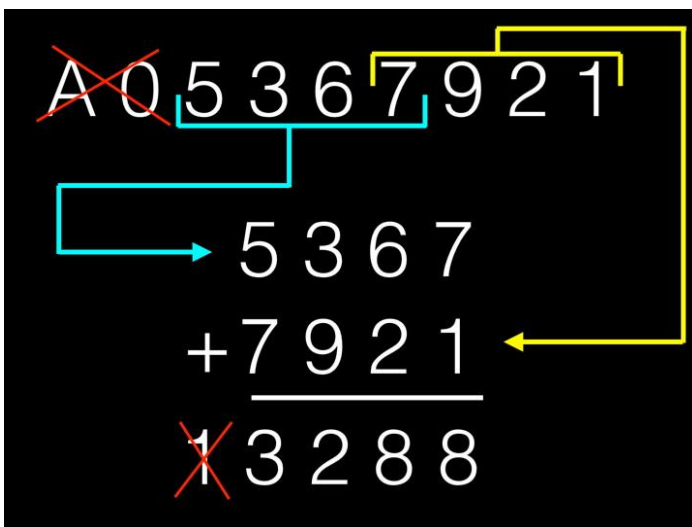
At the end of the class, the TA and I will take all points scored, turn that into a percentage, make the letter-grade cut-offs, and assign grades. The worst-case scenario will be a straight 10% break-down. Though depending on the average score and score distribution, the cut-offs might be lower.

Score Sheets

The scores will be posted online after exams are graded. **Scores are listed by a coded version of your student ID number in order to protect privacy, as per University regulations.** In order to determine what your coded ID number is, do the following. Take your student ID number. This will be something like a letter followed by 8 digits, like "A01234567".

Remove the letter and the first digit, and you're left with a string of 7 digits, like "1234567". Take the first four digits, and treat this as a 4 digit number (something between 0000 and 9999); and take the last four digits and treat this like another 4-digit number. In the example above, they would be "1234" and "4567". Add these two numbers together, for example: $1234 + 4567 = 5801$. If the number you get is 5 digits, remove the first digit to make it 4 digits long; if it is 4, then keep it at 4 digits. This is your coded ID number. To see another example: If your student ID is "A05367921", you drop the first letter and number: "5367921"; then take the first 4 digits:

"5367"; and the last 4 digits "7921"; add them together: $5367 + 7921 = 13288$. If the result is 5 digits, remove the first digit: "3288". If you cannot find your row on the score sheet, email me with your name, section, and ID number, **AND WHAT YOU DETERMINED YOUR CODED ID NUMBER IS.**



[>>>> The Score Sheet is Here <<<<](#)

Google Group:

There is a Google group for this class, and **it is a course requirement** that you either subscribe to the list and set your membership to receive email announcements, or that you **regularly, at least once or twice a week**, check the page online to read the announcements. You can get to the announcement page here:

I recommend that you click on that link now, and sign up for the group. **And set the delivery option to EMAIL, so you get every post as it is made.** Don't worry, only the TA and I can post, so you won't be getting a lot of spam.

If for whatever reason you don't wish to sign up, that is OK. You can still visit the page to read any announcements without signing up. But the announcements won't be emailed to you, you will have to remember to visit the page often to read the announcements. Remember, you are responsible for any information or announcements posted to this group.

When the quarter is over, and it is clear that no more announcements will be needed (like where to pick up finals, or whatever), I will delete this group. So if you are subscribed, there will be no need to unsubscribe.

How to do well in this course:

1. **Be sure to read the assigned material before class.** This will help to ensure that our class time is quality time, and not wasted with me and some of the students reiterating the material to those who haven't read it. Reading the material before class will also help you get some points on the quizzes, and that is a good thing.
2. **Bring *specific* questions with you to lecture and to the discussion/review sessions.** Even if there are aspects of the readings or study questions you didn't fully grasp, the fact that you tried should help you to narrow down what it is that you don't get.
3. **See the TA or me in office hours, or email us,** if there are still questions you are unclear about. That's what office hours are for. Don't be shy.
4. **After class, re-read the material for the session,** paying special attention to the questions that you had before. Hopefully the material will make much more sense to you now.

5. **Manage your time well.** Many students are lazy, and wait until a few days before exams to start studying. That is *bad* time management. The **same number of hours** devoted to the material BEFORE lectures can lead to a much more efficient use of your time, better understanding, and higher grades.