

## PHIL 3301: PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

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*Free and open discussion is the lifeblood of philosophy. Consequently, no student shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, gender, disability, place of national origin, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, political affiliation, or any other similar factor. I expect all members of the class to be equally tolerant of differing perspectives and ideologies. Critique, evaluate and analyze the ideas put forward by me and others; do not demean or belittle them.*

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### Course Description

The philosophy of mind is ultimately a dialectic between two opposing schools of thought—physicalism and dualism. Physicalists maintain that everything in the world may ultimately be accounted for in terms of certain fundamental physical properties. The dualist denies this. According to the dualist, the mind is something wholly new under the sun. This course is structured around the ongoing debate between these two schools of thought. We will begin with a dilemma: On the one hand, we will discuss some arguments that (purport to) show that the mind and the body cannot be identical (The Identity Theory); on the other hand, we will discuss some arguments that (purport to) show that the mind and the body cannot be distinct (Dualism). We will then take a long, hard look at the most promising way out of this dilemma, the Functionalist Theory of Mind.

Although the course is centered around this dispute between physicalists and dualists, the issues will force us to consider a number of other important topics in the philosophy of mind. These include problems of mental causation, externalism about mental content, and introspective knowledge of one's mental states.

### Required Materials

#### Required Texts

- A course packet available electronically.

#### Optional

- *A good stiff cup of joe!*

### Course Objectives

- To develop a critical understanding of the fundamental nature of the mind.
- To develop an ability to clearly express and defend not only your own opinions on these matters, but also the views and arguments of those with whom you disagree.

## Requirements and Expectations

This course is an upper division philosophy course. Students will be expected to have academic skills commensurate with its level including: the ability to read complex primary source material, the ability to write clear, well-constructed essays, and the ability to engage in articulate and respectful discourse. In addition, I expect all students to be prepared and attentive in class. This means coming to class having done reading assignments and having thought about their significance, and while in class being an active listener and contributor. Although I will not take attendance, I do expect you attend every class meeting. You are responsible for all material and announcements made in class, whether you are present or not. No late assignments will be allowed without a University excuse.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have or suspect you have a physical, learning, or psychological disability and require accommodations, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services located in the Union Bldg East, room 106 (747-5148).

### Evaluation:

- **Class Participation (200 points):** Ten points per class over 20 classes (5 points for attendance, 5 points for participation).
- **Four Short Essays (100 points each):** Very short (1-2 pp.) critical essay. *State and criticize some position you favor concerning the mind-body problem.*
- **Midterm & Final exam (200 points each):** In class cumulative essay exams.

The grading scale for this class is given below:

A	B	C	D	F
>89.5%	>79.5%	>69.5%	>59.5%	≤59.5%

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a concern for everyone. By joining the UTEP community every student agrees to abide by the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable to another person.

### **Cheating**

- Copying from the test paper of another student
- Communicating with another student during a test
- Giving or seeking aid from another student during a test
- Possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during tests (i.e. Crib notes, class notes, books, etc)
- Substituting for another person to take a test
- Falsifying research data, reports, academic work offered for credit

### **Plagiarism**

- Using someone's work in your assignments without the proper citations
- Submitting the same paper or assignment from a different course, without direct permission of instructors

### **Collusion**

- Unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments

**Class Schedule:** The following is a detailed schedule of classes. The schedule, however, is flexible. I will freely amend it as time, interest, and comprehension dictate.

\*\* = Supplementary reading.

W Jan. 18 Introduction

**The Mind/Body Problem: Dualism and the Identity Thesis**

M Jan. 23 Overview of the Mind/Body Problem.

W Jan. 25 Cartesian Dualism

- René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (II and VI)

M Jan. 30 The Problem of Interaction

- Karen Bennett, "Mental Causation,"
- Keith Campbell, "How the Mind-Body Problem Arises"

W Feb. 2 Type Identity Theory

- J. J. C. Smart, "Sensations and brain processes"

M Feb. 06 The Modal/Multiple-Realizability Arguments.

- Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Lecture 3),

W Feb. 08 Token Identity Theory: Anomalous Monism

- Donald Davidson, "Mental Events"

M Feb. 13 Events and Causation **[First Essay Due]**

- Jaegwon Kim, "TBD"

W Feb. 15 Behaviorism: Type Identity Theory Revisited

- Gilbert Ryle, "Descartes' Myth"

M Feb. 20 Against Behaviorism

- Hilary Putnam, "Brains and Behavior"

**Functionalism**

W Feb. 22 Emergent Properties

- C. D. Broad, "Mechanism and its alternatives"
- Jerry Fodor, "Special sciences"

M Feb. 27 Turing Machines and the Nature of the Mind

- Hilary Putnam, "The nature of mental states"

W Mar. 01 Ramsification and Functional Definition

- David Lewis, "Psychophysical and theoretical identifications"

M Mar. 06 Catch Up and Review

W Mar. 08 Midterm Exam

**Problems with Functionalism**

- M Mar. 13 Spring Break  
 W Mar. 15 Spring Break
- M Mar. 20 The Certainty/Knowledge Arguments [Second Essay Due]  
 • Frank Jackson, “Epiphenomenal qualia”  
 • Thomas Nagel, “What is it like to be a bat?”
- W Mar. 22 The Ability Response  
 • David Lewis, “What experience teaches”
- M Mar. 27 The Conceivability Argument  
 • David Chalmers, “The Hard Problem” (excerpt from *The Conscious Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.)
- W Mar. 29 The Explanatory Gap  
 • Joseph Levine, “Materialism and qualia”
- M Apr. 03 Mysterianism  
 • Colin McGinn, “Can we solve the mind-body problem?”

**Functionalism and the Nonwellfounded Mind**

- W Apr. 05 Intentionality & Propositional Attitudes [Third Essay Due]  
 • Franz Brentano, “The Distinction between Mental and Physical Phenomena”  
 • Gottlob Frege, “On sense and reference,”
- M Apr. 10 Functionalism and Intentionality  
 • George Bealer, “Self-conscious Thought: The Really Hard Problem,”  
 • George Bealer, “Self-consciousness,” *Philosophical Review*, **106**: 69-117 (1997).

**Dualism Revisited**

- W Apr. 12 Mental Causation Revisited  
 • Stephen Yablo, “Mental Causation”
- M Apr. 17 Mental Causation Revisited (Cont’d)  
 • George Bealer, “Mental Causation,”

**Further Topics (Time Permitting)**

- W Apr. 19 TBD  
 M Apr. 24 TBD  
 W Apr. 26 TBD  
 M May 01 TBD  
 W May 04 [Fourth Essay Due]
- F May. 12 Final Exam – 8:00-9:45 p.m.