

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

PHILOSOPHY 381 Lec 01

“Philosophy of Mind”

Fall 2008

MWF, 9:00 – 9:50

Course Outline

Instructor: Alex Sager
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Office Hours: Monday, 10:00-11:00 or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers some of the key issues in philosophy of mind. These include the mind-body problem, the role (if any) of innate ideas, the nature of consciousness, the possibility of artificial intelligence, the free will debate, and the ontology of madness.

The first two weeks are devoted to Plato’s *Phaedo* and *Meno*. These set out his view of the soul and his doctrine of recollection. This is followed by a discussion of the linguist Noam Chomsky’s defense of innate ideas and the modularity of mind thesis (as articulated by evolutionary biologists Leda Cosmides and John Tooby).

Next, we examine the computation theory of mind with special attention to John Searle’s objections to the theory. Our next topic is the nature of consciousness which is explored through the work of Thomas Nagel, Daniel Dennett and David Chalmers.

The final four and half weeks of the class are devoted to two short books. Daniel Dennett’s *Elbow Room* defends a compatibilist account of free will; Ian Hacking’s *Mad Travellers* provides a fascinating account of the nature of madness and psychiatric practice.

TEXTS

Plato, *Phaedo* (translated by David Gallop), 1999
Daniel Dennett, *Elbow Room: The Varieties of Free Will Worth Wanting*, 1984
Ian Hacking, *Mad Travellers*, 1998

These books are available at the University of Calgary Bookstore in McEwan Hall.

There will also be readings made available online throughout the semester, sometimes through the University of Calgary library. These are listed in the proposed schedule.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Essay #1 (4-5 pages)	Due October 13	25% of final grade
Essay #2 (9-10 pages)	Due December 12	35 % of final grade
Registrar Scheduled Final Exam	Date TBA	40% of final grade

No assignment is such that a passing grade on it is required to pass the course. Students will receive a grade of 0% for missed exams; make-up exams will only be provided if medical or other formal documentation is provided. Late papers will be accepted depending on the circumstances.

Grading Policy

A+ 96-100	B+ 81-85	C+ 66-70	D+ 51-55
A 91-95	B 76-80	C 61-65	D 46-50
A- 86-90	B- 71-75	C- 56-60	F 0-45

INTELLECTUAL HONESTY

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. As a result, cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offence, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. The University Calendar states that plagiarism exists when:

- *the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test;*
- *parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;*
- *the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source; and/or*
- *a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.*

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

STUDENTS' UNION REPRESENTATIVE

The Humanities Representative is Daniel Pagan, MSC 251, humanitiesrep@su.ucalgary.ca or 220-3913.

Proposed Lecture Schedule

Please note that readings are subject to change as the semester progresses

September 8: Introduction to course

September 10: Plato

Plato, *Phaedo*

September 12: Plato

Plato, *Phaedo*

September 15: Plato

Plato, *Phaedo*

September 17: Plato

Plato, *Meno*, translated by Janet Sisson (available on Blackboard)

September 19: Plato

Plato, *Meno*

September 22: Locke and others

Arguments against innateness

September 24: Chomsky

Noam Chomsky, "Language and Nature," *Mind*, Vol. 104, No. 413 (Jan., 1995), pp.1-61. (available through the U of C library)

September 26: Chomsky

September 29: Evolutionary Psychology

Leda Cosmides and John Tooby, "Evolutionary Psychology: A Primer" <http://www.psych.ucsb.edu/research/cep/primer.html>

October 1: Evolutionary Psychology

"Resolving the Debate on Innate Ideas," Tooby, J., Cosmides, L. & Barrett, H. C. (2005) <http://www.psych.ucsb.edu/research/cep/papers/innate05.pdf>

October 3: Evolutionary Psychology

October 6: Evolutionary Psychology

David J. Buller, "Evolutionary psychology: the emperor's new paradigm," <http://www.niu.edu/phil/~buller/research/tics.pdf>

October 8: Thanksgiving

October 10: Artificial Intelligence

Searle, "Minds, Brains and Programs"

<http://members.aol.com/NeoNoetics/MindsBrainsPrograms.html>

October 13: Artificial Intelligence

FIRST PAPER DUE

October 15: Artificial Intelligence

October 17: Artificial Intelligence

October 20: Review Class

October 22: Consciousness

Thomas Nagel, "What is it like to be a bat?", *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 83, No. 4 (Oct., 1974), pp. 435-450 (available through the U of C library)

October 24: Consciousness

Daniel Dennett, "Quining Qualia"

<http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/papers/quinqal.htm>

October 27: Consciousness

David Chalmers, "Facing up to the problem of consciousness", <http://consc.net/papers/facing.pdf>

October 29: Consciousness

October 31: Consciousness

November 3: Review Class

November 5: Free Will, etc.

Dennett Chapter 1

November 7: Free Will, etc.

Dennett Chapter 2

November 10: Free Will, etc.

Dennett Chapter 3

November 12: Remembrance Day

November 14: Free Will, etc.

Dennett Chapter 4

November 17: Free Will, etc.

Dennett Chapter 5

November 19: Free Will, etc.

Dennett Chapter 6

November 21: Free Will, etc.

Dennett Chapter 7

November 24: Madness

Hacking, Chapter 1

November 26: Madness

Hacking, Chapter 2

November 28: Madness

Hacking, Chapter 3

December 1: Madness

Hacking, Chapter 4

December 3: Madness

Hacking, Selected Readings from Supplements and Documents

December 5: Review for Exam