



FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

**PHIL 683 Lec 01 – Topics in Philosophy of Mind
Topic 2 – “Consciousness”**

Fall Term 2012

Course Outline

Lectures: M 18:00-20:30 in ST 055

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Office Hours: Tuesday: 13:30-15:30

Course Description

This course examines different aspects of the human capacity for conscious awareness and associated capacities of thought and agency. It is divided into three parts. The first part considers the “hard problem” of consciousness, the mind-body problem, and the distinction between phenomenal and access consciousness. The second part examines the claim that conscious free will is an illusion in light of the relation between conscious and unconscious processes in the mind and brain. And the third part addresses metaphysical and ethical issues regarding chronic disorders of consciousness.

Required Texts

- *Consciousness and the Mind-Body Problem*, T. Alter and R. Howell, eds. Oxford, 2012.
- *Effective Intentions: The Power of Conscious Will*, A. Mele, Oxford 2009.
- *Frontiers of Consciousness*, I. Weiskrantz and M. Davies, eds. Oxford 2008.
- Optional: *Consciousness: A Very Brief Introduction*, S. Blackmore, Oxford 2004.

Evaluation

- Two papers: First paper 10-12 pages; Second paper: 15-20 pages.
First paper due in class Monday October 15=35 percent
Second paper due in class Monday December 3=50 percent
(Because proper grammar and syntax are necessary to write clearly, these will be factors in the evaluation of papers.)
- Weekly one-page analysis of readings=5 percent
- One class presentation=10 percent

Grading Method

98-100=A+	86-89=B+	74-77=C+	62-65=D+
94-97=A	82-85=B	70-73=C	58-61=D
90-93=A-	78-81=B	66-69=C-	<57=F

Policy on Late Assignments

Papers submitted later than the due date will lose one-half letter grade for each day beyond that date. Students with medical or other extenuating reasons for not submitting a paper on the due date will not be penalized if they inform the instructor and provide him with documentation confirming the special circumstances.

Schedule

September 10: Introduction to philosophical problems associated with consciousness: the hard problem/mind-body problem (how a physical system like the brain can generate subjective, phenomenal experience); the binding problem (how the unity of consciousness can emerge from distributed activity in the brain); conscious free will. Theories: materialism; monism; dualism (substance and property); mysterianism; biological naturalism; qualia; epiphenomenalism; the conceivability argument. History: James; Freud; Sherrington; Penfield; Crick and Koch; Neurological basis of consciousness (what disorders of consciousness and anesthesia can teach us about awareness). Readings: Hasegawa et al., "Neurosurgery and Consciousness: Historical Sketch and Future Possibilities"; Zeman, "Consciousness," Zeman, "Does Consciousness Spring from the Brain?," in Weiskrantz and Davies, pp. 289-321; Alter and Howell, "Introduction," pp. 1-6; Davies, in Weiskrantz and Davies, pp. 1-53.

September 17: The mind-body problem; physicalism and challenges to it. Readings: Chalmers, "Consciousness and Its Place in Nature," in Alter and Howell, pp. 47-72, Chalmers, "Phenomenal Concepts and the Explanatory Gap," in Alter and Howell, pp. 148-168; McGinn, "Can We Solve the Mind-Body Problem?" in Alter and Howell, pp. 287-300; Papineau, "Explanatory Gaps and Dualist Intuitions," in Weiskrantz and Davies, pp. 55-68.

September 24: The mind-body problem. Readings: Kripke, from *Naming and Necessity*, in Alter and Howell, pp. 9-14; Nagel, "What Is it Like to Be a Bat?" in Alter and Howell, pp. 15-23; Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia," in Alter and Howell, pp. 23-34; Gertler, "In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism," in Alter and Howell, pp. 34-46; LeDoux, "Emotional Colouration of Consciousness: How Feelings Come About," in Weiskrantz and Davies, pp. 69-130.

October 1: The mind-body problem. Readings: Block, "On a Confusion about a Function of Consciousness"; Noe, *Out of Our Heads*

October 15: The mind-body problem. Challenges to Conscious Free Will. **First paper due**

October 22: Challenges to Conscious Free Will. Readings: Mele, *Effective Intentions*, Frith, "The Social Functions of Consciousness," in Weiskrantz and Davies, pp. 225-244; Weiskrantz, "On the Ubiquity of Conscious-Unconscious Dissociations in Neuropsychology," in Weiskrantz and Davies, pp. 323-334.

October 29: Challenges to Conscious Free Will. Readings, Mele, *Effective Intentions*; Papineau, "The Case for Materialism," pp. 352-358 in Alter and Howell; Kim, "The Rejection of Immaterial Minds," in Alter and Howell, pp. 359-369.

November 5: Disorders of Consciousness. Readings: Hasegawa et al.; Zeman; Fins, "Rethinking Disorders of Consciousness"; Fins and Schiff, "Shades of Gray"; Laureys, "Death, Unconsciousness, and the Brain"; Alkire, Hudetz, and Tononi, "Consciousness and Anesthesia."

November 19: Disorders of Consciousness: Readings: Bernat, "The Natural History of Chronic Disorders of Consciousness"; Levy and Savulescu, "Moral Significance of Phenomenal Consciousness"; Kahane and Savulescu, "Brain Damage and the Moral Significance of Consciousness"; Wilkinson et al., "Functional Neuroimaging and Withdrawal of Life-Sustaining Treatment from Vegetative Patients"; Legal Cases.

November 26: Presentations.

December 3: Presentations. **Second paper due**

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 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, 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.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial FOIP Act in all aspects of its operations as a publicly funded institution. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor.