



PHIL-PSYC-2270H-A: Philosophy of Mind 2018FA - Peterborough Campus

Instructor:

Instructor: Amanda Bryant

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Phone Number: 705-748-1011 x7118

Office: CC G15

Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:00-2:00pm

Meeting Times:

TUE 10:00-11:50am OCA 208

WED 12:00-12:50pm OCA 205

Consult the [academic timetable](#) to confirm class dates, times, and locations.

Department:

Academic Administrative Assistant: Kathy Axcell

Email Address: philosophy@trentu.ca

Phone Number: 705-748-1011, x7166

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Description:

Human beings have a rich mental life — when conscious, we experience a whole range of things: hunger, exhaustion, boredom, happiness, pleasure, pain, comfort, discomfort, and so on. But how do we account for those mental phenomena? What is the nature of the mind, and what is its relation to the brain and body? Can the activity of our brains and bodies account for the rich array of conscious phenomena we experience, and if so, how? These are the central questions of the

philosophy of mind and the main questions that will concern us in this course. Our exploration of the general nature of the mind will then inform our thinking about concrete issues including artificial intelligence and animal minds.

Learning Outcomes:

I have developed the course to address several learning outcomes. By the end of the course a successful student should:

- understand and be able to explain and evaluate the principal metaphysical theses concerning the status of the mind and mental states
 - understand and be able to explain what intentional and qualitative properties are and grasp what challenges they pose to different metaphysical positions
 - have a grasp of how recent scientific advances help shape how we think about the brain and its relation to the mind
 - have a deeper understanding of what it means to have a mind
 - have improved skills in reading, writing, and arguing about complex and abstract ideas
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Texts:

David Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. Oxford University Press.

Assessments, Assignments and Tests:

1. Type of Assignment: **Online Discussion**

Description: Students will critically question, comment on, object to, or otherwise discuss 10 course readings of their choice before the class in which we discuss each respective reading.

Due Date: **Ongoing**

2. Type of Assignment: **Midterm Exam 1**

Description: an in-class test of students' knowledge of the course content and their ability to respond critically to it

Due Date: **OCT 09**

3. Type of Assignment: **Midterm Exam 2***

Description: an in-class test of students' knowledge of the course content—especially content covered following Midterm Exam 1—and their ability to respond critically to it

Due Date: **NOV 13**

*Students who prefer to do so may complete a written essay assignment instead of Midterm 2, due via Blackboard on **NOV 13**, which will require students to think and write critically about the course material. Students who prefer this option should indicate their preference

to the professor **no later than OCT 30**. Think carefully about which option is better for you, given your strengths. Keep in mind that Midterm 2 will be good practice for the final exam.

4. Type of Assignment: **Final Exam**

Description: a cumulative test of students' knowledge of the course content and their ability to respond critically to it

Due Date: **During exam period**

Grading:

- Online Discussion: 15%
- Midterm 1: 25%
- Midterm 2 / Alternate Essay Assignment: 30%
- Final Exam: 30%

Grade Total by Withdrawal Date:

At least 25% of final grade will be available to students by withdrawal date of November 6, 2018.

Schedule:

Note: This schedule is subject to change

Note: BB stands for Blackboard and PM stands for our textbook, *Philosophy of Mind*

TUE SEP 11 - Introduction

- No reading

WED SEP 12 - Dualism

- Descartes, *Second Meditation* <<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1641.pdf>>

TUE SEP 18 - Dualism

- Descartes, *Sixth Meditation* <<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1641.pdf>>
- *Correspondence between Descartes and Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia*, 10.vi.1643, 28.vi.1643, 1.vii.1643 <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1643_1.pdf>

WED SEP 19 - Academic Skills presentation on note-taking, studying, and exam skills

- No reading

TUE SEP 25

- David Chalmers, Ch. 3 of *The Conscious Mind* (BB)
- Dan Dennett, "The Unimagined Preposterousness of Zombies" (BB)

WED SEP 26 - Behaviourism

- Gilbert Ryle, "Descartes' Myth" (PM, 32-39)

TUE OCT 02 - Identity Theory

- U.T. Place, "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?" (PM, 55-60)
- J.J.C. Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes" (PM, 60-68)

WED OCT 03 - **Exam Review**

- No reading

TUE OCT 09 - **Midterm Exam 1**

WED OCT 10 - Eliminativism

- Patricia Churchland, "Mind-brain reduction: new light from the philosophy of science" (BB)

TUE OCT 16 - Functionalism

- Hilary Putnam, "The Nature of Mental States" (PM, 73-79)
- David Armstrong, "The Causal Theory of the Mind" (PM, 80-87)

WED OCT 17 - Extended Mind

- Larissa MacFarquhar, "[The Mind-Expanding Ideas of Andy Clark](#)" *The New Yorker*

TUE OCT 23 & WED OCT 24 - **NO CLASS (Reading Week)**

TUE OCT 30 - Consciousness

- Tom Nagel, "What is it Like to Be a Bat?" (PM, 219-225)
- Kathleen Akins, "What is it Like to be Boring and Myopic?" (BB)

WED OCT 31 - Consciousness

- David Chalmers, "Facing up to the Hard Problem of Consciousness" (BB)

TUE NOV 06 - Consciousness

- Frank Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia" (PM, 273-280)
- Dan Dennett, "Quining Qualia" (PM, 226-246)

Note: Nov 06 is the drop deadline

WED NOV 07 - **Exam Review**

TUE NOV 13 - **Midterm 2 / Alternate Essay Assignment Due**

WED NOV 14 - Artificial Intelligence

- Alan Turing, "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" (BB)

TUE NOV 20 - Artificial Intelligence

- John Searle, "Can Computers Think?" (PM, 669-675)
- Paul and Patricia Churchland, "Could a Machine Think?" (BB)

WED NOV 21 - Artificial Intelligence

- Luciano Floridi, "[Should We Be Afraid of AI?](#)" *Aeon*

TUE NOV 27 - Animal Minds

- Donald Griffin and Gayle Speck, "New Evidence of Animal Consciousness" (BB)
- Dan Dennett, "Animal Consciousness: What Matters and Why" (BB)

WED NOV 28 - Animal Minds

- Peter Godfrey-Smith "On Being an Octopus", *Boston Review* <<http://bostonreview.net/books-ideas/peter-godfrey-smith-being-octopus>>

TUE DEC 04 - Beyond Animal Minds

- Laura Ruggles, "[The Minds of Plants](#)" *Aeon*
- Olivia Goldhill, "[The idea that everything from spoons to stones is conscious is gaining academic credibility.](#)" *Quartz*

WED DEC 05 - **Exam Review**

Final Exam Date TBA

Course Guidelines:

Attendance:

Repeated, unexcused absences and latenesses will affect your grade negatively. You must be present for all exams. Make-up exams will only be given to students with legitimate extenuating circumstances.

24-Hour Rule:

When an assignment or exam is returned to you, please wait at least 24 hours before contacting me about your grade.

Email:

I get a lot of email, so please email me just when necessary. Make sure the answer to your question isn't already on the syllabus. If you have a question that might require a long answer, see me in my office hours.

Please note that I don't discuss grades by email. If you wish to discuss a grade, please make an appointment with me.

Departmental Policies:

Final departmental deadline for submission of work:

No term work will be accepted for evaluation in the Philosophy Department later than one week after the last day of classes. One week after the last day of classes is also the deadline for the filing of Request for Incomplete Standing Forms to the Chair with all the relevant documentation.

Note: Most instructors will have deadlines well before this final departmental deadline. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with instructor's deadlines and deadline policies.

University Policies:

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty, which includes plagiarism and cheating, is an extremely serious academic offence and carries penalties varying from failure on an assignment to expulsion from the University. Definitions, penalties, and procedures for dealing with plagiarism and cheating are set out in Trent University's *Academic Integrity Policy*. You have a responsibility to educate yourself – unfamiliarity with the policy is not an excuse. You are strongly encouraged to visit Trent's Academic Integrity website to learn more: www.trentu.ca/academicintegrity.

Access to Instruction

It is Trent University's intent to create an inclusive learning environment. If a student has a disability and documentation from a regulated health care practitioner and feels that they may need accommodations to succeed in a course, the student should contact the Student Accessibility Services Office (SAS) at the respective campus as soon as possible.

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