

# Philosophy 7: Introduction to Philosophy of Mind

Summer 2016, A Session

Gabe Dupre

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**Time:** Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10.00am - 11.20am

**Place:** Dodd 146

**Instructor:** Gabe Dupre

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**Office:** Dodd 343

**Office Hours:** 11.30-1.30 Wednesday (Dodd 343)

**TA:** Vaheh Shirvanian ([vaheh.shirvanian@gmail.com](mailto:vaheh.shirvanian@gmail.com))

## Course Overview

The aim of this course is to introduce students to some philosophical debates about the nature of the relationship between the mental and the physical realms. It is commonplace that humans and (at least some) other animals are different from all other earthly entities in an important way: these creatures have *minds*. But, in what does this difference consist? What *exactly* is it that we humans and our pet cats and dogs have, that statues, trees and bacteria lack?

The first part of this course will look at various answers to this question: accounts of what it is to be in a mental, rather than a merely physical, state. We will examine and evaluate theories according to which mentality involves: i) standing in a certain relationship to a special kind of non-physical stuff ii) having certain behavioral dispositions iii) being in a particular brain state and iv) having states with a particular kind of causal/functional role.

The second part of the course will introduce philosophical discussions about two seemingly distinctive properties of mental states: consciousness and intentionality. Mental states (at least sometimes), unlike typical physical states, are unusual in that there is something it is like to be in them and in that they are about other aspects of the world. We will look at puzzles that these properties raise for the production of complete and illuminating theories of the mental.

## Course Materials

There will be no official textbook for the course. All of the required readings will be available digitally through the course webpage. Please check the course website regularly for updates.

Although there is no course textbook, many of the readings can be found in David Chalmers' (ed.) 2002 collection *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (OUP). Also, it may be helpful to check out an introductory text for useful background either prior to, or alongside, assigned readings from the class. Jaegwon Kim's 2001 text *Philosophy of Mind* (3rd edition, Westview Press) contains useful and accessible entries on all the topics we will cover.

## Course Difficulty

While there are no prerequisites for this course, it will be intellectually demanding—requiring you to master novel theoretical concepts and critically engage with complex arguments in your own writing. In short: the class is not an easy A. As with many other courses, to do well in Phil 7 you will need to:

- Attend lectures regularly and take (mental or physical) notes;

- Attend sections regularly and engage in discussion;
- Complete all the course readings, slowly and carefully, typically multiple times;
- Complete all the weekly problem sets;
- Work hard on the final paper, including proof-reading and re-drafting multiple times, and submit it on time.
- **Optional, but highly recommended:** Meet with me or your TA to discuss questions regarding the course material or your final paper topic.

This class is not about memorizing facts or correctly reproducing slogans; this class is about developing your own opinions and critical perspective on the topics discussed and enriching your ability to articulate and defend those opinions in a written form. Students who are prepared to work hard, challenge themselves, and attend lecture and section regularly will do well.

For pro-tips on reading and writing philosophy:

<https://sites.google.com/a/wellesley.edu/pinkguidetophilosophy/>

## Course Requirements

1. **Weekly Attendance and Participation:** 4% of final grade, assigned by your TA.
2. **Online Course Evaluation (on MyUCLA)** 1% of final grade.
3. **Weekly Problem Sets:** 4 sets, 12.5% of your final grade each. 4 X 12.5 = 50% of final grade.
4. **Final Paper Essay Plan:** 5% of final grade.
5. **Final Paper:** 40% of final grade.
6. **Be familiar with and abide by UCLA's policy on Academic Integrity:**  
This policy can be found at <http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Academic-Integrity>
  - Students needing an academic accommodation based on a disability should notify the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) located at (310) 825-1501 or A255 Murphy Hall. When possible, students should contact the OSD within the first two weeks of the quarter, as reasonable notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. For more information visit [www.osd.ucla.edu](http://www.osd.ucla.edu).

- Unless requested by the Office for Students with Disabilities, ***The use of computers, phones and tablets is not allowed in lecture.*** This component of the course's requirements is not intended to be mean or punitive, but rather to aid your understanding — and the understanding of those around you — of the contents of the lectures.

7. **Late assignments:** Late problem sets will be docked by 10% (1.25% of your final grade) for every 24 hours after the due date they are handed in. Your final paper grade will be docked by 1/3 of a letter grade for every 24 hour period after the due date. There will be no credit for late essay plans. Extensions may be granted by your TA if they deem you to have a valid reason.

## Waitlist

In order to avoid undue burden on the TAs, I will not be giving out PTE numbers. If you are on the waitlist, the only way for you to get into the class is for someone to drop the class; you are thus advised to find a back-up class as soon as possible.

## Classroom Etiquette

Classroom participation is strongly encouraged. The best way to learn philosophy is to *do* philosophy, and this involves discussion and argumentation, in the flesh as well as in written work. Such discussion may get heated and this is OK. However, what is not OK is behavior that discourages other students from engaging. Finding the line between passionate debate and personal attack is a vital skill for anyone in or outside of academia.

All other students in the classroom must be treated respectfully, as peers engaged in a collective activity. Behavior that will not be tolerated includes, but is not limited to: dismissing another student's opinion, talking over another student, personal attacks etc. In short: Don't be a jerk. Class discussion is every student's opportunity to engage with the material, and behavior which impedes this will not be tolerated.

## Problem Sets

These will be assigned in weeks 2-5. They will be assigned via the course website each Friday afternoon, and must be returned by midnight the following Friday. Each set will consist of 5 or so short questions, requiring an answer of approximately a paragraph each. They will all concern the assigned readings.

As they are designed to test for reading comprehension, you are not allowed help from the TA with these questions.

## Final Paper

The final paper requires you to critically engage with the philosophical material covered in the course. The topic will not be assigned (although the TA and I are willing to help you find one). Once you have settled on a topic, you must check with me or your TA that this topic is suitable. As this paper is the largest chunk of your grade of any single piece of work, it is highly recommended that you start thinking about this paper fairly early in the course, and begin discussions with me or your TA no later than the beginning of week 5. An essay plan must be produced for your TA by Midnight on Friday of Week 5.

This paper is an indication of your ability to do philosophy. This involves understanding the material you are drawing on, presenting this material clearly and concisely, and demonstrating an ability to engage creatively and productively with this material. It is not required of you to master an entire area of the literature, and secondary readings should be utilized sparingly, if at all. This paper should be 6-8 pages long.

## Reading Schedule

### Week 1

Monday 6/20: Introduction. No Reading.

Wednesday 6/22: Dualism I: Descartes, R. *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Excerpts- Meditations 2 and 6) (1641)

Friday 6/24: Dualism II: Gertler, B. *In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism* (2007)

### Week 2

M 6/27: Dualism III: Princess Elizabeth and Descartes, R. *Correspondence Between Princess Elizabeth and Descartes* (Excerpts- Letters from 1643) (1643)

W 6/29: Behaviorism I: Ryle, G. *The Concept of Mind* (Excerpts- Chapter 1: *Descartes' Myth* and Chapter 2 *Knowing How and Knowing That* (sections 1-4) (1949)

F 7/01: Behaviorism II: Putnam, H. *Brains and Behavior* (1963)

### Week 3

M 7/04: \*No Class\* 4th of July

W 7/06: Identity Theory I: U.T. Place. *Is Consciousness a Brain Process?* (1956)

F 7/08: Identity Theory II: Putnam, H. *The Nature of Mental States* (1967)

Week 4

M 7/11: Functionalism I: Fodor, J. *The Mind-Body Problem* (1981)

W 7/13: Functionalism II: Searle, J. *Can Computers Think?* (1983)

F 7/15: Functionalism III: Clark, A. and Chalmers, D. *The Extended Mind* (1998)

Week 5

M 7/18: Consciousness I: Jackson, F. *Epiphenomenal Qualia* (1982)

W 7/20: Consciousness II: Nida-Rümelin, M. *Qualia: The Knowledge Argument* (2008)

F 7/22: Consciousness III: Churchland, P.S. *The Hornswoggle Problem* (1996)

**Final Paper Essay Plan Due**

Week 6

M 7/25: Intentionality I: Crane, T. *The Mechanical Mind* (Excerpts: Chapter 5) (1995)

W 7/27 :Intentionality II: Dretske, F. *A Recipe for Thought* (1994)

F 7/29: Intentionality III: Millikan, R. *Teleological Theories of Mental Content* (2006)

F 8/05 **Final Paper Due**