

## PHLB81-Theories of Mind

**Instructor:** Dr. Dustin Stokes  
**Section:** PHLB81H3 LEC01; Winter Term  
Lectures: W 9:00-10:00/F 10:00-12:00 SW319  
**Office:** HW 323  
**Office Hours:** W 10-11/and by appointment  
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### Course description

This is a course on philosophical theories of mind. We will distribute our time across three sections.

#### *MIND/BODY PROBLEM*

What is the mind? Today the common-sense intuition is that the human mind is somehow importantly related to the brain (e.g. the mind *is* the brain), which is of course part of the physical body. But this is not how philosophers have always thought about the issue (indeed, some philosophers today don't think of the issue in this way). We will begin by looking at a classic formulation of the mind/body problem, and why the qualitative, subjective features of our life challenge any straightforward theory of what the mind is.

#### *MENTAL REPRESENTATION*

A standard way to think about the mind is that it represents things in the world. Your seeing a red tomato involves your mentally representing a red tomato. This feature of the mind—sometimes called *intentionality*—poses interesting questions. In what sense does the mind represent? What is the nature of this representation? Do all mental states represent?

#### *CHALLENGES TO ORTHODOX THEORIES*

Finally we'll look at a few fairly recent challenges to orthodox ways of thinking about the mind. For example, we'll consider the apparent neglect of discussions of the body in most theories of mind. What is the role of the body in thought and reasoning? Could we really enjoy mental experience without having a body, situated in an environment?

### Course materials

All course materials are available online via the course blackboard site. ALL readings will be online. Lecture slides, essay assignments, announcements, and other information will also be made available on this site. Please check the site regularly.

The portal may be accessed via: <https://portal.utoronto.ca/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>  
(You must login using your UTORid and password. Then find our course: PHLB81 Theories of Mind. Then click 'Course Documents', then 'Readings').

### Assignments/Requirements:

<b>30% Short paper 1</b>	<b>DUE 12 FEB (Questions assigned 5 Feb)</b>
<b>30% Short paper 2</b>	<b>DUE 19 MAR (Questions assigned 12 Mar)</b>
<b>40% Final exam</b>	<b>TBA</b>

The short papers might also be thought of as take-home exams. You will be given a short list of questions, from which you will choose and respond to one. The questions will be distributed in class, and the papers are to be submitted the following week at the start of

class. Your responses should be concise and to the point, and should be approximately 750-1250 words.

The final exam will be comprehensive and essay-style, but like the short papers, you will have choices between questions. More details later.

### **General:**

Lecture notes will be posted online **after** lecture (without images, etc.)

This is a writing intensive course. All of the work/examinations will be written. Your papers will be graded not only on content, but also on grammar, writing mechanics, style, etc. The UTSC writing centre can be found online here:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/~ctl/twc/index.html>

I also recommend this for writing philosophy papers:

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

**Plagiarism and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. You should familiarize yourself with the university guidelines and policies on academic integrity:**

<http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/resourcesforstudents.html>

Late work/exams are allowed only with the submission of an official University of Toronto Medical Certificate or a letter from your registrar (or other university authority).

**Unexcused late work will NOT be accepted.** No exceptions.

*If you require special test-taking or note-taking accommodations, please see me.*

### **(Tentative) Reading/lecture schedule:**

\*You are expected to have readings completed **prior** to the lecture date for the respective readings.

#### *THE MIND/BODY PROBLEM*

W 06/01	<i>Introduction: The mind</i>
F 08/01	<i>The mind/body problem and Descartes' substance dualism</i> <b>READ:</b> Descartes, excerpts from <i>Meditations</i> and <i>Passions of the Soul</i>
W 13/01	<i>The Ghost in the Machine</i> <b>READ:</b> Ryle, 'Descartes' Myth'
F 15/01	<i>Behaviourism and challenges</i> <b>READ:</b> Putnam, 'Brains and Behavior' (coupled w/ Ryle pdf)
W 20/01	<i>Identity theory</i> <b>READ:</b> Smart, 'Sensations and brain processes'
F 22/01	<i>Identity theory and challenges</i> <b>READ:</b> Putnam, 'The Nature of Mental States'
W 27/01	<i>Functionalism and computationalism (CTM)</i> <b>READ:</b> Heil, 'Functionalism'
F 29/01	<i>Functionalism/CTM/AI and challenges</i> <b>READ:</b> Searle, 'Minds, Brains, and Programs'

W 03/02      *Consciousness: Subjective experience*  
                  **READ:** Nagel, 'What is it like to be a bat?'

F 05/02      *Consciousness: The hard problem*  
                  **READ:** Chalmers, 'The puzzle of conscious experience'

W 10/02      *Property dualism*  
F 12/02      *Mind/body review*  
                  **\*Short paper 1 due\***

W 17/02      READING WEEK  
F 19/02

#### *MENTAL REPRESENTATION*

W 24/02      *Mental representation and intentionality*  
F 26/02      **READ:** Crane, from *The Mechanical Mind*

W 03/03      *The language of thought and representational theory of mind (RTM)*  
F 05/03      **READ:** Braddon-Mitchell and Jackson, 'The language of thought'  
                  Heil, 'The representational theory of mind'

W 10/03      *Language of thought and RTM continued*

#### *CHALLENGES TO ORTHODOX THEORIES*

F 12/03      *The intentional stance*  
                  **READ:** Dennett, 'True Believers...'

W 17/03      *On the unity of consciousness*  
                  **READ:** Nagel 'Brain bisection and the unity of consciousness'

F 19/03      *On the role of the body in mind*  
                  **READ:** Dreyfus, 'The Role of Body in Intelligent Behavior'  
                  **\*Short paper 2 due\***

W 24/03      *Locating the mind*  
F 26/03      *The mind outside of our body?*  
                  **READ:** Clark and Chalmers, 'The Extended Mind'

W 31/03      NO CLASS

#### **Resources:**

All of the readings will be primary sources. Needless to say, much of this material will be challenging. You might find some of the following resources helpful.

-For introductory texts on philosophy of mind, try Kim, J., *Philosophy of Mind*, Second Edition (Westview Press: 2005) or Heil, J., *Philosophy of Mind: A Contemporary Introduction* (Routledge: 2004).

-For general philosophy resources, I suggest both *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, (1999) ed. Audi, R. and *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, (1994) ed. Blackburn, S. Online, try the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://plato.stanford.edu/>