

Fall 2020

PHI 4320

Philosophy of Mind

Lectures Tuesday 4th Period and Thursday 4th and 5th Periods

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Office Hours

The study of philosophy of mind has become, in the last 50 years, central to all of contemporary philosophy. For instance, it has recently been argued that epistemology, which had traditionally been the center of philosophy, should simply become a sub topic within philosophy of mind. This course is intended as more than simply an overview of this part of philosophy, but aims at a deeper study of what I consider one central issue and dispute within philosophy of mind.

Often philosophy of mind has been approached from the perspective of new fields of scientific inquiry such as artificial intelligence, computer science, and neuroscience. But I am going to be more traditional (quite unlike me) and discuss philosophy of mind through the topic that gave it birth, namely the idea of mind-body dualism. The course will therefore examine two recent versions of dualism, namely property dualism and anomalous monism, to see whether they have provided reasons to accept some version of this Cartesian position.

I have selected Tim Crane's Elements of Mind for its overview of the whole topic and Crane's useful discussion of key concepts and disputes. But I want to emphasize that the course is not organized in the way Crane structures his book. It would be fine to read it through, but we will turn to only parts of his book during the course. I have indicated that in the syllabus below (some of the assignments in the syllabus may change of course as the course proceeds).

All readings in the course, other than Crane's book, are provided as PDFs within Files on our Canvas page. Not all of those PDFs are currently within Files.

The requirements of the course are of three kinds. 1) There is a final paper that requires meeting with the instructor with some plan or outline of the project before we reach the last week of classes. 2) There will be a take home essay exam at the middle of term. 3) During the semester, biweekly short writing exercises will be assigned to focus discussion. These exercises are graded S/U.

Given our schedule, Thursdays are wholly devoted to discussion/review but of course are required meetings of the course.

Announcements will be used for both preparing or commenting on Thursday discussion and making changes to the syllabus. Please note these announcements when they appear on our page.

All written assignments including comments are submitted as files uploaded within Assignments.

Textbook: Tim Crane, Elements of the Mind (Reitz Union Bookstore)

Grade Requirements: The mid-term take home essay is 1500 words (roughly 5-7 pages double spaced) and the Final Paper is 3000 words (roughly 10-15 pages). The take home essay does not allow outside sources and focuses exclusively on course readings. It will, however, ask for critical assessment as well as exposition. The final paper may include outside sources, but additional sources are not required. I will review the design of the final paper in class with each member individually, but the final paper does require substantial critical assessment (and here substantial means not merely 2 or 3 sentences). Additional sources as well as the topic of the final paper must be approved by the instructor in advance of its due date during exam week.

The bi-weekly reaction comments are wholly to generate discussion, are limited to 500 words (1 page), and graded S/U. I will normally post prompts on Mondays and they are uploaded to Assignment before class on Thursdays. These prompts would range from asking for a brief summary or a succinct reaction. How could Descartes respond to Princess Elizabeth's criticism? What is meant by 'identity' in the identity theory response to mind-body dualism?

If you have questions about your grades or the final grade in the course, then you should meet with me. This course does not use a grade contract system.

UNIT 1 Descartes's Dualism

First Week -Introduction to Course

1/7 1/9 Meditations II and Meditation VI;

Second Week - Descartes's Meditations

1/14 1/16 Crane, Elements of Mind, #9 and 10

Third Week Reaction to Descartes

1/21 1/23 Meditation VI Objections and Replies; Letters between Descartes and Princess Elizabeth; Crane, Elements of Mind #11

Fourth Week Identity Theory in 20th century

1/28 1/30 J.J.C. Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes;" Place, "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?;" Crane, Elements of Mind, #14

Fifth Week

2/4 2/6 Place "Thirty Years Later;" Smart, "Further Thoughts on the Identity Theory"

Sixth Week

2/11 2/13 Thomas Nagel, "What is it Like to be a Bat," Frank Jackson, "What Mary Didn't Know" Crane, Elements of Mind, #16 and #17

Take Home Essay Questions Posted/Take Home Exam Due 2/30

Seventh Week

2/18 2/20 Q&A

Eighth Week

2/25 **Introduction to UNIT 2 Anomalous Monism**

SPRING BREAK

Ninth Week

3/10 3/12 Donald Davidson, "Mental Events"

Tenth Week

3/17 3/29 Davidson, "Mental Events" and "Psychology as Philosophy"

Eleventh Week

3/24 Searle, "Mind-Body Problem" and Searle, "Intentionality"

3/26

Twelfth Week

3/31 Searle, Chapter 5 "Prospect for the Social Sciences"

4/2

Thirteenth Week

4/7 Fodor, "The Special Sciences"

4/9

Fourteenth Week

4/14 4/16 **Review Final Papers Need Approval**

Fifteenth Week

4/21 Q&A **Final Paper Due 4/30**

Course Guidelines: Attendance at discussion sections and lectures is the only way to successfully complete the course work. If you plan to attend sporadically, this course is not recommended.

Extensions for assigned work papers are granted only for circumstances of the sort listed under excused absences and only if proper arrangements have been made.

Essays handed in past the due dates set for them will normally suffer a grade penalty. Documentation must be provided to your instructor if you have a medical reason for not completing an assignment when due. Keep copies of all your essays.

Being assigned an Incomplete in lieu of a final grade for the course requires permission of the instructor and it is rare.

Learning Objectives

Students should become familiar with philosophical questions and arguments concerning philosophy of mind and specifically responses and defenses of mind-body dualism. Student should learn how to judge and criticize arguments, as well as understand key concepts. Take home essay exams involve objective essay questions that do not ask for opinions but require critical analyses of positions and argumentative strategies. The aim of the course is to learn to read and think critically about philosophy of mind in both oral and written formats.

I will provide both in our syllabus and in Assignments a rubric for expectations of the take home essay assignments and the final paper. I will also discuss these expectations further in class.

Grade Determination

Factor	Percentage
Class Attendance	10%
Discussion & S/U Comment Papers	10%
Take Home Mid-Term	35%
Final Paper	45%

Letter grades are equivalent to numerical values as per the following chart.

A	4	C	2
A-	3.67	C-	1.67
B+	3.33	D+	1.33
B	3	D	1
B-	2.67	D-	0.67
C+	2.33	E	0

Note that a grade of C- for the course is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, General Education, or College Basic Distribution requirements. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> (Links to an external site.)

Academic Honesty

Please note that all UF students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. In particular, you should be aware of the regulations governing the scope of the Honor Code and possible violations; you can find that here: <http://regulations.ufl.edu/chapter4/4041.pdf> (Links to an external site.):

Plagiarism is a very serious violation of academic honesty. It includes, but is not limited to, copying another text as your own, copying the work of a fellow student, handing in a paper prepared by another as your own, and using sources for writing your paper not cited within the paper. Plagiarism is not restricted to matters of copyright infringement and therefore it does cover materials found on web pages. The penalties for plagiarism can range from an automatic failing grade in the course to suspension or expulsion from the university. If you have any questions about how to prepare your paper, please discuss them with your discussion leader or

instructor before turning in the paper. An electronic upload is the only way to submit written work.

Attendance

Attendance is required and lengthy unexcused absences will hurt your grade in the following ways.

Number of unexcused absences

6-9	Participation grade reduced
9 or more	10% lost

As stated in UF's official policy regarding attendance, acceptable reasons for absence include: Illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences are excused from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena).

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> (Links to an external site.)

Classroom Etiquette

Do not read check email, browse the Web, or distract fellow students during the class.

Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results> (Links to an external site.).

Disability Accommodations

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resources Center for information about available resources.

www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/