



ARTS3370

Topics in the Philosophy of Mind and Psychology

Semester One // 2018

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
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School Contact Information

School of Humanities and Languages

Location: School Office, Morven Brown Building, Level 2, 258

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday, 9am - 4:45pm

Phone: +61 2 9385 1681

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Attendance Requirements

A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face (F2F) or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.

A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.

If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, their request should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance. A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course's learning outcomes and/or volume of learning. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

For more information about the attendance protocols in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to: requests for extension; review of marks; occupational health

and safety; examination procedures; special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure; student equity and disability; and other essential academic information,
see <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Subject area: *Philosophy*

Humans and other animals stand out from the rest of nature because of our capacity to feel, think, and act purposefully on the world around us. For all we know, these capacities may be unique in the universe. Other physical systems (such as rocks, trees and even robots) can interact with their environments, but have no feelings, thoughts or desires. In this course, we will be reflecting upon the conceptual foundations of contemporary approaches to the nature of such phenomena in the cognitive sciences, including psychology, neuroscience and artificial intelligence.

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to

1. Articulate some central questions in the philosophy of mind, as well as of some influential approaches in addressing them.
2. Engage reflectively and critically with the material presented in the course.
3. Appreciate the relevance of philosophical approaches to the interdisciplinary study of the mind, as well as our broader understanding of human existence.
4. Employ and explain key concepts in the philosophy of mind, demonstrating a basis for ongoing engagement with the subject.
5. Compose clear analytical essays.
6. Communicate complex ideas in a concise and clear way.

Teaching Strategies

This course is taught by way of weekly two-hour lectures and one-hour tutorials. The purpose of the lectures is to introduce new material, including new concepts, theories and arguments. The purpose of the tutorials is to deepen your understanding of the material and to enhance your ability to think philosophically, through student-led discussion, group activities, and other learning activities.

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Weekly Online Discussion Forums	30%	Due weekly, weeks 2-4, 6-11.	1,2,4,6
In Class Quizzes	30%	Quiz 1: During lecture, on 28 March; Quiz 2: During lecture, on 30 May.	1,4,6
Major Essay Assessment	40%	08/06/2018 04:00 PM	1,2,3,4,5,6

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Weekly Online Discussion Forums

Start date: Starting Week 2

Length: 2000 words total.

Details: Students will be asked to initiate and participate in online discussions on the course's topics and materials. The instructor monitors, moderates and contributes to the debate. Students are assessed for the quantity and quality of their contributions. Feedback is given in real time during the discussion, and also in the form of a weekly mark. Students are expected to contribute 2K words in total, over the course of the semester (around 200 per week, on average).

Additional details:

Please make sure you consult the instructions and guidelines on Moodle.

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 2: In Class Quizes

Start date: Not Applicable

Details: There will be two in-class, short answer quizzes. Each quiz will be 45 minutes long. Each question will be given a separate mark, and individual comments. A set of model answers will also be provided after each quiz is completed.

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 3: Major Essay Assessment

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 2.5000 words

Details: Students have to write a major essay of 2.5K words. To help with the development of the essay students will have to submit a first draft of the essay. Draft essays will be peer-reviewed, on the basis of a rubric and instructions that are provided by the instructor. Peer reviewers will also be asked to provide a brief text comment. The draft essay will be marked out of 5%. This mark will be based on the results of the peer reviews, moderated by the instructor. Please note that due to the nature of this assessment, late submissions will not be accepted unless a prior application for Special Consideration has been submitted and granted. Peer reviews are awarded 5% of the mark, to be awarded in full as long as the student submits their review on time. Late submission will be penalised in accordance with standard Faculty policy. The final essay submission is worth 30%. Essays are marked using a rubric, and each essay will also receive individual written comments. This is the final assessment for attendance purposes.

Additional details:

This assessment has multiple parts: a draft that will be peer-reviewed, a peer-review (via Moodle), and a final Turnitin submission. Please see detailed instructions on Moodle.

Submission notes: Submissions for peer review should be uploaded anonymously.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Students are expected to put their names and student numbers on every page of their assignments.

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

Late Assessment Penalties

An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).

The late penalty is the loss of 5% of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late. Lateness will include weekends and public holidays. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.

Work submitted fourteen (14) days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but for the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component, a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.

Work submitted twenty-one (21) days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.

Special Consideration Applications

You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances interfere with your assessment performance.

Sickness, misadventure or other circumstances beyond your control may:

- * Prevent you from completing a course requirement,
- * Keep you from attending an assessable activity,
- * Stop you submitting assessable work for a course,

* Significantly affect your performance in assessable work, be it a formal end-of-semester examination, a class test, a laboratory test, a seminar presentation or any other form of assessment.

For further details in relation to Special Consideration including "When to Apply", "How to Apply" and "Supporting Documentation" please refer to the Special Consideration website:

<https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose

- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

(<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>)

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 26 February - 4 March	Lecture	Introduction Is the mind a part of the natural world? Can there be a natural science of the mind? Are our brains just naturally evolved computers? These are the types of question we will be pursuing in this course.
	Reading	OPTIONAL 1. René Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i>, Meditation II 2. Princess Elisabeth's First Letter to Descartes Comment: The readings for this week are meant mostly for historical context. We want to understand where the ideas we will be discussing in this course came from. Many of you will have encountered them before, in other classes.
	Online Activity	Optional introductory online discussion.
Week 2: 5 March - 11 March	Lecture	Functionalism and Supervenience This week we discuss how to think about the mind at a fairly abstract level. We introduce “functionalism”, a label for the most popular family of approaches in the area.
	Tutorial	Functionalism and Supervenience
	Reading	1. Putnam, “The Nature of Mental States” (MC4) 2. Armstrong, “The Causal Theory of Mind” (MC3) Comment: Putnam’s paper was ground-breaking in its time. We will see why. In Section II, you may have your first encounter with the notions of a “Turing machine” and a “probabilistic automaton”. These are very abstract and somewhat hard to grasp concepts. Do not worry if you struggle at first; we will be returning to them at a later point. 3. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Entry on Supervenience, Sections 1-2 and 5.4. (https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/supervenience/)

		<p>Comment: The concept of supervenience has become an essential tool in the philosophers' conceptual toolkit. This entry on the SEP goes into a lot of detail (much more than is needed for our purposes). Only Sections 1, 2, and 5.4 are required.</p> <p>OPTIONAL</p> <p>4. Skinner, Excerpt from <i>About Behaviorism</i> (MC1)</p>
	Assessment	Online Discussion 1
Week 3: 12 March - 18 March	Lecture	<p>Minds and Other Things: Drawing the line</p> <p>Humans have minds. Rocks do not. But, what about dogs? Frogs? Bees? A good theory of mind should be able to draw principled lines; but the results might surprise us.</p>
	Tutorial	Minds and Other Things: Drawing the line
	Reading	<p>1. Tye, "The Problem of Simple Minds" (MC52)</p> <p>2. Schwitzgebel, "If Materialism Is True Then The US Is Probably Conscious"**</p> <p>3. Chalmers and Clark, "The Extended Mind" (MC35)</p> <p>Comment: The readings for this week tease out some of the implications of a broadly functionalist understanding of the mind. They are fascinating!</p>
	Assessment	Online Discussion 2
Week 4: 19 March - 25 March	Lecture	<p>Psychological Explanation</p> <p>We turn from abstract, ontological questions to questions about psychological understanding. Are there laws of the mind? Can psychology be a science, on the model of the natural sciences?</p>
	Tutorial	Psychological Explanation
	Reading	<p>1. Fodor, "The Persistence of the Attitudes"**</p> <p>2. Hornsby, "Physicalism and Conceptions of Behaviour"**</p> <p>Comment: We are interested in two things. First, highlighting the importance and characteristic features of psychological explanation. Then, the different conceptions of why and how such explanations work.</p>
	Assessment	Online Discussion 3

Week 5: 26 March - 1 April	Assessment	Quiz 1 takes place during the scheduled lecture slot. No tutorials this week. No new online discussion.
Break: 2 April - 8 April		MID-TERM BREAK
Week 6: 9 April - 15 April	Lecture	<p>Computationalism</p> <p>The idea that the brain is a computer has been one of the most fruitful scientific ideas of the last century. It has defined the project of cognitive science, and influenced popular discourse about the mind. But what exactly does it mean?</p>
	Tutorial	Computationalism
	Reading	<p>1. Haugeland, "Semantic Engines: an introduction to mind design" (MC 14)</p> <p>Comment: <i>this is a long essay that handles some difficult concepts—including the promised discussion of the Turing Machine! But it is one of the most important readings in this course. So, it is worth putting in the effort to understand it. We will also discuss it extensively in class.</i></p> <p>2. Searle, "Can Computers Think?" (MC 15)</p> <p>Comment: Searle's notorious "Chinese Room" argument.</p> <p>OPTIONAL:</p> <p>3. Turing, "Computing Machinery and Intelligence"*</p> <p>Comment: <i>Turing was one of the founders of the theory of computation, and instrumental in the development of modern computers. But one of his core ambitions was understanding human intelligence. This is a non-technical paper, which introduces the famous "Turing Test" for "true" intelligence. Interesting as background reading.</i></p>
	Assessment	Online Discussion 4
Week 7: 16 April - 22 April	Lecture	<p>Neural Networks and Connectionism</p> <p>The Turing Machine provided the blueprint for the first generation of cognitive scientists. Neural networks, already dominant in fields like Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, seem to be doing the same for newer generations. Here we discuss the implications of this new approach to computation for the study of the mind.</p>
	Tutorial	Neural Networks and Connectionism

	Reading	<p>1. Churchland and Sejnowski, “Neural Representation and Neural Computation” (MC17)</p> <p>Comment: The article by the philosopher Patricia Churchland and the neuroscientist Terry Sejnowski is an in-depth (if early) investigation of the neural net paradigm. Its interdisciplinary character can make it challenging. In this class, we *do not* care about the technical details. We care only about the big picture. If you feel you are catching the drift, do not worry about the details.</p> <p>2. Van Gelder, “What Might Cognition Be, If Not Computation?” (MC19)</p> <p>Comment: Van Gelder provides a provocative, and controversial, argument that traditional computationalism is all wrong. He illustrates his case with interesting examples from the history of science and engineering. As before, do not worry too much about the technical details of his examples. Focus on the big picture.</p>
	Assessment	Online Discussion 5
Week 8: 23 April - 29 April	Lecture	PUBLIC HOLIDAY: NO LECTURE OR TUTORIALS THIS WEEK.
Week 9: 30 April - 6 May	Lecture	<p>Psychosemantics</p> <p>Much of our discussion has focused on the idea of the idea that minds have contents, i.e., that they represent things in the world. But how do mental states get to have meaning, or content? Words have meanings because we give it to them; but how about our own minds?</p>
	Tutorial	Psychosemantics
	Reading	<p>1. Fodor, "Information and Representation" (MC 8)</p> <p>2. Millikan, "Biosemantics" (MC 9)</p> <p>3. Dennett, "Real Patterns" (MC23)</p> <p>Comment: Fodor, Millikan and Dennett represent three very different approaches to the question of mental content. We will ask whether any of their approaches is successful, and if so which one.</p>
	Assessment	Online Discussion 6
Week 10: 7 May - 13 May	Lecture	Cognition and Consciousness

		<p>Our discussion so far seems to have neglected the most striking feature of our minds, namely, consciousness. What should we say about this? Can it fit within the broadly functionalist/computationalist approaches we have been discussing? If so, what is the role of conscious mental states, such as visual perception?</p>
	Tutorial	Cognition and Consciousness
	Reading	<p>1. Ned Block, "Some Concepts of Consciousness"*</p> <p>Comment: <i>Block is very skeptical of approaches to consciousness within a functionalist framework, because he thinks they are guilty of a certain conceptual error. We will consider his reasons, and ask if his conceptual distinction is as deep and important as he thinks.</i></p> <p>2. Gilbert Harman, "The Intrinsic Quality of Experience" (MC44)</p> <p>Comment: <i>Harman offers a deceptively simple theory about consciousness, one that is friendly to cognitive science. Our question will be, does this leave something out?</i></p>
	Assessment	Online Discussion 7
Week 11: 14 May - 20 May	Lecture	<p>Consciousness and Representation</p> <p>How well do you know what things look like to you? We normally assume that, no matter how wrong we might be about the world, we can't be wrong about our own experiences. Is this correct? And, if it turns out to be wrong, what would it tell us about the mind?</p>
	Tutorial	Consciousness and Representation
	Reading	<p>1. Dennett, "Seeing Is Believing — or Is It?"*</p> <p>2. Noe, "Is the Visual World a Grand Illusion?"**</p> <p>3. Campbell, "Sensorimotor Knowledge and Naïve Realism"**</p> <p>Comment: <i>These three articles work together as follows: Dennett raises issues for the very idea that we have much of the way of conscious perception of the world around us. Noe responds, and hints at a bigger theory (which he develops in a book). And Campbell responds to that book. Taken together, they give a good overview of contemporary theories</i></p>

		<i>of perception.</i>
	Assessment	Online discussion 8.
Week 12: 21 May - 27 May	Lecture	Wrapping Up
	Tutorial	Peer Review Workshop. We will discuss and practice peer-reviewing essay drafts.
	Assessment	Major Essay draft for peer review due: 4 pm, Friday 25 May. LATE SUBMISSIONS OF DRAFTS WILL NOT BE ALLOCATED FOR PEER REVIEW.
	Assessment	Online discussion 9. This is the final online discussion for this course.
Week 13: 28 May - 3 June	Assessment	Quiz 2 takes place during regular lecture time.
	Assessment	Peer Reviews due Friday, 1 June.

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Most of our readings will be from the following anthology:

- Lycan, William and Jesse Prinz (eds.). (2008) *Mind and Cognition: An Anthology*. Blackwell Anthologies. (Labeled "MC" in the schedule of readings.)

The readings in this book are mostly **required** readings. You are responsible for getting access to those readings in time and reading them before each lecture/tutorial.

Recommended Resources

An excellent resource for philosophy is the online Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/>

An excellent resource for your writing needs, including especially citations and referencing, is the Chicago Manual of Style, available online from the library

Course Evaluation and Development

Formal feedback from students will be collected *via* myExperience, and will be used to improve future iterations of this course. Informal, real-time feedback is also very welcome, either in person or through a permanently open forum for suggestions and comments.

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<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PurkinjeCell.jpg>

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