

# Philosophy of Mind

Philosophy 207, Spring 2017 | Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:55am-11:10am | Griffin 1

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-3 and Thursdays 11:30am-1 and by appointment

## REQUIRED TEXTS (Available at Water Street Books)

Wittgenstein, L. (1953/1973). *Philosophical Investigations*. Translated by Anscombe, G.E.M. New York: Macmillan.

*Additional required readings are available in the course reading packet*

## GRADING

*Grading on all written assignments is anonymous. Please turn in your papers with only your Williams ID number on it.*

Anonymous grading is one way of assuring that the collegiality of our interactions does not cloud my assessment of your work. Grading blindly is not a perfect mechanism for this purpose. One disadvantage to anonymous grading is that I will not know when your work is systematically inadequate and will not approach you with concerns about your writing. As a result, there is an additional burden of responsibility on your shoulders. You must elect to visit office hours, to discuss your work with the teaching assistant, and to seek out informal opportunities to improve your writing.

The desire to preserve the integrity of the anonymous grading system should never prevent you from seeking advice on assignments for this course. You are encouraged to speak with me with your work in hand. Naturally this will reveal facts of authorship, and may give me some insight into your style and interests. Still, your success in meeting the challenges of this course should always be our first concern.

### 1. Participation

Discussion is essential to the vitality of the seminar. Thoughtful participation in our discussions is also one indicator that you are reading carefully. Thus, participation constitutes 10% of the final grade.

Your first priority is reading the assignments carefully and working diligently on the writing for the course. Thoughtful, honest, and respectful participation derives from these. Every effort will be made to ensure that the class is a welcoming forum for sharing serious ideas. In addition, participation is more inclusive than many students realize. Being attentive and engaged in class, asking clarificatory questions, and discussing aspects of the course with the instructor during office hours all fall under this heading.

### 2. Weekly writing assignments

You are required to write 10 short papers. These short paper assignments will stimulate class discussion and help you master the material. *About* 600 words. Typewritten, double spaced in a 12 point font. 30% of final grade.

Your early efforts on the weekly assignments may be primarily expository. For the first two or three papers, I urge you to summarize one or two crucial themes of the reading for that week. It is appropriate for your papers to begin with, e.g., "Wittgenstein claims that..." Your goal would then be to elaborate and put into your own words Wittgenstein's arguments. Please keep direct quotations to a minimum (one or two short quotations in a paper of this length is acceptable), but be sure to include page references when attributing a view or citing a passage.

By the third or fourth weekly paper, my expectations will change: I will begin looking for a more critical engagement with the readings. While it will be acceptable for your later weekly papers to begin with exegesis, you should also aim to offer some response to philosophical topics we encounter. Please keep in mind that by "critical engagement" I do not mean to demand *criticism*. You are welcome to flag your disagreements with the authors we have studied, but you are equally encouraged to develop ideas in a positive vein.

For any given week, you may write for EITHER our Tuesday meeting or our Thursday meeting. You must write on readings *before* they have been discussed in class. Papers will be due at the beginning of the class you write for.

Not counting the first class meeting, and not counting the week when the mid-semester essay is due (since you are not expected to write a weekly essay that week) there are 11 weeks of class. Again, you are required to write for only 10 of these weeks.

### 3. Two Seminar Papers

2500-3000 words. Typewritten, double spaced in a 12 point font. No title page. 60% of final grade with each paper weighted equally.

These papers are an opportunity for you to engage the themes of the course in a sustained and serious manner. You may write on the suggested paper topics (to be distributed in class) or you may propose another topic to pursue.

You are not expected to seek additional sources for final papers, though you may.

There are *NO EXTENSIONS* on written work. Papers turned in on the day they are due but after the beginning of class will be assessed a one-step grade penalty (e.g., A- to B+). Papers turned in the day after they are due will be assessed a three-step penalty (e.g., A- to B-) and papers turned in two days after they are due will be assessed a seven-step penalty (e.g., A- to D+). *THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY.*

Students with disabilities who may need disability-related classroom accommodations for this course are encouraged to set up an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible and to contact the Dean's Office (at extension 4262) to better insure that accommodations are provided in a timely manner.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS  
All readings are to be done in advance of the class meeting.

*No laptops or food in class*

February			17(Fri.)		FIRST ESSAY DUE at 5pm emailed as a PDF attachment
	1 (Weds.)	Discussion: Minds Readings: None		April	
	7	Discussion: Descartes' Substance Dualism Readings: Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , Meditations II & VI		4	Discussion: The Problem of Consciousness Readings: Nagel, "What is it Like to be a Bat?" Block, "Troubles with Functionalism" (excerpt)
	9	Discussion: Elisabeth's Objections Readings: Elisabeth of Bohemia, <i>Correspondence with Descartes</i>		6	Discussion: The Problem of Consciousness Readings: Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia" Levin, "Could Love Be Like a Heatwave?"
	14	Discussion: Dualism Defended Readings: Rodrigues, "There are no good objections to substance dualism"		11	Discussion: The Problem of Consciousness Readings: Chalmers, "Consciousness and Its Place in Nature"
	16	Discussion: Behaviorism Readings: Hempel, "The Logical Analysis of Psychology" Ryle, "Descartes Myth" Putnam, "Brains and Behavior"		13	Discussion: Non-Reductive Materialism Readings: Kim, "The Non-Reductivist's Troubles with Mental Causation" Schneider, "Why property dualists must reject substance physicalism"
	21	Discussion: Wittgenstein Readings: Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> , ¶1-¶43; ¶244-¶293		18	Discussion: Against Consciousness Readings: Churchland, "The Hornswoggle Problem" Dennett, "Quining Qualia"
	23	Discussion: Wittgenstein Readings: Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> , ¶294-¶450		20	Discussion: Against Intentionality in Computationalism Readings: Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs"
	28	Discussion: Wittgenstein Readings: Wittgenstein, <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> , ¶571-¶647		25	Discussion: Intentionality Readings: Brentano, "The Distinction Between Mental and Physical Phenomena" Antony, "The Mental and the Physical"
March				27	Discussion: A Causal Theory of Content Readings: Dretske "If you can't make one, you don't know how it works"
	2	Discussion: Identity Theory Readings: Place, "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?" Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes"		May	
	7	Discussion: A Modal Argument Against Materialism Readings: Kripke, Naming and Necessity (excerpt)		2	Discussion: Biosemantics Readings: Millikan, "Biosemantics"
	9	Discussion: Functionalism Readings: Putnam, "The Nature of Mental States"		4	Discussion: Instrumentalism Readings: Dennett, "The Intentional Strategy and Why it Works"
	14	Discussion: Computationalism Readings: Fodor, "The Mind-Body Problem"		9	Discussion: Eliminative Materialism Readings: Churchland, "Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes"
	16	Discussion: Computationalism Readings: Haugeland, "An Introduction to Mind Design"		11	Discussion: Dualism Again Readings: Foster, "A Defense of Dualism"
				20 (Sat.)	SECOND ESSAY DUE at 5pm emailed as a PDF attachment