THE EMBODIED MIND: MEDITATIVE PRACTICES,
THE MIND SCIENCES AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

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Course Requirements

You are expected to come to class prepared to raise questions about the material, answer questions and discuss the issues involved. A missed class will require a summary and response paper to the readings for that week. 4-6 pages.

Essay 1 on the empirical study of consciousness, 5-7 pgs...30% of final grade
Essay 2 on meditation and meditation journal, 5-7 pgs.......30% of final grade
Final Research Essay, 12-15 pgs..............................40% of final grade

You are required to practice meditation regularly.

No laptops or food in the classroom. The honor code applies fully to this class.

Required books

Plus reading packet available at the Class of ’37 House, 51 Park Street (Behind Paresky)

Outline of Class Topics and Readings

Class 1 Methods
Clark, Mindware, Introduction & Chap 1 packet
Tye, “Ten Problems of Consciousness,” 3-18 packet
Gallagher & Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*, chap. 1 & 2 section 1
 (“Fantasies in the Science of Consciousness”).
Meditation: Introduction to concentration
Class 2 The practice and study of meditation
Olendzki, “Buddhist Meditation,” packet
Solé-Leris, *Tranquility and Insight*, 21-26, packet
Wallace, *The Attention Revolution*, 1-116
Tricycle, “Meditation Nation” packet
Rocha, “The Dark Night of the Soul” packet
Faure, “Buddhist Meditation and Neuroscience” packet.
Suggested: Lomas & al., “A Qualitative Analysis of Experiential Challenges Associated with Meditation” packet
Meditation: Concentration

Class 3 Meditation and the difficulties of studying attention
Thompson, *Waking, Dreaming, Being* packet
Watzl, “The Nature of Attention”
Lutz, et al., “Attention regulation and monitoring in meditation” packet
Google: change blindness, hemi-neglect, stroop effect, binocular rivalry.
Meditation: Concentration.

Class 4 Phenomenological method, consciousness and its structure.
Husserl, *The Essential Husserl*, 87-91, packet
Meditation: Mindfulness of breathing.

Class 5 Consciousness, mindfulness and introspection
Schwitzgabel, “The Unreliability of Naïve Introspection” packet
Bitbol & Petitmengin, “A Defense of Introspection from Within” packet
Meditation: Mindfulness of breathing.

Class 6 Naturalizing phenomenology or quining qualia?
Dennett, “Quining Qualia,” 43-57, packet
Dennett *Consciousness Explained*, 101-115, packet
Carman, “Dennett on Seeming,” packet
Meditation: Mindfulness.

**Essay 1 (Due Friday after Class 6 at 8pm by email to Professor Cruz):** It is standard to claim that consciousness eludes explanation by traditional cognitive approaches to the mind. In this essay explain in detail why this is thought and evaluate whether the arguments for the elusiveness of consciousness are correct.

Class 7 Embodiment as a gateway to consciousness
Prinz, “Is Consciousness Embodied?” packet
Mandrigin & Thompson, “Own-Body Perception,” packet
Meditation: Body scan

**Class 8** Can consciousness be grasped?
Fasching, “Consciousness, self-consciousness and meditation,” packet
Gallagher and Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*, chap. 4;
Kiverstein, “Consciousness, the Minimal Self and Brain,” packet
Meditation: Open presence style of concentration.

**Class 9** Subjectivity and agency
Wegner, “Apparent Mental Causation,” packet
Gallagher and Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*, chap. 8
Toner et al, “Reflective and Prerreflective Bodily Awareness in Skilled Action,” packet
Meditation: mindfulness of movement.

**Essay 2** (Due Friday after Class 9 by Noon in Professor Dreyfus’s mailbox in Hollander):
Answer this question including substantial references to your personal experience of meditation without limiting yourself to this dimension: “What is the use, if any, of meditation in the study of consciousness?” Include separately some excerpts from your meditation journal.

**Class 10** Subjectivity: self or no-self?
Gallagher and Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*, chap. 10;
Dreyfus, “What Happens when the Self Goes?” packet
Clark, “Soft Selves and Ecological Control,” packet
Suggested: Case, “Stages in the Development of Young Children’s First Sense of Self” packet.
Meditation: mindfulness of the body-mind complex.

**Class 11** Buddhism and the science of positive affects
Goleman, *Destructive Emotions*, 118-125, 139-176, packet
Dreyfus and Thompson, “The Abhidharma Tradition and its View of the Mind” packet
Meditation: mindfulness of the body-mind complex: identification vs disidentification.

**Class 12** From subjectivity to intersubjectivity
Gallagher and Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*, chap. 9;
Zahavi, “Simulation, projection and empathy” packet;
De Vignemont & Jacob, “What Is It To Feel Another’s Pain?” packet;
Meditation: compassion and loving-kindness.

(Final Research Essay Due Tuesday May 15th by Noon in Professor Dreyfus’s mailbox in Hollander)
1. What is the nature of the self? Does Buddhism and/or phenomenology help to conceptualize this difference?

2. What is at stake in the opposition between neurophenomenology and heterophenomenology? Does neurophenomenology have a value or is heterophenomenology a more viable account of experience?

3. Does the embodied cognitive approach gain plausibility or evidence in light of phenomenology or meditation?

4. Does the study of meditation help (re)conceptualize attention? How is attention conceptualized and what does this relation suggest about the study of meditation?

5. If introspection is impaired in one of the brain’s hemispheres, what are the problems that this raises?

6. What are the prospects for the therapeutic use of meditation? What are the results obtained so far?

7. What is the role of introspection in the study of the mind? How does it relate to mindfulness meditation?

8. Can a principled scientific distinction be made between individual cognition and processes in the nervous system or the environment? What kinds of theoretical tools are going to be required?

9. Can the notion of experience sustain critical analysis or is it just a grand illusion, as argued by Dennett and his followers?

10. Can dualism be defended in the light of recent advances in the mind sciences?

Final proposed topics

- The nature of the self
- The role of meditation in the study of the mind
- The prospects for the therapeutic use of meditation
- The opposition between neurophenomenology and heterophenomenology
- The embodied cognitive approach
- The role of introspection in the study of the mind
- The nature of the self
- The role of meditation in the study of the mind
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- The role of introspection in the study of the mind