

**PHIL 4361W.01 Philosophy of Psychology and Mind  
Spring 2018**

Day and Time: Tues/Thurs, 11:00-12:20

Location: CHSS 220

Instructor: Dr. Maria Botero

Office: CHSS building, room 348

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:30am and 2-3 pm or by appointment (please email me at least one day in advance and provide three tentative meeting times so we can set an appointment). You do not need an appointment for regular office hours, just drop by. Please consider office hours as part of the class. Your success in this course is important to me. I am happy to work with you if you have any difficulties/questions regarding the class material, studying for the exam, writing an essay or if you just want to discuss the class material, I always enjoy talking about Philosophy!

Email: mdb037@shsu.edu

**Course Description:** This class will be divided into two sections. In the first section we will explore the main descriptions of the mind. This section involves formal lectures that will discuss crucial issues from the readings and their relationship with the basic questions explored during the course. During the second part we will explore several topics on the area of consciousness. The second section will be conducted seminar-style where students are responsible for conducting their own research.

This is a “W” course, which means that more than 85 percent of your course grade will derive from writing activities designed to help you master course objectives. These writing activities include, essay-type-question test (20 % of your grade), essay (30% of your grade), in-class writing exercises (20% of your grade) and Book Review (15%). Writing in this course is one of the tools used to help you learn course material; in-class exercises will require you to draft and revise your work, with or without instructor feedback.

**Course Objectives:** This course will introduce students to some basic questions about the human mind and personal identity. Some of the topics we will explore include: the relation between mind, brain, body, and environment, how it is possible to understand the subjective experience of having a mind from a third-person objective description of the mind, and the place the human mind has in nature and its relation to artificial and animal minds. We will explore these questions through the reading of articles that will provide the student with an overview of the basic questions and contemporary research regarding the human mind.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance is mandatory. In accordance with University regulations attendance will be taken every class. If you miss more than four classes I will deduct one point from your final grade for each day. For example, five absences mean that 1 point will be deducted from your final grade. If you earned a 70 (C) based on your work, your final grade will be 69 (D) because of your absences.

### Required Textbooks:

Chalmers, D., (2002) *Philosophy of Mind, Classical and Contemporary Readings*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blackmore, S., (2012) *Consciousness. An Introduction*, Second Edition, New York: Oxford University Press.

### Recommended Reading

Blackmore, S. (2006) *Conversations on Consciousness, What the Best Minds Think About the Brain, Free Will, and What It Means to be Human* Oxford: Oxford University Press

### Grading Plan

Journal entries: 20%

In class test: 20%

Presentation 15%

Book Review: 15%

Final Essay: 30%

I recognize that there are multiple ways to learn and that this multiplicity should be acknowledged in the structure of university courses and the evaluation of their participants. For that reason we will use different formats of evaluation throughout the class.

### Description:

- **Journal:** Your journal will be an eclectic and fun collection of reflections/exercises based on different topics on consciousness, you will be asked to read from your journal when the exercise/reflection is due. Journals will be due at the beginning of class. I will ask you to read share your journal with the class. Your grade will be an average of this “presentation” and the journal submitted on the due date (see below).
- **In class test:** The test will consist of multiple choice questions and essay-type questions based on the lectures and the readings.
- **Presentation:** Students will select one topic from the “Consciousness Section” (see reading list below) and present that section to your classmates. The day of your presentation you are responsible for three things: 1. Explain the basic ideas of that section/problem. 2. Select an issue that you want to discuss and present it in an interesting way (e.g. art pieces, video etc.) 3. Submit a short paper summarizing points one and two and bring copies for your classmates to read and discuss. This will be considered a draft for your final essay.
- **Book Review:** We will go as a group to the library, examine and discuss books on consciousness. During that session you will choose a book that sounds interesting and write book review (following guidelines posted on Bb) of the first two chapters of the book.
- **Final Essay:** The student will expand the short paper submitted the day of their presentation. He/she is expected to incorporate the feedback given on the presentation and the short paper.

**Illness on the day of the exam, essay or presentation:** If the student has a very good reason and supporting documentation (i.e. doctor’s note, death in the family), he or she can apply to the course director to do a make-up exam within 2 days of the missed exam and submit their essays without penalty. You will be granted one “Journal Free Pass”: if I ask you to share your journal

on a day you are not prepared (Murphy's Law!), this zero will be eliminated from your average but the next zero will become part of your average.

**Grading Scale:** A 90-100, B 80-89, C 70-79, D 60-69, F below 60. Only in cases where the final grade is a .6 or higher, the final grade it will be rounded to the next letter grade. No other grades will be rounded.

**Laptop Policy:** No laptops are allowed in class. If you feel that this restriction limits your ability to learn please talk to me.

**Standard Policies:** Students should consult the standard policies in the following link

<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Please consult this webpage for a complete description. The following is a brief description of some of the main points of the standard policies plus some additions pertinent to this class: (1)

**NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY:** Every student is entitled to a meaningful and stimulating learning experience. Disabled students are strongly encouraged to avail themselves of the services provided by the *Office of Services for Students with Disabilities in the SHSU Lee Drain Annex* (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786). Please contact this office to request accommodations.

Please keep in mind that no accommodation can be made until you register with this office and that there will be no retroactive accommodations. However, if your paperwork/diagnosis is in progress please talk to me (2) **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. If during a test the student engages in a behavior not acceptable during a test (for example, consult your cellphone, a textbook or another student's test) the student will automatically get a zero for that test. Cheating on a test is not worth the risk! (3) **CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT:** Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning because of the topics discussed in this class it is crucial that we maintain a respectful environment.

### **Tentative Reading Schedule**

All of the readings are from the textbook unless it is indicated otherwise. Please keep in mind that this is not a final reading schedule; changes may be incorporated during the semester. My priority is that students understand the material so, if necessary, I will make changes to the schedule if the material is not clear or if there is not enough time to finish an assignment. The order of the readings will remain the same; however, dates may change. That means that if there is a change in the list you should check the reading list and find the reading listed after the last one discussed in class.

January 18	Welcome and Introduction
January 23, 25	<p><b>Section I: What are mental states?</b> All of the readings in this section are from: Chalmers, D., (2002) Philosophy of Mind, Classical and Contemporary Readings, Oxford: Oxford University Press</p> <p><b>1. Mind as Immaterial substance:</b> Dualism, January 24-26 Descartes, Mediations I, II and IV, p. 10 Passions of the Soul, p. 21 <b>January 23</b> First Journal Entry (JE1) <b>January 25</b> JE2</p>
January 30, February 1	<p><b>2. Mind as Behavior:</b> Behaviorism, Ryle, Descartes' Myth, p.32 Putnam, Brains and Behavior p. 45</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Feb 1</b> JE3</li> </ul>
February 6, 8	<p><b>3. Mind as the Brain:</b> Identity Theory and Physicalism, Sensations and Brain processes J.J.C. Smart p. 60</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Feb 6,</b> JE4</li> </ul>
February 13, 15	<p><b>2. Mind as a Causal System:</b> Functionalism and the Mind as a Computer Putnam, The Nature of Mental States, p. 73 Searle, Can Computers Think? P.669</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Feb 15</b> JE5</li> </ul>
February 20, 22	<p><b>3. Where is the Mind?</b> Feb 14-16 Burge, Individualism and the Mental p. 597 Clark and Chalmers, The Extended Mind, p. 643</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Feb 20</b> JE6</li> </ul>
February 27, March 1	<p><b>4. Introduction to Consciousness</b> Block, Concepts of Consciousness, p. 206</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>March 1</b> JE7</li> <li>• <b>March 1 Deadline to pick a topic for your presentation</b></li> </ul>
March 6, 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>March 6</b> <u>Test</u></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 6 <b><u>Journal Submission</u></b></li> <li>• <b>March 8 Library Session</b>, Choose book for your book report. Book reviews are due on March 27.</li> </ul>
March 13, 15	Spring Recess (March 12-16), no class

**March 20 Section II Consciousness.** All of the readings from this section are from Blackmore S. *Consciousness. An Introduction*, unless specified. Students need to choose a date and a chapter from: Sections two (Consciousness and the world), three (consciousness and the self), four (consciousness and the brain), five (consciousness and evolution) and nine (consciousness and first-person approaches). If there is a chapter you are particularly excited about that is not included in this list let me know. Your choices need to be submitted by **March 1 Deadline to pick a topic for your presentation.** After everyone has a topic the schedule will be posted on Bb.

- March 27 **Book Reports due in class.**
- May 3 Last day of class
- May 10<sup>th</sup>. Final Essay is due