

PHI 416/516: Philosophy of Mind (Day 1 syllabus)

Philosophy 416/516, Fall 2017 (Class #10150 / #10157)
BB 221; MWF 10:25-11:20 -- profron.net/phi516

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Requirements:

Papers: Topics for short papers will be handed out three times during the semester, and will be due about a week after being assigned. You must do two of these, including the first one. (See the *Addenda* page for the rules on late papers.) In PHI 416, each short paper should be about 1200 words, and is worth 20% of the course grade. In PHI 516, each short paper should be about 1500 words; students will normally rewrite one of their two short papers to produce their longer (about 3000-4000 words) final paper; and for them, the two short papers are each worth 15% of the course grade, while the longer paper is worth 20%.

Exams: There will be three 55-minute in class closed-book tests, spaced relatively equally throughout the semester. Tests are mostly short-answer format, and will be non-comprehensive. (See the *Addenda* page for the rules on makeup exams.) In PHI 416, a student's two best exam scores are each worth 20% of the final course grade; in PHI 516, the two best exam scores are each worth 15% of the final course grade.

Participation, etc.: Class and online participation will total the other 20% of your course grade. This will include the following, and perhaps more: Every few classes, I will hold a "Chat Day", in which we devote a class to a question-and-answer and discussion period; you'll be expected to come prepared and to participate. You'll also be asked to post a 1-2 paragraph "Thought of the Week" before each chat day; topics for each ToW will be given out in class. Note that if you don't attend class, that's clearly non-participation, and will be graded accordingly.

Summary: Grades for students in 416 will be 20% for each of two short papers, 20% for each of their two best exam grades, and 20% for class/online participation/etc. Grades for students in PHI 516 will be 15% for each of two short papers, 20% for the longer paper, 15% for each for their two best exam grades, and 20% for class/online participation.

Readings: All readings for the course will be available as PDFs posted on the course EReserves page, available via the Blackboard course page. Several will come from the anthology *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, David Chalmers, ed. I recommend that graduate students get this book from Amazon or your favorite online vendor.

Course outline: (under revision; expect substantial changes, particularly in the second half)

Part I: The Mind-Body Problem

- **Dualism:**
 - Churchland (Paul), *Matter & Consciousness*, chapter 2
 - Smullyan, "An Unfortunate Dualist"
 - Descartes, Meditation II and from Meditation VI
 - Descartes, from *The Passions of the Soul*, Part I
- **Varieties of Materialism:**
 - Churchland (Paul), from *Matter & Consciousness*, ch.2
 - SEP entry (edited), "Physicalism"
 - Boyd, from "Materialism without Reductionism"
 - Kripke, from "Identity and Necessity"
 - McClamrock, from *Existential Cognition*, chapter 1
 - Davidson, from "The Material Mind"
- **Epiphenomenalism and Mental Causation:**
 - Kim, "Multiple Realization & the Metaphysics of Reduction"
 - Kim, "The Many Problems of Mental Causation"
 - McLaughlin, "Type and Token Epiphenomenalism"
 - Kim, from "The Supervenience Argument..."
 - McClamrock, from "Non-Reductive Materialism w/o Impotence"

Part II: Methods and Approaches

- **Behaviorism:**
 - Putnam, "Brains and Behavior"
 - Dennett, "Skinner Skinned"
 - Skinner, from *Science and Human Behavior*
 - Chomsky, from the review of *Verbal Behavior*
- **Brains and Reductionism:**
 - Churchland (Patricia), from *Neurophilosophy*
 - Churchland (Paul), *Matter & Consciousness*, chapter 5.4
 - Oatley, from *Perceptions & Representations*
 - Bickle, "The Philosophy of Neuroscience"

• Cognitive Science and Artificial Intelligence:

- Gardner, from *The Mind's New Science*
- Schank, "What is AI, Anyway?"
- Haugeland, from "Semantic Engines"
- Flanagan, from *The Science of the Mind*
- Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs"

Part III: Puzzles and Limits

- **Intentionality and Embeddedness:**
 - Fodor, from "Methodological Solipsism Considered..."
 - McClamrock, "Methodological Individualism Considered..."
 - Burge, "Individualism and Psychology"
 - Simon, from "Economic Rationality"
 - McClamrock, from *Existential Cognition*, chapter 6
 - Noë, from *Perception and Action*
- **Sensation and Qualia:**
 - Churchland, "The Semantics of Observation Predicates"
 - McClamrock, from *Existential Cognition*, chapter 10
 - Block, "Are Absent Qualia Impossible?"
 - Shoemaker, from "Absent Qualia are Impossible: A Reply to Block"
- **Irreducibility and Explanatory Gaps:**
 - Nagel, "What Is It Like To Be a Bat?"
 - Lycan, *Consciousness*, chapter 7
 - McClamrock, "Irreducibility and Subjectivity"
 - Chalmers, from *The Conscious Mind*
 - Levine, from *Purple Haze*

Philosophy of Mind Syllabus Addenda (PHI 416/516 – Fall 2017 – McClamrock)

Paper Submission Guidelines:

- All papers must be submitted electronically, transmitted as documents attached to a piece of e-mail addressed to me at ron@albany.edu.
- Electronic documents sent to me should be as “.docx” files if possible (the native format in recent *Microsoft Word*); if you don't use .docx, please send the paper as **RTF** ("Rich Text Format"). You need to use one of those formats; please, no PDFs or other wordprocessor files.
- Name the file *Q1A1_Lastname_Firstname_PHI416.docx*, substituting your name in for "Lastname_Firstname", and the assignment and question numbers in place of "A1" and "Q1". So, e.g., assignment #2 written on question 3 from undergraduate student Morty Smith should be named "Q3A2_Smith_Morty_PHI416.docx" (or .rtf, as the case may be). The subject line of the email should be the same; e.g., "Q3A2_Smith_Morty_PHI416". Note: use "516" in place of "416" if you're in the graduate section.
- Please format papers simply, single-spaced, with your name, the assignment and question number, and any title you might give to the paper at the top of the first page (don't use a separate title page). Please set the text font to 12pt Times-Roman, and set the left margin to 1" and the right margin to 2.5".
- When you send papers to me, please cc: yourself to make sure everything worked OK.

Missed Exams:

Makeup exams are given only when extreme circumstances make it *impossible* for you to take the test when given; e.g., when you are hospitalized on that day. (If you miss an exam for some other kind of reason, just take the other two, and the missed exam will be dropped.) In these extreme circumstances, in order to be given a makeup exam, you must do all of the following.

1. You must obtain a letter of excuse from the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies; all inquiries about such letters and the documentation required for them should be directed to the Dean's office (LC-30). This request (with documentation) is to be made to the Vice-Provost's office no more than two weekdays after the end of the period for which you are asking to be excused. (Graduate students should come to me directly concerning documentation.)
2. Give me a written (e-mail is best, paper is OK) request for a makeup exam. This request should be given to me no more than two weekdays after the end of the period for which your absence has been excused.
3. Talk to me in person at the end of the first class after your excused absence in order to schedule a makeup.

You must do all of these in order to be given a makeup. But even if you do, I reserve the right to judge that the excuse is inadequate, in which case I may decline to give the makeup.

Late papers:

Late papers are marked down by one grade notch (e.g. B to B- or B- to C+) for every hour or portion thereof I receive them after the due date and time. The only exception is the one noted under "Missed exams": If there are such extreme circumstances, and a paper is due during an excused absence, you may get an extension until the first day not covered by the excused absence. In such a case, the paper is due on that day, at the same time of day it was originally due.

Grade Calculation Rules:

1. Every graded piece of work (exam, paper, whatever) is given a letter grade. These letter grades range from A+ (the best) to F (the worst).
2. Each of these letter grades has a numerical equivalent. Here are the possible letter grades and numerical equivalents:

A+ = 15	C- = 7
A = 14	D+ = 6
A- = 13	D = 5
B+ = 12	D- = 4
B = 11	E+ = 3
B- = 10	E = 2
C+ = 9	E- = 1
C = 8	F = 0

"Slash" grades like "A-/B+" are equivalent to the midpoint between the two grades; e.g., a grade of A-/B+ is calculated as a 12.5.

3. Once this assignment of letter grades is made for, say, a given exam, nothing else matters. In calculating your final grade, all that matters is (the numerical equivalents of) your various letter grades for the various graded pieces of work.
4. I use the numerical equivalents of the letter grades to calculate a composite numerical grade using whatever procedure I've specified for the particular class.
5. I round the composite numerical grade to the nearest integer (.5 and above go up, below go down).
6. I convert back to letter grades using the chart above. You get the letter grade determined by the chart, except if (i) you got an A+, in which case your official grade is an A (the University doesn't use A+), or (ii) you got lower than a D-, in which case your official grade is E.

On getting a grade of "I":

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) will be given only if you an excuses absence of the sort described under "Missed Exams" prevents you from either taking the last of the exams or turning in the last of the papers. In addition to following the procedures describe under "Missed Exams", you must also ask me in writing (email is best) to assign you an "I" for the course.

Cheating:

Cheating, including but not confined to plagiarizing (i.e. using the words or content of others as your own), will result in being failed for the course and reported to the Dean's office.