

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

Philosophy 416/516, Fall 2019 (Class #9391 / #9393)  
BB 237; MWF 1:40-2:35pm – profron.net/phi516

Prof. Ron McClamrock (Hum 314)  
rmclamrock@albany.edu - 518-416-1637 - profron.net

## Requirements:

**Papers:** Topics for short (about 1200 words in PHI416, 1500 words in PHI 516) 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.) For PHI 416, each short paper is worth 20% of the final course grade. In PHI 516, students will rewrite one of their two short papers into a longer (about 3000-4000 words) paper; for them, the two short papers are each worth 15% of the course grade, and 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 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 discussion (and Q&A) period; you'll be expected to come prepared, and to participate. I will normally ask you to submit (electronically) a "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 or don't do the ToWs, that's clearly non-participation, and will be graded accordingly.

**Grading Summary:** In 416, final grades come from 20% for each of two short papers, 20% for each of their two best exam grades, and 20% for class/online participation/etc. In 516, final grades come from 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. To pass the course, you must also get a passing grade on at least one paper and one exam.

**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 changes, particularly in the second half)

### Part I: The Mind-Body Problem

- **Dualism:**
  - Part I: The Mind-Body Problem Old-school 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
  - Kim, from *Physicalism, or Something Near Enough*
- **Varieties of Materialism:**
  - Churchland (Paul), from *Matter & Consciousness*, ch.2
  - SEP entry (edited), "Physicalism"
  - Fodor, "Special Sciences; Or, the Disunity of Science as a Working Hypothesis"
  - Aizawa, "The Massive Multiple Realization of Psychological Properties"
- **Epiphenomenalism and Mental Causation:**
  - Kim, "Multiple Realization & the Metaphysics of Reduction"
  - Kim, from "The Many Problems of Mental Causation"
  - McLaughlin, "Type and Token Epiphenomenalism"
  - Kim, from "The Supervenience Argument..."
  - McClamrock, from "Non-Reductive Materialism w/o Impotence"
  - Shoemaker, from *Physical Realization*

### Part II: Minds, Brains, and the World

- **Brains and Reductionism:**
  - Churchland (Paul), *Matter & Consciousness*, chapter 5.4
  - Oatley, from *Perceptions & Representations`*
  - Bickle, "The Philosophy of Neuroscience"
  - Churchland (Patricia), from *Brain-Wise*

- Polger & Shapiro, from "Precis: The Multiple Realization Book"
- **Cognitive Science and Artificial Intelligence:**
  - Haugeland, from "Semantic Engines"
  - Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs" (with selected replies)
- **Embedded intentionality:**
  - Burge, from "Individualism and the Mental"
  - Simon, from "Economic Rationality"
  - Rowlands, "Bringing Philosophy Back: 4e Cognition and the Argument from Phenomenology"
  - Noë, from *Out of Our Heads*

### Part III: Puzzles and Limits

- **Perception and sensation:**
  - Noë, from *Perception and Action*
  - Churchland, "The Semantics of Observation Predicates"
  - McClamrock, from *Existential Cognition*, chapter 10
  - Siegel, from *The Contents of Visual Experience*
  - McClamrock, "Visual Consciousness and the Phenomenology of Perception"
- **Qualia:**
  - Block, "Are Absent Qualia Impossible?"
  - Shoemaker, from "Absent Qualia are Impossible: A Reply to Block"
  - Chalmers, "The Paradox of Phenomenal Judgment"
  - Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia"
- **Irreducibility and Explanatory Gaps:**
  - Nagel, "What Is It Like To Be a Bat?"
  - Lycan, *Consciousness*, chapter 7
  - McClamrock, "Irreducibility and Subjectivity"
  - Levine, from *Purple Haze*

# Philosophy of Mind Syllabus Addenda (PHI 416/516 – Fall 2019 – McClamrock)

## Paper Submission Guidelines:

- All papers must be submitted electronically, transmitted as documents attached to a piece of e-mail addressed to me at [rmccclamrock@albany.edu](mailto:rmccclamrock@albany.edu). Please attach a file to the email; don't send me a cloud link.
- These should be formatted as .docx files if possible (the native format in recent Microsoft Word); if you can't use .docx, use .rtf ("Rich Text Format"). You need to use one of those formats. No PDFs or other formats.
- 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). The text font should be 12pt Times-Roman or similar; the left margin should be 1" and the right margin 2.5".
- Name the file *Q1A1\_Lastname\_Firstname\_PHI416.docx*, substituting your name, and the assignment and question numbers in place of "Q1" and "A1" (and "516" for "416" if you are registered for PHI 516). So, e.g., the file for assignment #2 written on question 3 from undergrad student Eric Cartman should be named *Q3A2\_Cartman\_Eric\_PHI416.docx*. The subject line of the email likewise be *Q3A2\_Cartman\_Eric\_PHI416*. The message body should not be left empty; include a line saying "Here is Eric Cartman's assignment #2 on question #3 for PHI 361" (substituting as above with your own details.) You may also include a joke in the message body. No extra credit, but good brownie points.
- When you send papers to me, please cc: yourself to make sure everything worked OK.

## Missed Exams:

Makeup exams and paper extensions are given only under conditions the conditions specified by UAlbany: see the medical excuse rules (at [https://www.albany.edu/health\\_center/medicalexcuse.shtml](https://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexcuse.shtml)) and religious practice excuse rules at <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/224-A>) for details. In addition, to be given a makeup exam/quiz in this course, students in PHI 416 must do all of the following, while students in PHI 516 must do #2 and #3 below.

1. 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.

## 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.