

Lingnan University
Department of Philosophy

Course Title	: Philosophy of Mind
Course Code	: PHI3265
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Sectional approach
Class Contact Hours	: 3 hours per week
Category in Major Programme	: Core Philosophy Elective
Prerequisite(s)	: N/A
Co-requisite(s)	: N/A
Exclusion(s)	: N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	: N/A

Brief Course Description

The course will address some of the central topics in philosophy of mind. These include: the mind-body relation (as understood by, e.g., materialist, dualist, functionalist approaches); the question about how the mental causally interacts with the physical; different attempts to explain the fact that mental states have content; the place of consciousness in nature.

Aims

The aim is to make the students acquainted with philosophy of mind, one of the most dynamic subdisciplines in contemporary analytic philosophy, and also to develop students' interest in exploring the place of the human mind in the natural world.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

- (LO1) Describe the main contemporary theories on the nature of mind.
- (LO2) Specify the main points of disagreement between the various theories discussed in class.
- (LO3) Evaluate the theoretical solutions proposed to the problems that a philosophical study of the mind poses.
- (LO4) Propose and discuss their personal views on the issues debated.

Indicative Content

1. Materialism, dualism, functionalism
2. Mental causation
3. Mental content
4. Consciousness
5. Evolutionary psychology
6. Phenomenal concepts
7. Personal identity and memory
8. Perception
9. The extended mind thesis

Teaching Method

Lectures and seminar discussions.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Students will take/write:

- Short in-class quizzes, in which they will have to answer short questions on the various concepts and theories discussed in class (to assess LO1, LO2, and LO3);

- A final exam, in which they will have to write long essay questions on the content of the course. Students will have to elaborate their views on the theories discussed in class (to assess LO1, LO2, LO3, and LO4);
- A term paper (1500-2000 words) on a topic of the course (to assess mainly LO4). The students will be provided with a list of readings related to the specific topic they choose to write about.

In addition, students are expected to participate in classroom discussions and demonstrate good preparation—for instance, they will have to demonstrate adequate knowledge of the required weekly readings when called by the lecturer (to assess LO1, LO2, LO3, and LO4).

Assessment

Participation and in-class discussion (10%)

In-class quizzes (20%)

Paper (30%)

Final exam (40%)

Required Readings

Selections from:

Braddon-Mitchell, D. & Jackson, F. *Philosophy of Mind and Cognition*. 2nd edition. Blackwell Publishing, 2007.

Kim, J. *Philosophy of Mind*. Westview Press, 2010.

Other material (papers, lecture notes, etc.) will be available on moodle.

Supplementary Readings

Churchland, P. M. *Matter and Consciousness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Davidson, D. *Essays on Actions and Events*. Clarendon Press, 1980.

Guttenplan, S. (ed.), *Companion to the Philosophy of Mind*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1994.

Lycan, W. (ed.), *Mind and Cognition* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

Millikan, R. *On Clear and Confused Ideas*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Papineau, D. *Thinking about Consciousness*. Clarendon Press, 2002.

Important Notes

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>