

Φ Syllabus Ψ

Instructor: Ron Bombardi
 Office: 307 JUB, Ext. 2049
 Office Hours: 8:00-9:00 & 11:30-12:30, MWF; 9:00-10:00, TR; and by appointment
 Email: rbombard@mtsu.edu

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course will provide an overview of traditional problems and some recent developments in the philosophy of mind. While a number of specific approaches and agenda (e.g., phenomenology, neuroscience, supervenience, artificial intelligence) are discussed, emphasis is placed on tracing the general philosophical implications of contemporary research in neurobiology, cognitive psychology, and the behavioral sciences. Topics in both classical philosophy of mind and applied philosophical psychology will be covered; after considering three broad philosophical theories of mentality, students will be encouraged assess and critique the applicability of philosophical theory to various conceptual problems derived from the special sciences of mind.

TEXTS

The following texts will figure prominently in class discussion; a thorough familiarity with their contents is advised:

- Calvin, William H. *The Cerebral Code: Thinking a Thought in the Mosaics of the Mind*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, Bradford Books, 1998.
- Chalmers, David J. *The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory* (Philosophy of Mind Series). Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Changeux, Jean-Pierre and Alain Connes. *Conversations on Mind, Matter and Mathematics*. Ed. and trans., M.B. Debevoise. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995, 1999.
- Churchland, Patricia S. *Neurophilosophy: Toward a Unified Science of Mind/Brain*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, Bradford Books, 1990.
- Damasio, Antonio R. *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*. New York: Avon Books, 1995.
- Dennett, Daniel C. *Kinds of Minds: Towards an Understanding of Consciousness* (Science Masters Series). New York: HarperCollins, 1997.
- Ford, Kenneth M., Patrick J. Hayes and Clark N. Glymour, eds. *Thinking about Android Epistemology*. Cambridge, MA: AAI Press (MIT Press), 2006.
- Hacking, Ian. *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995, 1998.

The following texts are recommended as ancillary; a limited supply of them should be available in local bookstores:

- Churchland, Patricia S. *Brain-Wise: Studies in Neurophilosophy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.
- Damasio, Antonio R. *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*. New York: Harvest Books, 2000.
- Hofstadter, Douglas R. and Daniel C. Dennett. *The Mind's I*. New York: Bantam Books, 1985.
- Ridley, Matt. *The Origins of Virtue: Human Instincts and the Evolution of Cooperation*. New York: Penguin USA, 1998.
- Simon, Herbert A. *The Sciences of the Artificial*. Third Edition. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996.

COURSE DIVISION

I. On the Marriage of True Minds

Consciousness and the Mind/Body Problem: Three Philosophical Perspectives

Readings: Dennett, *Kinds of Minds*
Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind*
Churchland, *Neurophilosophy*

II. Soul Searching

Passions, Proofs, and Personalities: Three Philosophical Problems

Readings: Damasio, *Descartes' Error*
Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul*
Changeux & Connes, *Matière à Pensée*

III. Curing the Common Code

Models, Machines, and Mentality: Three Philosophical Puzzles

Readings: Calvin, *The Cerebral Code*
Ford, et al., *Thinking about Android Epistemology*

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE MECHANICS

A calendar of readings, discussion topics, and written assignments is provided below. Since the readings will serve as the primary springboard for discussions, it is vital that you be familiar with whatever texts are appropriate to a topic BEFORE that topic is covered in class. Class discussion will approximate seminar format, so joint inquiry will generally take precedence over *ex cathedra* lecture.

There will be three (3) written assignments (none to exceed ten double-spaced typed pages), as follows.

- (1) **THEORETICAL ANALYSIS.** Outline the essential features of a contemporary theory of consciousness; include some discussion of the metaphysical assumptions, methodological practices, and substantive claims that characterize the theory in view.
- (2) **APPLIED ANALYSIS.** Various arguments are presented in the texts for the second part of the course (*Soul Searching*), many purporting to have solved or dissolved some classical philosophical problem or other (e.g., memory & personality, sense & reference, knowledge & perception, etc.); examine and evaluate one such argument.
- (3) **EXPERIMENTAL ANALYSIS.** Devise a thought-experiment to test an hypothesis derived or derivable from a specific (biological, computational, mechanical, etc.) model of mentality.

GRADES

Ten percent of the final grade will reflect class participation. The remaining ninety percent of the final grade will be based on the following division (total possible points = 90):

- (a) Theoretical Analysis: 30 pts.
- (b) Applied Analysis: 30 pts.
- (c) Experimental Analysis: 30 pts.

COURSE CALENDAR

DATE	MATERIALS COVERED	DATE	MATERIALS COVERED
J. 15	Introductory; Syllabus	12	Calvin, Chapters 1-2
18	Martin Luther King Day - No Classes	14	Calvin, Chapters 3-4
20	Dennett, Chapters 1-2	16	Calvin, Chapters 5-6 / Applied Analysis due
22	Dennett, Chapters 3-4	19	Calvin, Chapters 7-8
25	Dennett, Chapters 5-6	21	Calvin, Chapters 9-10
27	Chalmers, Chapters 1-2	23	Calvin, Chapter 11
29	Chalmers, Chapters 3-5	26	Ford, Chapters 1-9
F. 01	Chalmers, Chapters 6-8	28	Ford, Chapters 10-17 / Experimental Analysis due
03	Chalmers, Chapters 9-10	M. 05	Final Examination Period: 12:30 - 2:30
05	Churchland, Chapters 1-2		
08	Churchland, Chapters 3-5		
10	Churchland, Chapter 6		
12	Churchland, Chapters 7-8		
15	Churchland, Chapter 9		
17	Churchland, Chapters 10		
19	Review Period		
22	Damasio, Chapters 1-2		
24	Damasio, Chapters 3-4		
26	Damasio, Chapters 5-6 / Theoretical Analysis due		
M. 01	Damasio, Chapters 7-8		
03	Damasio, Chapters 9-10		
05	Damasio, Chapters 11-Postscriptum		
08	Spring Break: No Classes		
10	Spring Break: No Classes		
12	Spring Break: No Classes		
15	Hacking, Chapters 1-3		
17	Hacking, Chapters 4-6		
19	Hacking, Chapters 7-9		
22	Hacking, Chapters 10-12		
24	Hacking, Chapters 13-15		
26	Hacking, Chapters 16-18		
29	Changeux & Connes, Chapters 1-2		
31	Changeux & Connes, Chapter 3		
A. 02	Changeux & Connes, Chapter 4		
05	Changeux & Connes, Chapter 5		
07	Changeux & Connes, Chapter 6		
09	Changeux & Connes, Chapters 7-Epilogue		