

# Philosophy of Mind for Honours, Masters, and PhD Students

This course focuses on three interconnected problem areas related to conscious experiences, that have each been the focus of significant recent research attention.

- I. What is the metaphysical status of conscious experiences? How do they fit in with the rest of the world?
- II. What is the relationship between conscious experience and representational content?
- III. What significance do conscious experiences have for knowledge and justification?

## 1 Readings

The readings consist mainly of primary sources: research articles and extracts from books. They will all be made available electronically. All compulsory readings must be completed **before** the class in question. Please come prepared to discuss the material. Further additional readings may be made available as we go along.

In addition to the primary sources, I strongly recommend consulting secondary literature, to aid your understanding. I recommend Jaegwon Kim, *Philosophy of Mind* (third edition), in combination with relevant articles from *the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. *The Internet Encyclopedia*

*of Philosophy* is also a good resource, and at times more accessible than the *SEP*, but the standard is not as high.

## 2 Recommended Background

These texts are not written for beginners, so familiarity with some basic concepts and thoughts from this area of philosophy will be advantageous. A prior course with a component in philosophy of mind should be sufficient, as will most likely a course in epistemology be.

Succeeding in this course without any of this background will be more difficult and take more work, but it is *definitely* doable. Those without the experience should read relevant parts of Kim's book before class, as well as looking at relevant *SEP* and *IEP* articles. Come see me if you're uncertain whether to take the class or not, or want help picking preparatory readings.

## 3 Teaching

There will be 13 two-hourly seminars, one each week. Participation is obligatory, and must be approved for 10 out of 13 classes for you to pass the course. Your physical presence does not suffice; if you are there but not prepared you will be regarded as not participating.

## 4 Evaluation

Students will write two essays, each approximately 2,500 words long (+/- 10% will be accepted, though I would not recommend going much below the limit). The two essays have to be drawn from two different main problem areas (they can't both be about the metaphysical status of experience, for instance). The first essay is due on the Monday of Week 12, at 8pm, in order to allow enough time for those who want to write on week 9's topic, and one of the later weeks' topic. However, **I strongly recommend submitting your first essay earlier**, or you'll be in for a very busy end of the

year. The second essay is due on the Monday of week 15, i.e. two weeks after our last class, again at 8pm.

I will provide suggestions for essay topics, but students are also encouraged to try to try to formulate their own. If you write your own essay question it must be approved by me, in writing, at least two weeks before the relevant deadline, and it's your job to make sure that this happens.

## **5 Consultation**

I do not have set office hours for this course, but you are more than welcome to seek out further discussion and help from me. First, I'm available after each class for at least half an hour, usually more. If you see me around the department, or if my door is open, please don't be shy to strike up a discussion. I love this, and I'll be sure to let you know if I'm too busy and you need to come back later. Finally, you can email me to set up an appointment.

## 6 Course Outline

Week	Topic	Compulsory Readings
I. METAPHYSICAL STATUS		
1	Introduction: experience and content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Chalmers: 'Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness'</li> <li>• Susanna Siegel: 'The Content View' (kapittel 2 i <i>The Contents of Visual Experience</i>)</li> </ul>
2	Identity Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Lewis: 'An Argument for the Identity Theory'</li> <li>• David Lewis: 'Psychophysical and Theoretical Identifications'</li> </ul>
3	The Knowledge Argument and the Ability Hypothesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frank Jackson: 'Epiphenomenal Qualia'</li> <li>• David Lewis: 'What Experience Teaches'</li> </ul>
4	The Knowledge Argument and the Phenomenal Concept Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brian Loar, 'Phenomenal States'</li> <li>• David Chalmers, 'Phenomenal Concepts and the Knowledge Argument'</li> </ul>
5	Modal Arguments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saul Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i>: Introduction, Lecture II, pp. 97–105, og Lecture III.</li> <li>• Christopher S. Hill: 'Imaginability, Possibility and the Mind-Body Problem'.</li> </ul>

II. CONSCIOUS EXPERIENCES AND CONTENT		
Week	Topic	Compulsory Readings
6	Russellian Representationalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Tye: 'Consciousness, Color and Content', Chapters 3 – 4.</li> <li>• Ned Block: 'Inverted Earth'</li> </ul>
7	Fregean Representationalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Chalmers: 'The Representational Character of Experience'</li> <li>• David Chalmers: 'Perception and the fall from Eden'</li> </ul>
8	Direct Realism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M.G.F. Martin: 'The Transparency of Experience'</li> <li>• James Genone: 'Appearance and Illusion'</li> </ul>
9	Phenomenal Intentionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charles Siewert, <i>The Significance of Consciousness</i>, Chapters 7 – 8.</li> <li>• Adam Pautz, 'Does Phenomenology Ground Mental Content?'</li> </ul>
III. CONSCIOUS EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE, AND JUSTIFICATION		
10	Dogmatism and Liberalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jim Pryor, 'The Skeptic and the Dogmatist'</li> <li>• Nico Silins, 'Basic Justification and the Moorean Response to the Skeptic'</li> </ul>
11	Objections to Dogmatism I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stewart Cohen: 'Why Basic Knowledge is Easy Knowledge'</li> <li>• Jonathan Weisberg: 'The Bootstrapping Problem'</li> </ul>

Week	Topic	Compulsory Readings
12	Dogmatism, Liberalism, and Intuition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elijah Chudnoff: 'The Nature of Intuitive Justification'.</li> <li>• Ole Koksvik, 'Intuitional and Perceptual Experience'.</li> </ul>
13	Phenomenal Conservatism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Huemer: 'Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism'</li> <li>• Susanna Siegel: 'The Epistemic Impact of the Etiology of Experience'</li> </ul>