

Philosophy of Mind Tutorials (Michaelmas 2020)

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General Instructions: Essays should not exceed 2500 words and must be emailed to me in .doc format to no later than 24 hours before the tutorial. Weekly essay questions are included. Where there are multiple questions, choose *one*. Please come to tutorials with all readings mastered. If you would like further readings, email me.

Materials: Here is a dropbox link with almost all of the readings:

- <https://tinyurl.com/y632geq5>

I strongly advise you to read the papers each week *in the order that they appear here*.

Tip: Articles in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy and the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy provide overviews of topics that are often useful. The SEP tends to focus on surveying the literature. The IEP is often less comprehensive but better at explaining views and arguments. For every topic we will cover, it will be useful to read the relevant SEP and IEP entries, where they exist.

Other Stuff: I expect you've already been directed to at least one of these already, but just in case, here are three very useful links:

1. <https://tinyurl.com/retc4>
2. <https://tinyurl.com/y45bmf4b>
3. <https://tinyurl.com/y3h3h5ha>

Note: This syllabus is provisional; we may decide to modify it as the term progresses.

WEEK 1: IDENTITY THEORY

Essay Questions:

- Is the mind identical to the brain?

Readings:

- Heil, J. – *Philosophy of Mind: A Contemporary Introduction* Chapters 1-3
- Kim, J. – “Mind as Brain” (*Philosophy of Mind*, Chapter 4)
- Smart, J. – “Sensations and Brain Processes”

- Fodor, J. – “Special Sciences (Or: The Disunity of Science as a Working Hypothesis”

WEEK 2: BEHAVIOURISM

Essay Questions:

- What is Logical Behaviourism? Does it provide us with a satisfactory solution to the mind-body problem?

Readings:

- Kim, J. – “Mind and Behaviour” (*Philosophy of Mind*, Chapter 3)
- Putnam, H. – “Brains and Behaviour”
- Block, N. – “Psychologism and Behaviourism”

WEEK 3: FUNCTIONALISM

Essay Questions:

- ‘We could be made out of Swiss cheese, and it wouldn’t matter’ (Putnam). Is this true?
- Is the mind software running on brain hardware?

Readings:

- Heil, J. – *Philosophy of Mind: A Contemporary Introduction* Chapter 6
- Putnam, H. – “The Nature of Mental States” (also published as “Psychological Predicates”)
- Block, N. – “Troubles with Functionalism”
- Searle, J. – “Minds, Brains, and Programs”

WEEK 4: INTERPRETATIONISM AND ELIMITIVISM

Essay Questions:

- ‘Dennett’s philosophy of mind cannot account for the fact that we sometimes act irrationally’. Discuss.
- Will folk psychology eventually go the way of the dinosaur?

Readings:

- Heil, J. – *Philosophy of Mind: A Contemporary Introduction* Chapter 9

- Dennett, D. – “Intentional Systems”
- Dennett, D. – “Real Patterns”
- Stich, S. – “Dennett on Intentional Systems”
- Churchland, P. – “Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes”
- Jackson, F. & Pettit, P. – “In Defense of Folk Psychology”

WEEK 5: CONSCIOUSNESS

Essay Questions:

- Are there any interesting differences between propositional attitudes and experiences?
- What difficulties does consciousness create for the theory of mind?

Readings:

- Nagel, T. – “What’s it like to be a bat?”
- Jackson, F. – “Epiphenomenal Qualia”
- Chalmers, D. – “Consciousness and its place in nature”

WEEK 6: CONTENT EXTERNALISM

Essay Questions:

- Can your counterpart on Twin Earth think about water?
- What role should causation play in an account of mental content?

Readings:

- Smith, B. – “Internalism & Externalism in Philosophy of Mind and Language” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<https://tinyurl.com/y27csyca>)
- Putnam, H. – “The Meaning of Meaning”
- Burge, T. – “Individualism and the Mental”
- Boghossian, P. – “What the Externalist Can Know A Priori”
- Fodor, J. – *Psychosemantics*, Chapter 2

WEEK 7: SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Essay Questions:

- Could you be in pain without knowing it?
- 'If someone asks me "Do you think there's going to be a third world war?" I must attend, in answering him, to precisely the same outward phenomena as I would attend to if I were answering the question "Will there be a third world war?" (Evans). Discuss.

Readings:

- Gertler, B. – "Self Knowledge" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- Williamson, T. – *Knowledge and Its Limits*, Chapter 4
- Srinivasan, A. – "Are We Luminous?"
- Byrne, A. – "Introspection"
- Schwitzgebel, E. – "The Unreliability of Naïve Introspection"

WEEK 8: DISJUNCTIVISM

Essay Questions:

- 'There is no highest common factor between seeing an apple and hallucinating an apple'. Do you agree?

Readings:

- Soteriou, M. – *Disjunctivism*