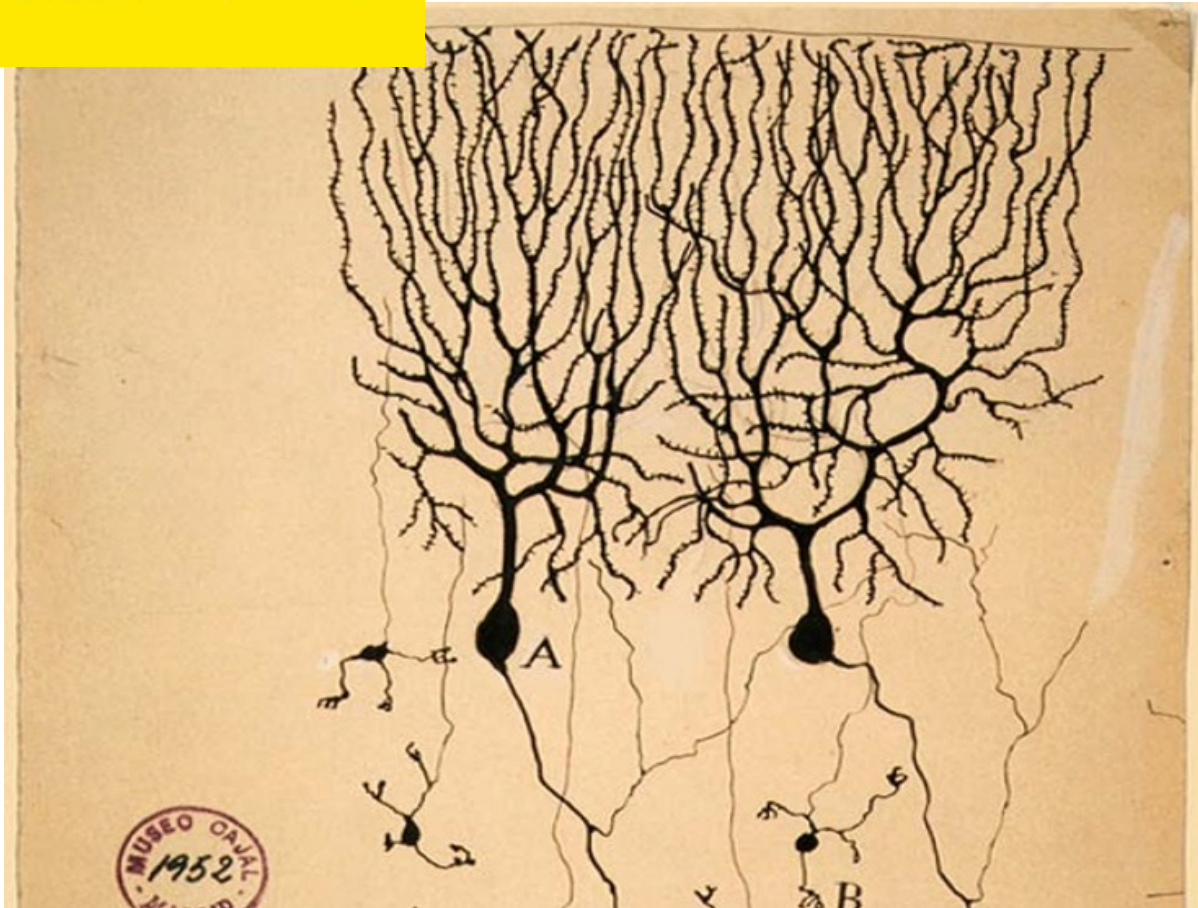




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## ARTS3370

Topics in the Philosophy of Mind and Psychology

Term Three // 2019

## Course Overview

### Staff Contact Details

#### Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Markos Valaris	m.valaris@unsw.edu.au	M 3-4	MB 339	9385 2760

### School Contact Information

School of Humanities and Languages

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## Course Details

**Credit Points 6**

### Summary of the Course

Subject area: *Philosophy*

Humans and other animals stand out from the rest of nature because of our capacity to feel, think, and act purposefully on the world around us. For all we know, these capacities may be unique in the universe. Other physical systems (such as rocks, trees and even robots) can interact with their environments, but have no feelings, thoughts or desires. In this course, we will be reflecting upon the conceptual foundations of contemporary approaches to the nature of such phenomena in the cognitive sciences, including psychology, neuroscience and artificial intelligence.

### Course Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate some central questions in the philosophy of mind, as well as of some influential approaches in addressing them.
2. Engage reflectively and critically with the material presented in the course.
3. Appreciate the relevance of philosophical approaches to the interdisciplinary study of the mind, as well as our broader understanding of human existence.
4. Employ and explain key concepts in the philosophy of mind, demonstrating a basis for ongoing engagement with the subject.
5. Compose clear analytical essays.
6. Communicate complex ideas in a concise and clear way.

### Teaching Strategies

This course is taught by way of weekly three-hour lectures and one-hour tutorials. The purpose of the lectures is to introduce new material, including new concepts, theories and arguments. The purpose of the tutorials is to deepen your understanding of the material and to enhance your ability to think philosophically, through student-led discussion, group activities, and other learning activities.

# Assessment

## Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Essay	60%	Draft for peer review due: 17 November. Peer review due: 24 November; Final submission: 29 November.	1,2,3,4,5,6
In-Class Tests	40%	Quiz 1: 10 October. Quiz 2: 21 November	1,4,6

## Assessment Details

### Assessment 1: Essay

**Start date:** Not Applicable

**Details:** You will write a major essay of 3K words. To help with the development of the essay, you will submit a first draft of the essay. Draft essays will be peer-reviewed, on the basis of a rubric and instructions that are provided by the instructor and practised in a tutorial. The draft essay will be marked out of 5%. This mark will be based on the results of the peer reviews, moderated by the instructor. Peer reviews are awarded 5% of the mark, to be awarded in full as long as the student submits their review on time. Feedback on first drafts will be received via peer-review. The final submission will be marked using a rubric, and each essay will also receive individual written comments.

**Turnitin setting:** This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

### Assessment 2: In-Class Tests

**Start date:** Not Applicable

**Length:** 50 mins

**Details:** There will be two in-class short answer tests, to test your knowledge of the material presented in the lectures and readings. Each test will be 45 minutes long. Feedback will be provided via individual marks for each question. A set of model answers will be released with the marks.

## Attendance Requirements

Please note that lecture recordings are not available for this course. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and contact the Course Authority to make alternative arrangements for classes missed.

## Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

### Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 16 September - 20 September	Seminar	<p><b>Monday: Introduction</b></p> <p>Is the mind a part of the natural world? Can there be a natural science of the mind? Are our brains just naturally evolved computers? These are the types of question we will be pursuing in this course.</p>
	Reading	<p><b>OPTIONAL</b></p> <p><b>1. René Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i>, Meditation II</b></p> <p><b>2. Princess Elisabeth's First Letter to Descartes</b></p> <p><i>Comment: The readings for this seminar are meant mostly for historical context. We want to understand where the ideas we will be discussing in this course came from. Many of you will have encountered them before, in other classes.</i></p>
	Seminar	<p><b>Thursday: Materialism</b></p> <p>In this session we will consider what exactly we might be committed to, if we reject Cartesian dualism. The idea that the mind is material might seem simple enough, but what exactly does it mean?</p>
	Reading	<p><b>2. Skinner, "About Behaviorism" (MC1)</b></p> <p><b>1. Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes"*</b></p> <p><b>2. Montero, "Post-Physicalism"*</b></p>
Week 2: 23 September - 27 September	Seminar	<p><b>Monday: Functionalism and Supervenience</b></p> <p>We continue our discussion of the metaphysics of mind. We introduce "functionalism", probably the most popular approach in the area these days. It is also one that is specifically designed to fit with a scientific picture</p>

		of the mind.
	Reading	<p><b>1. Putnam, “The Nature of Mental States” (MC4) (Section II: skim only)</b></p> <p><b>3. Armstrong, “The Causal Theory of Mind” (MC3)</b></p> <p><b>3. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Entry on Supervenience, Sections 1-2 and 5.4. (<a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/supervenience/">https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/supervenience/</a>)</b></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Putnam’s paper was ground-breaking in its time. We will see why. In Section II, you may have your first encounter with the notions of a “Turing machine” and a “probabilistic automaton”. These are very abstract and somewhat hard to grasp concepts. Do not worry if you struggle at first; we will be returning to them at a later point.</p>
	Seminar	<p><b>Thursday: Drawing the Line I</b></p> <p>Humans have minds. Rocks do not. But, what about dogs? Frogs? Bees? A good theory of mind should be able to draw principled lines; but the results might surprise us.</p>
	Reading	<p><b>1. Tye, “The Problem of Simple Minds” (MC52)</b></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Tye draws a bit on his own idiosyncratic views here, but what we want from this paper is just an illustration of how we can use an abstract theory such as Functionalism to draw some concrete conclusions, in this case, about how to demarcate what creatures should count as possessing a mind.</p>
Week 3: 30 September - 4 October	Seminar	<p><b>Monday: Drawing the Line II</b></p> <p>Humans have minds. Rocks do not. But, what about dogs? Frogs? Bees? A good theory of mind should be able to draw principled lines; but the results might surprise us.</p>
	Reading	<p><b>1. Chalmers and Clark, “The Extended Mind” (MC35)</b></p> <p><b>2. Schwitzgebel, “If Materialism Is True Then The US Is Probably Conscious”*</b></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The readings for this session continue to tease out some of the implications of a broadly functionalist</p>

		understanding of the mind. They are fascinating!
	Seminar	<p><b>Thursday: Psychological Explanation</b></p> <p>We turn from abstract, ontological questions to questions about psychological understanding. Are there laws of the mind? Can psychology be a science, on the model of the natural sciences? We will look at what is perhaps the dominant model for conceiving of the mind in such terms, namely, the computer.</p>
	Reading	<p><b>1. Fodor, "The Persistence of the Attitudes"*</b>  <b>2. Dennett, "True Believers" (MC21)</b>  <b>Comment:</b> We are interested in two things. First, highlighting the importance and characteristic features of psychological explanation. Then, the different conceptions of why and how such explanations work.</p>
Week 4: 7 October - 11 October	Seminar	MONDAY 7 OCTOBER: PUBLIC HOLIDAY
	Assessment	<b>Thursday: In-class quiz 1</b>
Week 5: 14 October - 18 October	Seminar	<p><b>Monday: Classical Computationalism</b></p> <p>The idea that the brain is a computer has been one of the most fruitful scientific ideas of the last century. It has defined the project of cognitive science, and influenced popular discourse about the mind. But what exactly does it mean? And is it <i>true</i>?</p>
	Reading	<p><b>1. Haugeland, "Semantic Engines: an introduction to mind design" (MC 14)</b></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> this is a long essay that handles some difficult concepts—including the promised discussion of the Turing Machine! But it is one of the most important readings in this course. So, it is worth putting in the effort to understand it. We will also discuss it extensively in class.</p> <p><b>2. Optional: Alan Turing, "Computing Machinery and Intelligence"*</b></p>
	Seminar	<p><b>Thursday: Alternatives to Old-School Computationalism: Neural Networks</b></p> <p>The Turing Machine provided the blueprint for the first generation of cognitive scientists. Neural networks, already dominant in fields like artificial intelligence and machine learning, seem to be doing the same for newer generations. Here we discuss the implications of this new approach to computation for the study of the mind.</p>

	Reading	<p><b>1. Churchland and Sejnowski, "Neural Representation and Neural Computation" (MC17)</b></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The article by the philosopher Patricia Churchland and the neuroscientist Terry Sejnowski (currently head of AI at Facebook) is an in-depth (if early) investigation of the neural network paradigm. Warning! Its interdisciplinary character can make it challenging. In this class, we *do not* care about the technical details. We care only about the big picture. If you feel you are catching the drift, do not worry about the details.</p> <p><b>2. Fodor and Pylyshyn, "Connectionism and Cognitive Architecture" (MC18)</b></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> A short excerpt from a classic attack in the turf wars between old-school computationalists and their rivals.</p>
Week 6: 21 October - 25 October	Seminar	<b>BREAK WEEK: NO SEMINARS THIS WEEK</b>
Week 7: 28 October - 1 November	Seminar	<b>Monday: Critiques of Computationalism</b>
	Reading	<p><b>1. Searle, "Can Computers Think?" (MC15)</b></p> <p><b>2. Hornsby, "Physicalism and Conceptions of Behavior"</b>*</p>
	Seminar	<p><b>Thursday: Consciousness and Cognition</b></p> <p>Our discussion so far seems to have neglected the most striking feature of our minds, namely, consciousness. What should we say about this? Can it fit within the broadly functionalist/computationalist approaches we have been discussing? If so, what is the role of conscious mental states, such as visual perception?</p>
	Reading	<p><b>1. Block, "Troubles with Functionalism" (MC5)</b></p> <p><b>2. Block, "Some Concepts of Consciousness"</b>*</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Block is very skeptical of approaches to consciousness within a functionalist framework, because he thinks they are guilty of a certain conceptual error. We will consider his reasons, and ask if his conceptual distinction is as deep and important as he thinks.</p>
	Assessment	<b>Essay Topics Assigned</b>



Week 8: 4 November - 8 November	Seminar	<b>Monday: Perceptual Consciousness I</b>  In this part of our discussion we will look more specifically at the cognitive role of perceptual consciousness. This may seem obvious, but as it turns out we may be surprisingly ignorant about the character of our own subjective experiences.
	Reading	<b>1. Gilbert Harman, “The Intrinsic Quality of Experience” (MC44)</b>  <b>Comment:</b> Harman offers a deceptively simple theory about consciousness---and one that is friendly to cognitive science, whether old-school or new. Our question will be, does this theory leave something out?  <b>2. Dennett, “Seeing Is Believing -- or Is it?”*</b>
	Seminar	<b>Thursday: Perceptual Consciousness II</b>
	Reading	<b>1. Dennett, “Seeing Is Believing — or Is It?”*</b>  <b>2. Noe, “Is the Visual World a Grand Illusion?”*</b>  <b>3. Campbell, “Sensorimotor Knowledge and Naïve Realism”*</b>  <b>Comment:</b> These three articles work together as follows: Dennett raises issues for the very idea that we have much conscious perception of the world around us. Noe responds, and hints at a bigger theory (which he develops in a book). And Campbell responds to that book. Taken together, they give a good overview of contemporary theories of perception.
Week 9: 11 November - 15 November	Seminar	<b>READING WEEK: NO SEMINARS THIS WEEK</b>
	Assessment	<b>ESSAY DRAFTS FOR PEER REVIEW DUE SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER. Note that because of the nature of the peer-review, late submissions will not be accepted for this part of the assessment.</b>
Week 10: 18 November - 22 November	Seminar	Wrapping up. No new readings.
	Assessment	<b>Quiz 2 in class, Thursday 21 November</b>
Week 11: 25 November - 29 November	Assessment	<b>Peer Reviews Due: Sunday 24 November</b>  <b>Essay Final Submission: 29 November</b>

## Resources

### Prescribed Resources

Most of our readings will be from the following anthology:

- Lycan, William and Jesse Prinz (eds.). (2008) *Mind and Cognition: An Anthology*. Blackwell Anthologies. (Labeled "MC" in the schedule of readings.)

The readings in this book are mostly **required** readings. You are responsible for getting access to those readings in time and reading them before each lecture/tutorial.

### Recommended Resources

An excellent resource for philosophy is the online Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/>

An excellent resource for your writing needs, including especially citations and referencing, is the Chicago Manual of Style, available online from the library

### Course Evaluation and Development

Formal feedback from students will be collected *via* myExperience, and will be used to improve future iterations of this course. Informal, real-time feedback is also very welcome, either in person or through a permanently open forum for suggestions and comments.

## **Submission of Assessment Tasks**

## **Submission of Assessment Tasks**

### **Turnitin Submission**

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on [externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au](mailto:externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au) . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

**Copying:** using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

**Inappropriate paraphrasing:** Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

**Collusion:** working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

**Inappropriate citation:** Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

**Duplication ("self-plagiarism"):** submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>

## Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

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