

## PHIL 4410 - Philosophy of Mind - Fall 2018 - syllabus

Charlie Huenemann, Professor

T/Th 1:30-2:45, Main 117

**Overview:** the most astounding fact about the universe is that some bits of it are able understand and be conscious of other bits of it. Consciousness is at once the *most obvious* thing in the world - there's no thinking without it! - and also the *least obvious*: we don't have any objective evidence that *anything* is conscious. Ask yourself how you might try *proving* that an entity (human or machine) is conscious, and not just acting *as if* it were conscious! In this class we will be exploring philosophical theories about what consciousness is, whether machines can be conscious, whether humans have free will, and so on.

**Work.** In addition to reading and class participation, students will write three 5-page papers on our key topics: various dualisms, Daniel Dennett's materialist explanation, and Galen Strawson's selves.

Students will also provide **short answers on the readings** for nearly every class. Finally, each student will present as part of a **panel discussion** on a book read outside of class. (Details on all these things to follow). Each paper contributes 20% of the final grade; the panel discussion contributes 20%; and the short answers altogether provide 20%.

**Contact information for the instructor:** Charlie Huenemann, Main 208, phone 797-0254; office hours 1-3 on Wednesdays, but I'm also generally available on T/W/Th, and by appointment, email [charlie.huenemann@usu.edu](mailto:charlie.huenemann@usu.edu). I'm always happy to meet with you - really, I'm a friendly and encouraging fellow who enjoys talking with students - so please feel welcome to knock on my door. I have a blog if you are interested: [huenemanniatic.wordpress.com](http://huenemanniatic.wordpress.com). Also, on the subject of blogs, you may wish to check [outusophilosophy.com](http://outusophilosophy.com) to stay abreast of local philosophical happenings.

**Cheating.** In class - as in life - never try to pass off someone else's work as your own. I'm completely intolerant of this kind of intellectual theft; it's a cardinal sin of the academy.

**Lateness in turning in work:** generally there should be none, but life packs surprises, and sometimes work has to be delayed. Be mature about this, and talk to me about it. If you need an alternative exam time, or need some alternative exam arrangement due to disability, please let me know, and we'll work something out.

Date	What we will discuss in class	Questions to think through for class:
8.28	Introduction	
8.30	The Mars teleporter	What would you do?
9.4	Descartes, Passions	Why must there be one spot for the soul to connect with the brain?
9.6	Descartes, Passions	What is Descartes's general remedy?

9.11	Conway's materialism	What is the difference between spirit and body?
9.13	Lewis, Identity Theory	What is Lewis's argument for the identity theory?
9.18	Jackson, What Mary Didn't Know	Why think qualia are epiphenomenal?
9.20	Searle, Chinese Room	What is Searle's reply to the "systems" reply?
9.25	Chalmers, Zombies	What does the conceivability of zombies prove?
9.27	Arguments for Dualism	What are the best arguments for dualism?
10.2	PANEL: Machuga, <i>In Defense of the Soul</i>	
10.4	Dennett, "Toward a Cognitive..." PAPER (due Friday, 10.5)	Would it be like anything to be the system DD describes?
10.9	Dennett, <i>Consciousness Explained</i> , chps 1-3	How does the "party game" model dreams or hallucinations?
10.11	Dennett, chps 4 & 5	What is the color phi phenomenon, and what conclusion does DD draw from it?
10.16	PANEL: Damasio, <i>Descartes' Error</i>	
10.18	Dennett, chps 7-9	In these chapters, how does DD undermine the notion of a self in charge?
10.23	Dennett, chps 10-12	How does DD respond to zombies? What is his account of qualia?
10.25	Dennett, chps 13 & 14	What role do language and other people play in the construction of the self?
10.30	Arguments for materialism PAPER (due Sunday, 11.4)	
11.1	PANEL: Taylor, <i>My Stroke of Insight</i>	
11.6	Strawson, <i>Selves</i> , selections from parts 1 & 2	Come up with three questions on the readings
11.8	Strawson, selections from part 3	Come up with three questions on the readings
11.13	Strawson, selections from part 4	Come up with three questions on the readings
11.15	Cancelled	
11.20	PANEL: Baggini, <i>Ego Trick</i>	
11.27	Strawson, selections from part 6	Come up with three questions on the readings

11.29	Strawson, extra day PAPER (due Sunday, 12.9)	Come up with three questions on the readings
12.4	PANEL: Baggini, <i>Freedom Regained</i>	
12.6	Conclusions	