

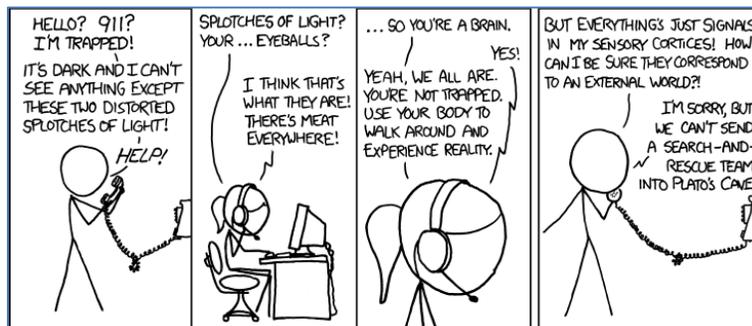
# COURSE SYLLABUS

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**YEAR COURSE OFFERED:** 2011  
**SEMESTER COURSE OFFERED:** Fall  
**DEPARTMENT:** Philosophy  
**COURSE NUMBER:** 3334  
**NAME OF COURSE:** Philosophy of Mind  
**NAME OF INSTRUCTOR:** Cameron Buckner  
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**The information contained in this class syllabus is subject to change without notice. Students are expected to be aware of any additional course policies presented by the instructor during the course.**

Time and location: MoWeFr 10:00AM - 11:00AM, AH 15  
Office hours: Monday & Wednesday 11:00-12:00 and by appointment, AH 654  
Instructor e-mail: [cjbuckner@uh.edu](mailto:cjbuckner@uh.edu)

## Learning Objectives



We have, it seems, two fundamentally different ways to learn about our own minds. On the one hand, we have common sense and our own faculties of introspection. From these perspectives, we seem to be conscious beings with logically-coherent beliefs and desires, freely choosing to act on the basis of our rational inferences. On the other hand, we have the perspectives of neuroscience and psychology. These sciences seem to show that we are but complex physical mechanisms whose behavior is causally determined by neurochemical processes unfolding in our brains, processes of which we are unaware and which often lead to seemingly irrational choices. In this class, we will review the main positions in the philosophy of mind, which respond to this apparent clash of perspectives in a variety of different ways. In doing so, we will review the main “problems” in the philosophy of mind, including mental causation (How can thoughts cause behavior?), mental content (How can thoughts be about the world?), and consciousness (How could physical matter be conscious?). Students will learn about the major positions on these questions in analytic philosophy over the last five or so decades.

Nonhuman animals offer a particularly fascinating and challenging case study for these questions. Animal minds are both easier and harder to study than our own—easier, in that their psychologies are much simpler than our own, but harder, because they cannot *tell* us what they

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are thinking. In the final unit of the course, we will review the ways that scientists attempt to address these challenges in the field of animal cognition.

## Major Assignments/Exams

(Undergraduates only – graduate students, see me individually)

Weekly Responses	10%
Exam 1	20%
Paper 1 (4-5 pages)	20%
Paper 2 (5-7 pages)	30%
Final Exam	20%

### Weekly responses

Each week, every student will be required to submit a 1-2 page response paper on that week's readings. Responses will typically be due on Wednesday, and will be discussed on Friday. Grading will be a completion grade—0, check-, check, and check+, corresponding to F, C, B, and A, respectively.

Your goal in a response paper is to wrestle with some issue that you found interesting or troubling in a reading. Sometimes I will give the class a prompt to respond to as you go through the readings, which will be posted on the course Blackboard site. Your response can consist of asking a question of the reading and exploring the author's answer, drawing some troubling implications of an author's views, or defending the author against possible objections. The first paragraph of the response should always summarize the thesis or issue that you will be discussing.

### Papers

Undergraduates will complete two papers, with topics chosen from a list passed out roughly at weeks 5 and 10. Papers will be due roughly two weeks after they are assigned. For advice on how to write a philosophy paper, this is an excellent resource:

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

**Note on plagiarism:** All papers will be reviewed through turnitin.com, which will automatically check for evidence of plagiarism. I will vigorously pursue and punish plagiarism (if you are not sure what counts as plagiarism, see here: <http://guides.lib.uh.edu/plagiarism>). \*Never\* cut and paste text from another source without attribution; you should also be very careful when paraphrasing. When in doubt, cite.

**Note on paper lengths:** 1 page = approximately 300 words. Do not try any formatting tricks to draw out the length of a paper—I have seen them all (even making the periods or spaces size 14 font). If you're in doubt, do a word count.

### Exams

Undergraduates will take two in-class essay exams, one mid-term and one final. A list of possible topics will be handed out roughly 1 week before the exam date, from which the essay questions will be chosen.

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## Required Reading

*Philosophy of Mind, Third Edition* (2010), Jaegwon Kim (ISBN-13: 978-0813344584).

## Recommended Reading

*Consciousness and the Prospects of Physicalism* (2011), Derk Pereboom (ISBN-13: 978-0199764037).

## List of discussion/lecture topics

Students are expected to have read the chapters or articles indicated. Readings with a “+” symbol are **recommended** for undergraduates and **required** for graduates.

Week	Topic	Readings
Part I: Psychophysical Relations		
Week 1 Aug 22	Substance dualism & background	Kim Ch1-2 Descartes, Meditation VI +Sellars, Philosophy & the scientific image of man +Kim, Ch3
Week 2 Aug 29	Behaviorism & Identity Theory	Kim Ch4 Ryle, Excerpts from The concept of mind U.T. Place, Is consciousness a brain process? +Turing, Computing machinery and intelligence
Week 3 Sept 5 *Labor day holiday Sept 5	Functionalism I	Kim Ch5 Armstrong, The nature of mind +Putnam, Brains and behavior
Week 4 Sept 12	Functionalism II	Kim Ch6 Lewis, Mad pain & Martian pain +Polger, Evaluating the evidence for multiple realization
Week 5 Sept 19	Property dualism & emergence, reductionism *Paper #1 assigned*	Kim Ch7 pp193-202 Jaegwon Kim, Making sense of emergence +Bechtel and Mundale, Multiple realizability revisited
Week 6 Sept 26	Mental causation and anomalous monism	Kim Ch7 p202-226 Davidson, Mental Events +Jim Woodward, Mental causation and neural mechanisms

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Week 7 Oct 3	Eliminativism	Ramsey, Stich, and Garon, Connectionism, eliminativism, and the future of folk psychology +Stich & Lawrence, Intentionality and naturalism
Part 2: Content		
Week 8 Oct 10	Folk psychology *Exam #1*	Kim Ch8 Horgan & Woodward, Folk psychology is here to stay +Kahneman & Tversky, Judgment under uncertainty
Week 9 Oct 17	Causal theories of content	Jerry Fodor, Meaning and the world order +Fred Dretske, Misrepresentation
Week 10 Oct 24	Informational and Teleological theories of content *Paper #2 assigned*	Fred Dretske, Psychological and biological explanations of behavior +Karen Neander, Content for cognitive science
Part 3: Consciousness		
Week 11 Oct 31	Consciousness	Kim Ch9 Nagel, What is it like to be a bat? +Pereboom, Consciousness and the prospects for physicalism, Ch1-2
Week 12 Nov 7	Arguments for and against qualia	Kim Ch10 Jackson, What Mary didn't know +Dennett, Quining qualia
Week 13 Nov 14	Nonreductive physicalisms	Katalin Balog, Phenomenal concepts +Pereboom, Consciousness and the prospects for physicalism, Ch7-8
Part 4: Animal Minds		
Week 14 Nov 21 *Thanksgiving Holiday Nov 23-26	Major questions	Kristin Andrews, Animal cognition
Week 15 Nov 28	Exercise in animal cognition *Paper #2 due*	Elizabeth Camp, Putting thoughts to work
*Final Exam*	11:00 AM-2:00 PM Wed., Dec. 14	All material