



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Introduction to Philosophy of Mind - 15034

Last update 18-09-2022

HU Credits: 4

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Philosophy

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: prof. Hilla Jacobson

Coordinator Email: hilla.jacobson@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff:

Prof Hilla Jacobson

Course/Module description:

We shall begin by introducing different kinds of mental states, and by clarifying some of the central and *prima facie* unique features of the mental. We shall then present the mind-body problem, and discuss central theories regarding the nature of mental states and their ontological status: dualism, behaviorism, the identity-theory, functionalism and the computer model of the mind. We shall also discuss following issues, which stand at the core of current discussions in philosophy of mind: consciousness, mental content and mental causation.

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

N.A

Attendance requirements(%):

80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

1st week

Introduction

The mental realm; central questions; introducing the mind-body problem

Kinds of mental states and some of their prime characteristics I:

Propositional attitudes, perceptual experiences, bodily sensations, emotions; intentionality, phenomenal properties.

2nd week

Kinds of mental states and some of their prime characteristics II:

Epistemic characteristics

Is there a mark of the mental?

Distinguishing two questions: what makes a state mental vs. the question of the individuation of mental states (mental properties)

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, parts of unit 1

3rd week

Substance Dualism:

Its main tenets; arguments in favor and against it (the notion of conceivability arguments)

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, parts of unit 2

4th week

Property Dualism:

The rejection of strong supervenience; versions of property dualism; interactionism; epiphenomenalism; arguments for and against property dualism.

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, parts of unit 2

5th week

Identity Theory I:

Empirical commitments ("weak supervenience"; two-directional correlation); theoretical commitments (synthetic vs. analytic identity statements), what does "identity" mean

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, parts of units 4 and 5

Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes"

6th week

Identity Theory II: Arguments for the identity theory:

The argument from simplicity, "Armstrong's argument", the argument from mental causation

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, parts of unit 5

7th week

Identity Theory III: Arguments against the identity theory; the Type Identity Theory and the Token Identity Theory

The knowledge argument and some replies; type identity vs. token identity; the multiple realizability argument

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, parts of unit 5, parts of unit 2

Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia"

Putnam, "The Nature of Mental States"

8th week

Towards functionalism:

Behaviorism and its shortcomings; the functionalist way of individuating mental states (Ramsey/Lewis Definitions)

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, units 6 and 7

Putnam, "Brains and Behavior"

Excerpts from: Lewis, "Psychophysical and Theoretical Identifications"

9th week

Functionalism:

The computer model of the mind; functionalism and the ontology of mental states

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, units 6 and 7

Putnam, "The Nature of Mental States"

10th week

Challenges to Functionalism:

Accusations of liberalism and chauvinism; Functionalism and intentionality; functionalism and qualia

Assigned Reading:

Excerpts from: Block, "Troubles with Functionalism"

11th week

Externalism and Mental Contents:

Revisiting intentionality; the causal co-variational theory; Internalism vs. Externalism

Assigned Reading:

Horowitz, parts of unit 8

Putnam, Meaning and Reference

12th week

Consciousness I:

Kinds of consciousness; phenomenal consciousness and the explanatory gap; phenomenal character and representational content

Assigned Reading:

Block, "Concepts of Consciousness"

Horowitz, unit 9

13th week

Consciousness II:

A taste of "empirical philosophy": phenomenality without cognitive accessibility? Supervenience of phenomenal character on representational content?

Assigned Reading:

Block, "Consciousness and Cognitive Access"

Required Reading:

Tentative Reading List

הורוביץ, א., פילוסופיה של הנפש בתקופתנו.

Smart, J.J.C. "Sensations and Brain Processes"

Jackson, F. "Epiphenomenal Qualia"
Putnam, H. "The Nature of Mental States"
Lewis, D. "Psychophysical and Theoretical Identifications"
Block, N. "Troubles with Functionalism"
Putnam, H. Meaning and Reference
Block, N. "Concepts of Consciousness"
Block, N. "Consciousness and Cognitive Access"

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 40 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 60 %
take home exam

Additional information: