Minds, Brains, and Worlds:
Topics in the Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science

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Office Hours: Mondays, 3:30-4:30, and Wednesdays, 1-3, and by appointment.
Class meetings: Tuesdays, 1:15-4
Class Location: 207 Ciruti

Schedule

Readings will be made available online, at the course website. The website address is:

http://www.mtholyoke.edu/courses/wschonbe/mind/index.html

A password is required to access readings: CONTACT THE INSTRUCTOR

In the following schedule, texts found under the heading ‘Readings’ are required readings; those under the heading ‘Additional readings’ either provide useful background material, alternative expositions of the same topic, or advanced material. Also, if you want more information on a given topic, follow up on references given by the author.

In some cases, multiple disjoined readings are given (i.e., A or B). In these cases, I have not determined which reading will be better suited to our purposes, and a decision will be made somewhere down the line.

Part I: The Mind/Body Problem – A Survey

1. February 3rd: Introduction & Dualism
   Readings: Given in-class.

2. February 10th: Logical Behaviorism
   Readings:
   Additional readings:
Watson, J.A., (1913/1994) ‘Psychology as a behaviorist sees it’ (a classic statement of methodological or psychological behaviorism.)

3. February 17th: Identity Theory & Functionalism
Readings:
Putnam, H. (1967), ‘Psychological predicates’ (a.k.a. ‘the nature of mental states’)
Additional Readings:

Readings:
Davidson, D. (1971), ‘Psychology as philosophy’
Additional readings:
Davidson, D. (1970), ‘Mental events’

Part II: Some Recent Issues: Representational Formats, Situated Cognition, Bifurcated Selves, and Multiply Realized Minds

5. March 2nd: Representational Formats I: The Language of Thought
Readings:
Fodor, J. (1987), Psychosemantics, chapter 1 (‘The persistence of the attitudes’)
or Fodor, J. (1975) The Language of Thought (excerpts)
or Fodor, J. (1987), ‘Why there still has to be a language of thought’ (Appendix to Psychosemantics)
Additional Readings:
Churchland, P.M. & Churchland, P.S. (1983), ‘Stalking the wild epistemic engine’

Writing exercise due.

6. March 9th: Representational formats II: Connectionism
Readings:
analysis’

**Additional Readings:**
Schonbein, W. (unpublished manuscript) ‘On the empirical content of classicism’

7. March 16th: No Class – Spring Break

8. March 23rd: *Representational Formats III: Dynamical Systems*

**Readings:**
Van Gelder, T. (1994), ‘What might cognition be, if not computation?’
or
Clark, A. (1996), ‘Happy coupling: emergence and explanatory interlock’

**Additional Readings:**
Schonbein, W. (forthcoming), ‘Cognition and the computational power of dynamical systems’, *Minds and Machines*

9. March 30th: *Representational Formats IV: Two Recent Proposals*

**Readings:**
Eliasmith, C. (forthcoming), ‘Moving beyond metaphors: understanding the mind for what it is’, *Journal of Philosophy*

**Additional Readings:**
Pylyshyn, Z. (forthcoming), ‘Return of the mental image: are there really pictures in the brain?’, *Trends in Cognitive Sciences.* See also S. Kosslyn’s response to this article, and then Pylyshyn’s response to Kosslyn.

10. April 6th: *Situated Cognition I: Where is the Mind?*

**Readings:**
or

**Additional Readings:**
Newell, J. and Simon, H. (1976) ‘Symbols and search: computer science as empirical inquiry’ (provides important background information for understanding the debate)

**Topics for final paper due.**

11. April 13th: *Situated Cognition II: Consciousness*

**Readings:**

**Additional Readings:**
Hurley, S. & Noe, A. (?) ‘Neural plasticity and consciousness’
See also *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 9(5-6) – the entire issue is devoted to Noe’s ‘Grand Illusion’ paper, and contains responses by many leaders in the field.
Guzeldere, G. (1997) ‘The many faces of consciousness: a field guide’ (a long (67 pages) paper with more information on theories of consciousness than most people want. – this is too big for me to scan in, so please check the library if you want this paper.)

**Introductory summary for final paper due.**

12. April 20th: *Brains and Persons: One Brain, No People*

**Readings:** Sperry et. al. (1969), ‘Syndromes of hemisphere disconnection’, in *Handbook of Clinical Neurology, Volume 4*, pp. 273-290. (Note: I requested this through interlibrary loan months ago, and it has not yet shown up.)
Craver, C. (unpublished manuscript), ‘Dissociable realization and kind splitting’

**Additional Readings:**

Introductory summary returned w/ comments.

13. April 27th: *Multiply Realized Minds I: The Special Sciences and Reduction*

**Readings:**
Fodor, J. (1974), ‘Special sciences’, *Synthese*  or Fodor, J. (19??), ‘The special sciences: still special after all these years’
Kim, J. (1992) ‘Multiple realization and the metaphysics of reduction’

**Additional Readings:**

Rough draft of paper due by 5:00 p.m.

14. May 4th: *Multiply Realized Minds II: Multiple Realization*

**Readings:**
Bechtel, W. & Mundale, J. (1999), ‘Multiple realizability revisited’
Either Shargrir’s or Francescotti’s recent paper on multiple realizability.

**Additional Readings**
Rough draft returned w/ comments.

15. May 6-7th: Individual meetings to discuss paper.
   Sign-up sheet will be distributed in class.

16. Final draft of paper due by 5:00 p.m., Monday, May 10th.

Leading Discussion

Twice during the semester, you will be asked to lead the discussion of a paper. This involves taking 5 to 15 minutes to (i) summarize for the rest of the class what you take to be the main thesis of the paper as well as any other important points, (ii) sketch out the argument or arguments given for that thesis, and (iii) bring up questions for discussion. The questions may be critical observations, counterarguments to the arguments given, or requests for the clarification of a concept or confusing passage.

Leading discussion is intended to be an informal process.

Note that everyone in the class is expected to do the assigned reading, even in cases where they are not leading discussion.

The Writing Exercise

The writing exercise is as follows: From the survey portion of the course, compare and contrast two conflicting positions on the nature of mind and its relation to the body (/brain). Take care to summarize each position clearly and concisely, utilizing examples to illustrate how the theories differ. You are not expected to articulate and defend an original thesis on the topic. The length of the paper should be 4 to 5 typewritten pages, double spaced, 1” margins, 12 point font.

The exercise will be assessed according to (i) accuracy of content, (ii) clarity of writing, and (iii) grammar and punctuation.

The Term Paper

In order to facilitate the goal of crafting a well-written paper, the process of writing the final term paper is divided into a number of sub-goals, each of which is required. They are:

1. Deciding on a topic.
2. An introductory summary of the theory or theories that are to form the topic of the paper.
3. A rough draft of the paper.
4. Meeting to briefly discuss your paper.
5. A final draft of the paper.

The overall paper is worth 40% of the final grade, and is broken down into: Initial summary (5%), rough draft (15%), final draft (20%). The meeting is an opportunity to discuss the written comments I give you, engage in informal discussion on the topic of your paper, etc. While the meeting is required, it is not graded.

**Final Grades**

The final grade is calculated according to the following decomposition:

- Leading discussion: 20% each.
- Writing exercise: 20%
- Term paper: 40% (as broken down above).

**Other Notable Dates**

Spring Break: March 16\textsuperscript{th} – March 19\textsuperscript{th}.
Last Day to Drop (without a DR): Tuesday, February 17\textsuperscript{th}
Last Day to Drop (with a DR): Tuesday, April 13\textsuperscript{th}
Dan Dennett speaks at Hampshire College at 5:30 on Wednesday, February 25\textsuperscript{th}.
Jesse Prinz speaks at Mt. Holyoke College at 4:00 on Friday, March 26\textsuperscript{th} (tentative).
V. Ramachandran speaks at Hampshire College at 5:30 on Thursday, April 8\textsuperscript{th}. 