Phil 236 (3242), 3 credits, Spring 2017, Rossey 301, M&W 9:55am–11:10am

Self: Mind

Dr. Scott O'Connor
Office hours: http://scoconno.github.io/Contact/Office/

1/16/2017–5/15/2017

Copyright

Catalog Description

This course introduces students to the philosophical study of mind. Students will learn how their unique psychologies play a role in distinguishing themselves from others, as well as consider how their psychologies are shaped by their environment and biology. The course also focuses on the relationship between mind and body.

Course Description

The primary goal of the course is to make students aware of their mental lives and the significance their mental lives have on questions about personal identity and naturalism. It will serve majors and minors in Philosophy and Religion as well as the wider student population. It introduces the former to the philosophical study of mind, which will serve as a spring-board to higher-level courses in mind, the philosophy of psychology, and related issues in epistemology and metaphysics. For the latter, the course will offer the opportunity to analyze the ways in which their unique psychologies shape who and what

they are, and, at the same time, offer the opportunity to analyze the ways in which their psychologies are affected by their biology and environment.

The course also promises to teach students to be tolerant in three distinct ways. First, questions about whether the mind can be explained by the natural sciences is key to deciding the scope of natural science, and, by extension, the nature of the reality we inhabit. The study of mind thus serves as a useful bulwark against an over-confidence in current scientific paradigms. Second, questions about whether, and to what extent, animals have mental states has been taken as key to deciding what if any moral status they enjoy. The study of mind thus serves as a bulwark against speciesism. Third, questions about the nature of psychological traits are key to deciding whether, and how, our environment determines how we act. Thus the study of mind makes students aware of how the actions of their fellow citizens are affected by their environment, not merely their intrinsic features.

Learning Objectives

Upon completing this course, students will be able to (i) identify their own psychological characteristics, (ii) interpret readings ranging from newspaper articles to literary and philosophical texts, as well as artworks and movies, (iii) define fundamental philosophical ideas and concepts, (iv) compare different theories of the mind, (v) apply these theories to settles questions of survival and mentality, and (vi) manage their studies in a responsible and timely manner.

General Education Information

Successfully completing this course satisfies one Tier 2 Language, Literary, and Cultural Studies requirement. It teaches the following two University-wide Learning Goals: (1) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, (2) Written Communication. For further information about the General Education Program see http://www.njcu.edu/cas/general-education/.

Required Textbooks

Available in the campus book store and online retailers.

· Kim, Jaegwon. *The Philosophy of Mind.* 3rd ed. Boulder, CO: Westview, 2010*

· Perry, John. *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality.* Indianapolis: Hackett, 1978

Course Website

There is both a Blackboard site and website for this course (link on first page). Clicking the first link on the left panel within the Blackboard site will bring you to the course website. All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard. Readings, notes, etc.

will be posted on the course website. Note that Blackboard difficulties are rare and automatically reported to instructors. Under no circumstance will a student's report of a Blackboard difficulty be reason for an extension. It is your responsibility to contact Blackboard support for help.

Requirements

- *Workload:* Expect to spend an average of 6 hours per week completing the readings and assignments. NJCU abides by the Federal and State definitions of a credit hour and adopts a policy consistent with the Carnegie Unit. A three-credit class represents 112.5 hours total of work. See here for more details.

- *Attendance:* Roll call will be taken. 0.5 point will be awarded per class up to a maximum of 10 points. Points will not be awarded during weeks 1 & 2.

- *Reading quizzes* administered through Blackboard. 7 will be assigned. You must complete 5. If you complete more than 5, the lowest grades will be dropped.

- *Essays (500–750 words)* submitted through Blackboard. 6 will be assigned. You must complete 4. If you complete more than 4, the lowest grades will be dropped.

- *Signature assignment* submitted through the TK20 site. **Submitting this assignment through the TK20 site is a requirement for earning a grade in this course.**

- *Course evaluations* completed online. 5 points extra credit for successful completion and screenshot of completed page sent through Blackboard.

- *Grade distribution:* Attendance–0.5 points per class (10 maximum); Reading Responses—5 points each (20 total); Essays—12.5 points each (50 total); Signature Assignment—20 points.

- *Grade Breakdown:*

96–100	A		77–79	C+
90–95	A-		73–76	C
87-89	B+		70–72	C-
83–86	B		60–69	D
80–82	B -		0–59	F

Policies

- **Student Responsibility:** This syllabus outlines the required text, assignments, requirements, and policies for this course. By taking this course, you agree to read this syllabus and be bound by those requirements and policies.

- *Academic Integrity:* All the work you turn in (including papers, drafts, and discussion board posts) must be written by you specifically for this course. It must originate with you in form and content with all contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. Being a student at NJCU requires you to follow NJCU's

Academic Integrity Policy. Penalties for violations are as follows: 1st infraction will result in a 0 for the assignment. 2nd infraction will result in a 0 for the entire course & application for permanent record on student's transcript. (Repeated violations can lead to expulsion from NJCU).

· *Attendance:* You are considered absent if you are (i) not present during roll call, (ii) leave early, (iii) leave without permission, or (iv) leave for an extended period of time. No excuses. No exceptions.

· *Communication:* To comply with Federal Privacy Laws (FERPA) and NJCU policies, all communication will be through Blackboard and/or official NJCU e-mail. Check both your NJCU e-mail and Blackboard daily. For further information see http://scoconno.github.io/Contact/.

· *Conduct:* Distracting and disrespectful behaviors, including but not limited to eating, leaving your seat, talking out of turn, and aggression are prohibited. Penalties include, but are not limited to, a loss of attendance points for the day of violation. Repeat offenders will be reported to the Dean of Students.

· *Electronic devices:* Use of electronic device, including, but not limited, to smartphones, dictaphones, tablets, and laptops, is prohibited. Recording a lecture is in violation of Copyright. Penalties include, but are not limited to, a loss of attendance points for the day of violation. Repeat offenders will be reported to the Dean of Students.

· *Format for Written Work:* Submit work to Blackboard as either a pdf, rtf, or doc file. All work must be typed and neatly presented.

· *General Education Program Assessment:* General Education courses participate in programmatic assessment of the six University-wide student learning goals. They include instruction in, and assessment of, at least two of these learning goals. Signature assignments, which may include document, picture, sound, or video files, are uploaded to a secure server for anonymous distribution to the NJCU assessment team, which scores them using approved program rubrics. While instructors also grade their own students' signature assignments, which count toward the course grade, assessment team results are aggregated to provide information about the Gen Ed program as a whole. Your name will not be included in any programmatic assessment data.

· *Grading:* Grades will be available within 1–2 weeks of an assignment being submitted. See: http://scoconno.github.io/Teaching/Grading for further information.

· *Late work & Make-up Policy:* See the assignment schedule below. No make-ups or late work accepted under any circumstances. No exceptions under any imaginable circumstances.

· *Statement for students with disabilities:* If you are a student with a disability and wish to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, please register with

the Office of Specialized Services and Supplemental Instruction (OSS/SI). To begin this process, complete the registration form available on the OSS/SI website at http://www.njcu.edu/oss (listed under Student Resources-Forms). Contact OSS/SI at 201-200-2091 or visit the office in Karnoutsos Hall, Room 102 for additional information.

· *Turnitin:* Students agree that by taking this course all assignments are subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com. Assignments submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site. For further information about Turnitin, please visit: http://www.turnitin.com

Weekly Course Schedule

Dates refer to the first day of the week. Readings marked with a '**' can be found on the course website. All other listed readings can be found in the required textbook. Changes to the syllabus will be announced through Blackboard and *via* your NJCU email address.

Week 1: Introduction (*1/16/2017*)

1. Kim, ch.1
2. Star Trek, 'Second Chances' (in class)

Week 2: Personal Identity–Same Soul (*1/23/2017*)

1. Perry, John. *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*
2. Kim. ch. 2

Week 3: Objections (*1/30/2017*)

1. Perry, John. *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*
2. Kim. ch. 2

Week 4: Personal Identity–Psychological Continuity (*2/6/2017*)

1. Perry, John. *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*
2. 'Blade Runner' (in-class movie)

Week 5: Behaviorism (*2/13/2017*)

1. Kim, ch.3

Week 6: Continued (*2/20/2017*)

1. **No class on Monday**

    2. Kim, ch.3

Week 7: Mind as Brain (*2/27/2017*)

    1. **'They're Made out of Meat', Terry Bisson

    2. Kim, ch.4

Spring Break

Week 8: The Mind as Computer (*3/13/2017*)

    1. Star Trek, 'Measure of a Man', Season 2, Episode 9.

    2. Kim, ch.5

    3. **"Computing Machinery and Intelligence", A.M. Turing,

    4. 'The Imitation Game', optional movie available on Amazon, Google Play, etc.

Week 9: Continued (*3/20/2017*)

    1. Kim, ch.5

    2. **"Minds, Brains, and Programs", John R. Searle

Week 10: Mental Causation (*3/27/2017*)

    1. Short story

    2. Kim, ch.7.

Week 11: Varieties of Consciousness (*4/3/2017*)

    1. Kim, ch.9

    2. **"What is it like to be a bat?", T. Nagel

Week 12: Higher Order Theories (*4/10/2017*)

    1. Kim, ch.9

Week 13: Representationalism (*4/17/2017*)

    1. Kim, ch.9

    2. **"How Do You Know You Are Not A Zombie", F. Dretske

Week 14: Consciousness and Science (*4/24/2017*)

    1. Kim, ch.10

Week 15 Continued (*5/1/2017*)

    1. Kim, ch.10

Week 16 Conclusion (*5/8/2017*)

    1. No new reading

Assignment Schedule

Dates refer to the due date. All assignments must be submitted through Blackboard by 12:00pm. No late work accepted. No exceptions. You must complete 5 quizzes, 4 essays, and the final group project. If you complete more than 5 quizzes, the lowest quiz grade(s) will be dropped. If you complete more than 4 essays, the lowest essay grade(s) will be dropped.

- *1/23/2017,* Essay
- *1/30/2017,* Quiz
- *2/6/2017,* Quiz
- *2/13/2017,* Essay
- *2/20/2017,* Quiz
- *2/27/2017,* Essay
- *3/6/2017,* Quiz
- *3/20/2017,* Essay
- *3/27/2017,* Quiz
- *4/3/2017,* Essay
- *4/10/2017,* Essay
- *4/17/2017,* Quiz
- *4/24/2017,* Quiz
- *5/1/2017,* Essay
- *5/8/2017,* Essay
- *5/15/2017,* Optional Final Exam