

Philosophy 7
Introduction to Philosophy of Mind

Summer 2026 Session A
 UCLA

Instructor: Seungtaek Lee (he) Email: stlee@ucla.edu Office Hours: TBD (online) Lecture: TBD (online)	TA: TBD Email: TBD Office Hours: TBD (online) Section: TBD (online)
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Course Description

In this course, we will explore the most fundamental questions in the philosophy of mind, such as: What is a mind? What distinguishes minded beings like humans from ordinary physical objects like rocks or chairs? Do computers have minds—if not, why not? Is a brain necessary for having a mind? How are the mind and the brain related to each other? Do chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT) understand what they produce? Can we ever figure out the answer to this question? Setting aside machines, what about other human beings? Can we fully understand what it is like to be another person at all? The course will revolve around three central themes: mind-body identity, cognition, and consciousness. In the first unit, we will ask whether the mind and brain are one and the same. Arguments for and against the negative and positive answers will be introduced and examined. In the second unit, we will explore the idea that minds are best understood as computers. The focus will be on what this exactly means and whether (or to what extent) it is convincing. In the third unit, we will turn to the nature of subjective experience and what it bears on the theories discussed in the first two units. By the end of the course, students will be able to approach these intellectually challenging but significant questions with care and rigor and to critically engage with major philosophical theories and arguments in the philosophy of mind.

Textbook

There is no official textbook for the course. All required materials will be made available digitally through the course website. Please check the website regularly for updates.

Assessment

1. Participation (20%)
2. Quizzes (4 x 5% = 20%)
3. Midterm Paper (30%)
4. Final Paper (30%)

Participation

Active participation is key to your learning in philosophy. For your academic success in this course, you are expected to attend and actively participate in lecture and section discussion. Participation can take many forms: asking questions, answering questions, responding to others, expressing your own thoughts, or coming to office hours. Participation is graded based on (i) whether you attend lectures and sections, (ii) whether you participate, and (iii) how well you are prepared.

- Please keep your camera on unless you have arranged an exemption in advance.
- Lecture participation and section participation each account for 10% of your final grade.

Quizzes

There will be 4 weekly quizzes. Each quiz must be completed via the course website by 11:59 PM on the Saturday of the week it is assigned. Late submissions will receive a maximum of 70% credit, but only if they are submitted within one week of the original due date. No submissions will be accepted beyond this period. While collaboration with 1–2 classmates is encouraged, sharing solutions is not permitted. No additional quizzes will be assigned for extra credit.

Papers

There will be two papers. Each paper will be 3–5 pages double spaced. The midterm paper will cover material from the first half of the course, and the final paper will cover material from the second half of the course. Prompts and instructions for the paper assignments will be released at least one week in advance of the due date.

Late Papers

Late papers will be docked one third of a letter grade (e.g. from A- to B+, from B+ to B, etc.) for each day they are late. If you can foresee that you will have trouble finishing your paper in time, please ask for an extension no later than 48 hours before the due date.

Course Work Policy

Students must complete all assigned work during the regular academic term. Any portion of the assessment left unattempted without prior written approval (e.g. over email) from the instructor will receive a zero and be factored into the final grade. No incompletes will be granted.

Sending Email

Emails should be professional and respectful. Please include the course title (e.g. “Phil 7”) in the subject line, begin with a greeting and an appropriate term of address (e.g. “Hi Seungtaek”), and close with a sign-off and your name. For substantive questions about exercises, course material, or philosophy in general, please attend office hours or ask after lecture. I typically respond within 2 working days. Help me stick to this rule by placing multiple questions into a single email.

Office Hours

Office hours are a great opportunity to ask questions you did not have a chance to formulate in class or to discuss details we could not cover for reasons of time. You are very welcome to bring questions about course materials, assignments, practical questions, or theoretical concepts, but please do not expect your instructor or TA to complete your assignment or repeat the lecture.

How to Succeed in This Course

To do well in this course, you will need to:

- Attend lectures and sections regularly and take notes.
- Complete all course readings and assignments on time.
- Visit office hours to ensure your understanding of course materials.

Accessible Education

Students who need academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at 310-825-1501 or in person at Murphy Hall A255. Where possible, students should contact CAE within the first two weeks of the term, as reasonable notice is required to coordinate accommodations. For more information, visit:

- <https://www.cae.ucla.edu>
- <https://www.cae.ucla.edu/testing-support>

Student Well-Being

Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. It is thus crucial during your college experience to develop the skills and resources to effectively navigate stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers a variety of services to support your psychological well-being, whether you are in a crisis or just looking to maintain general health. Services are available both on campus and over the phone. For more information, visit:

- <https://www.counseling.ucla.edu>
- <https://www.scholarshipcenter.ucla.edu/campus-resources>

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's guidelines for academic honesty. Academic misconduct can occur in various ways, including (but not limited to) cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. When in doubt about whether some academic practice is acceptable, ask your instructor or TA for assistance. Always err on the side of caution. Any suspected violation of university policy regarding academic conduct will be reported directly to the Office of the Dean of Students, without exception. UCLA's policies can be found at:

- <https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/studentconductcode>
- <https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Academic-Integrity>

Course Schedule (Tentative)**Unit 1: Mind and Body**

Week 1	6/22	Lecture 1 – Introduction <i>Clark, "Introduction: (Not) Like a Rock," Mindware (2000) - 4 pages</i>
	6/24	Lecture 2 – Mind vs. Body: Cartesian Dualism <i>Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy (excerpt, 1641) - 5 pages</i> <i>Ibn Sina, "Floating Man" (excerpts from al-Nafs, 1027) - 1 page</i>
	6/26	Lecture 3 – The Problem of Mental Causation <i>Correspondence between Elisabeth & Descartes (excerpt, 1643) - 7 pages</i> <i>Kim, "Princess Elisabeth against Descartes," Philosophy of Mind (2011) - 5 pages</i>

Quiz 1 due: 6/27

Week 2	6/29	Lecture 4 – Mind as Brain: Identity Theory <i>Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes" (excerpt, 1959) - 5 pages</i> <i>Clark, "Identity Theory," Mindware (2000) - 3 pages</i>
	7/1	Lecture 5 – The Problem of Multiple Realizability <i>Kind, "Identity Theory and Its Problems," Philosophy of Mind (2020) - 5 pages</i> <i>Ravenscroft, "Against the Identity Theory," Philosophy of Mind (2005) - 4 pages</i>
	7/3	No Class – Independence Day (substitute) <i>No required reading</i>

Quiz 2 due: 7/4

Unit 2: Cognition

- Week 3**
- 7/6 Lecture 6 – The Functionalist Turn
Heil, "Functionalism," Philosophy of Mind (2020) - 17 pages
- 7/8 Lecture 7 – Mind as Software: Computationalism
Edelman, "Computing Minds," Computing the Mind (2008) - 21 pages
- 7/10 Lecture 8 – Review
No new reading
- Midterm due: 7/11**
- Week 4**
- 7/13 Lecture 9 – The Problem of Meaning
Searle, "Can Computers Think?" Minds, Brains, and Science (1983) - 7 pages
- 7/15 Lecture 10 – The System and Robot Replies 1
Bermudez, "The Chinese Room Argument," Cognitive Science (2013) - 3 pages
Cole, "The Chinese Room Argument," SEP article (2024) - 15 pages
- 7/17 Lecture 11 – The System and Robot Replies 2
No new reading
- Quiz 3 due: 7/18**

Unit 3: Consciousness

- Week 5**
- 7/20 Lecture 12 – The Hard Problem of Consciousness
Chalmers, "Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness" (2010) - 7 pages
- 7/22 Lecture 13 – The Explanatory Gap
Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?" (1974) - 7 pages
Blackmore & Troscianko, "What Is It Like to Be ...?" (2024) - 7 pages
- 7/24 Lecture 14 – The Knowledge Argument
Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia" (1982) - 1 page
Jackson, "What Mary Didn't Know" (1986) - 5 pages
- Quiz 4 due: 7/25**
- Week 6**
- 7/27 Lecture 15 – Naturalistic Dualism
Chalmers, "Naturalistic Dualism" (2007) - 4 pages
Revonsuo, "Epiphenomenalism" (2009) - 4 pages
- 7/29 Lecture 16 – Nonreductive Physicalism
Chalmers, "Type A Materialism, Type B Materialism" - 7 pages
- 7/31 Lecture 17 – Review
No required reading
- Final due: 7/31**

Grading Scale

We will be using the following university standard grading scale, and we will not be curving:

A+: 100% - 97%

A: 96.99% - 93%

A-: 92.99% - 90%

B+: 89.99% - 87%

B: 86.99% - 83%

B-: 82.99% - 80%

C+: 79.99% - 77%

C: 76.99% - 73%

C-: 72.99% - 70%

D+: 69.99% - 67%

D: 66.99% - 63%

D-: 62.99% - 60%

F: 59.99% - 0%