

PHIL68000—001 - Fall 2023 - J. Gomez-Lavin –Updated 9.26.2023

Course Information

PHIL68000—001

CRN: 18881

W. 830-1120

BRNG 1248*

In Person

3 Credit Hours

Prerequisites: Many, or permission of instructor

Contact Information

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Office Hours: 1-2pm Ws, and by appointment

Course Description

PHIL 68000 Seminar In Philosophy – Reason and Cognition

Philosophers have long posited models of the mind: hypothetical structures linking the faculties, capacities and functions thought to be necessary to be thinking creatures like us. This course will survey historical and contemporary models of the mind with a focus on the minimal cognitive elements considered necessary to engage in the paradigmatic thought processes central to our human experience: reasoning, deliberation, inner speech and even consciousness. We will begin with a historical dive into philosophical models of central cognition (Aristotle, Ibn Sina, Descartes, Hume) before pivoting to early psychological treatments of the same set of faculties (James, Ladd, Skinner, Miller, Newell and Simon, Baddeley), finally coming to the present day with newer philosophical accounts of central cognition and working memory (Fodor, Block, Carruthers, Langland-Hassan, Nagel). Though we will touch on empirical results (especially in the last third of the course), no prior knowledge or comfort with contemporary psychology or neuroscience is required.

Learning Resources, Technology & Texts

- Readings

Most readings will be made available on our course website. If you wish to find the physical books I recommend you start with these (list will be updated periodically)

Fodor, J. 1983. *Modularity of Mind*. MIT Press

Hamlyn's Translation of Aristotle's *De Anima*. OUP.

Miller, Galanter, & Pribram (1960). *Plans and the Structure of Behavior*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, inc.

Ladd, G. T. (1887). *Elements of Physiological Psychology*. Scribners.

James, W. (1890). *The Principles of Psychology* Vol. 1. Holt.
 Boring, E. (2008, repb). *History of Experimental Psychology*, Vol. 2. Cosmo Press.
 Carruthers, P. (2015). *The Centered Mind*. OUP

Reference works that maybe helpful:

Finger, S. (1993). *Origins of Neuroscience*. OUP
 Greenwood, J. (2015). *A Conceptual History of Psychology*. CUP

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Understand the history and foundations of psychology and cognitive constructs
2. Identify the philosophical roots of contemporary constructs in cognitive science
3. Be able to charitably read and engage with an array of canonical and contemporary philosophical and psychological sources
4. Develop professional presentation skills, both in presenting seminar readings and in their final conference-styled presentation
5. Write a compelling, 3000 word conference-styled paper or literature review that develops from themes explored in our class

Assessments

Assignments	Points	Due
Seminar Lead	15	Once, by choice
Draft of "Conference" Paper	20	Wednesday, November 22 nd
"Conference Presentation"	30	Wednesday, December 6 th
Final Version of Conference Paper	30	Wednesday, December 13 th
Active Participation	5	Every Seminar
	Total: 100	
Grade	Points	
A+	96-100	
A	90-95	
A-	85-89	
B+	80-84	

B	75-79
B-	70-74
C+	65-69
C	60-64
C-	55-59
F	< 55

Assessment Details

Seminar Lead (15 Points)

On the first seminar, you'll pick from a shuffled series of cards. The number you draw indicates your order in the second step. Whoever has the Ace picks their date first, with each subsequent number getting the following pick. You are allowed to trade picks with other students provided everyone agrees. When it is your day to lead seminar, you will prepare a one-to-two-page handout that picks out the major themes and arguments from the core reading for that week* (more on this below) supported by textual citations. Either print 10 copies of the hand out or send it to me via email before the morning of seminar I can print copies for you. You should lead the first 20-30 minutes of class by working through this handout, concluding with one to three questions to motivate further discussion. Do not try to cover all the readings in an exhaustive manner, rather focus on points of interest, importance and difficulty. If you have a question about a core point of the reading, it's likely other do too. That is an indication that they merit further discussion in seminar.

Draft of Conference Paper (30 points)

A goal of this course is to enable you to produce a short, 3000 words maximum, piece of quality philosophy of mind or cognitive science that could, with some revision, merit submission to a conference such as the Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology or the Society for Philosophy and Psychology. As such you'll be asked to produce such a piece of writing. Writing, at least in my experience, is an iterative process. We begin with a rough draft. I would like you to submit a rough draft (2000-3500) words via email to me by November 22nd so that I make some comments on the draft before the final version is due December 13th. You'll either select from a list of topics that I generate and hand out on October 25th, or you can propose a topic by the following seminar (November 1st). I don't expect perfection on the draft, but I will take off points for tardiness. Truly, the "points" associated with this assessment are

largely geared to motivate you to turn it in in time for me to make some comments on the draft prior to the conference that we'll have in seminar at the end of term.

Conference Presentation (30 points)

On December 6th, we will host our own version of a philosophy of mind / cognitive science conference. You'll be asked to prepare a 15-20 minute* (note this number may change depending on enrollment) either handout or powerpoint presentation of your drafted "conference paper". Prior to this I will give some guidance as to what I expect for either handout or powerpoint presentations. As part of this assessment you should expect to receive and answer questions from your peers.

Final Conference Paper (30 points)

You should revise your conference paper on the basis of my comments and feedback received at our end of semester conference. Papers are due no later than 5pm on December 13th. I will then grade the papers on their philosophical merits and the revisions that you made in light of the feedback.

Active Participation 5 points

Please contribute to seminar discussions and regularly attend seminar. At the same time, be charitable to your peers and do not monopolize discussion. Just be kind and be mindful.

Note, depending on average scores I reserve the right to institute a mid-semester curve in either direction.

Reading list on next page is tentative and subject to change! I will update it as the semester proceeds. Please check our Brightspace page regularly for updates.

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Week 1 8.23	Introduction to the course, Work through the syllabus, selection of Seminar Leads. Lecture on cognitive ontologies.	Poldrack, R. (2016). "How Folksy is Psychology"	
Week 2 8.30	Modularity of Mind, Part 1, Historical Review, Gall, etc.	Core reading sequence: Fodor, J. (1985) <i>Precis</i> w/out comment, MoM1, MoM2, Boring (1952) Chpt 2. Supplemental: Finger (1994) Chpts 3 and 4, Hollander (1920) Selections.	
Week 3 9.6	Modularity of Mind, Part 2 Central Systems, Fodorian Challenge	Core reading sequence: MoM3*, MoM4, MoM5, Murphy (2019) "On Fodor's First Law of the Nonexistence of Cognitive Science" Supplemental: Wilson (2004) "What Computations (Still, Still) Can't Do", Gottschling (2020) "Modularity"	
Week 4 9.13	Aristotle and Ibn Sina. Ancient and Medieval Approaches to Faculty Psychology	Core reading sequence: Posterior Analytics 11.19, Hamlyn 1-7, Hamlyn 45-60 (<i>De Anima</i> Book III 1-4), Jessica Moss (2022) "Thought and imagination Aristotle's Dual Process Psychology of Action", Kemp and Fletcher (1993) "The Medieval Theory of the Inner Senses" Supplemental: King (1994), Gutas (2012), Zarepour (2020) Finger (1994) Chpts 1 and 2, Greenwood (2015) Chpts 2 and 3	
Week 5 9.20	William James and the Rise of Cerebral Psychology	Core reading sequence: James, W. (1890). <i>Principles of Psychology</i> Vol 1: Preface, Chapter 1, Chapter 7, Chapter 11, Chapter 14, and Chapter 16*, Boring (1952) "American Psychology: It's Pioneers" (Chpt 20). Supplemental reading: Greenwood (2015) Chpt 9, James PoP Vol 2, Chpt 18, Chpt 22 and Chpt 26	

<p>Week 6 9.27</p>	<p>George T. Ladd, the soulful pessimist, the Metaphysics of Psychology and debates about the connection between mind and Body.</p>	<p>Core reading sequence: Ladd (1909) <i>Psychology: Descriptive and Explanatory</i>: Preface, Chpts 1-V (1-85). Ladd (1887) <i>Elements of Psychology</i>: Preface, Introduction, and Part 2 Chapter X. Fodor (1999) “Why the Brain?”</p> <p>The Debate: James <i>Review of Psychology Descriptive and Explanatory</i>, Ladd “Psychology as so-called ‘natural science’” and James’ response “A Plea for psychology as a natural science.”</p>	
<p>Week 7 10.4</p>	<p>Episodic Memory and its function(s). Guest Lecture by Marta Carava</p>	<p>Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tulving, Endel (2002). Episodic memory: From mind to brain. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i>, 53: 1-25. • Boyle, Alexandria (2022). The mnemonic functions of episodic memory. <i>Philosophical Psychology</i>, 35(3): 327-349. • Robins, Sarah K. (2023). Episodic memory is not for the future. In A. Sant’Anna, C. McCarroll, & K. Michaelian (eds.). <i>Current Controversies in the Philosophy of Memory</i> (pp. 166–184). London/New York: Routledge. <p>Suggested</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michaelian, Kourken & Robins, Sarah K. (2018). Beyond the causal theory? Fifty years after Martin and Deutscher. In K. Michaelian, D. Debus & D. Perrin (eds.), <i>New Directions in the Philosophy of Memory</i> (pp. 13-32). London/New York: Routledge. • Mahr, Johannes B., & Csibra, Gergely (2018). Why do we remember? The communicative function of episodic memory. <i>Behavioral and Brain Sciences</i>, 41: 1-93. 	

Week 8 10.11	Peirce and Pragmatism Guest Lecture by Bruce Rushing	Peirce, C.S. <i>Illustrations of Logic: "The Fixation of Belief" and "How to Make Our Ideas Clear"</i> Secondary source to read: SEP article on CS Peirce, sections 3 and 4 link .	
Week 9 10.18	Frank Ramsey's Cognitive Psychology Guest Lecture by Bruce Rushing	Mellor, "Facts and Propositions", Dokic and Engel, <i>Ramsey: Truth and Success</i> Chapter 1 Rushing, "Ramsey's Cognitive Psychology and Philosophy of Logic"	
Week 10 10.25	The cognitivists strike back: Miller and the rise of "Mathematical Psychology". Newell and Simon and their Logic Theory Machine, the birth of working memory	Miller, Galanter, and Pribram (1960) <i>Plans and the Structure of Behavior</i> Chapters 1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14 , Atkinson and Shiffrin (1972), Baddeley (2010) Supplemental: Newell and Simon (1956) <i>The Logic Theory Machine</i> , Baddeley and Hitch (1974)	
Week 11 11.1	<i>Guest Lecture with Paul Henne: The Counterfactual Theory of Causation</i>	Henne "Counterfactual thinking and recency effects in causal judgement" and Henne "Double Prevention, Causal Judgements, and Counterfactuals" Supplemental: Henne "A counterfactual explanation for the action effect in causal judgement" and Henne "Experimental Metaphysics"	
Week 12 11.8	Sub/personal distinction	"The personal/subpersonal distinction" Zoe Drayson, "The uses and abuses of the personal/subpersonal distinction" Zoe Drayson, "Constructing Persons: On the Personal-Subpersonal Distinction" Mason Westfall	
Week 13 11.15	Class canceled	<i>Professor at Supercomputing Conference</i>	
Week 14 11.22	No class, Thanksgiving Break	-	Draft of Conference Paper due by 5pm via email.
Week 15 11.29	Minimal Cognition	"Uncovering cognitive similarities and differences, conservation and innovation" Levin et al.	

		"Oh having no head: Cognition throughout biological systems" Baluska and Levin, "The cognitive cell: Bacterial behavior reconsidered" Lyon, and "Of what is 'minimal cognition' the half-baked version" Lyon	
Week 16 12.6	Conference – No Readings		
December 13 th – papers due via email by 5pm			

Note, reading list is subject to change!

Attendance Policy

Please come unless you have a family, medical or religious observance that you've cleared with me as far in advance as possible. Please don't come if you're sick and fear spreading your illness to others. Please do make up the work if you miss class. I am not disposed to give incompletes except for truly unforeseen and catastrophic reasons.

Academic Guidance in the Event a Student is Quarantined/Isolated

If you must miss class at any point in time during the semester, please reach out to me via Purdue email so that we can communicate about how you can maintain your academic progress. For COVID-19 concerns, please see the [Fall 2022: What you need to know](#) guidance published July 27. If you find yourself too sick to progress in the course, notify your adviser and notify me via email or Brightspace. We will make arrangements based on your particular situation.

If I fall ill...

depending on the circumstances we will either: (a) have a zoom lecture where I can present the information required, or (b) I will find an suitable faculty member or graduate student to cover the course sections (especially on "game-days"), and finally (c) I reserve the ability to truncate sections of the course and adapt the syllabus if need be to reflect my absence.

Classroom Guidance Regarding Protect Purdue

Any student who has substantial reason to believe that another person is threatening the safety of others by not complying with Protect Purdue protocols is encouraged to report the behavior to and discuss the next steps with their instructor. Students also have the option of reporting the behavior to the [Office of the Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). See also [Purdue University Bill of Student Rights](#) and the Violent Behavior Policy under University Resources in Brightspace.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information is submitted the greater the opportunity for the university to investigate the concern. More details are available on our course Brightspace under University Policies.

Nondiscrimination Statement

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. A hyperlink to Purdue's full Nondiscrimination Policy Statement is included in our course Brightspace under University Policies. From your professor: *don't be mean to each other*, this is a team-based class and you'll be working with these folks for a long time, so treat each other with charity and respect.

Accessibility

Purdue University strives to make learning experiences accessible to all participants. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone at 765-494-1247.

Mental Health/Wellness Statement

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try [WellTrack](#). Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources, please contact or see the [Office of the Dean of Students](#). Call 765-494-1747. Hours of operation are M-F, 8 am- 5 pm.

If you find yourself struggling to find a healthy balance between academics, social life, stress, etc., sign up for free one-on-one virtual or in-person sessions with a [Purdue Wellness Coach at RecWell](#). Student coaches can help you navigate through barriers and challenges toward your goals throughout the semester. Sign up is free and can be done on BoilerConnect.

If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support,

services are available. For help, such individuals should contact [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office on the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours. The [CAPS website](#) also offers resources specific to situations such as COVID-19.

Basic Needs Security

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. There is no appointment needed and Student Support Services is available to serve students 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Considering the significant disruptions caused by the current global crisis as it relates to COVID-19, students may submit requests for emergency assistance from the [Critical Need Fund](#)

Emergency Preparation

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructors or TAs via email or phone. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis.