



**CAMOSUN COLLEGE**  
**School of Arts & Science**  
**Department of Humanities**

**PHIL-207-001AB**  
**Philosophy of Mind**  
**Fall 2019**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

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The course description is available on the web @ <http://camosun.ca/learn/calendar/current/web/phil.html>

ΩPlease note: This outline will not be kept indefinitely. It is recommended students keep this outline for their records, especially to assist in transfer credit to post-secondary institutions.

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**1. Instructor Information**

(a) Instructor	Megan Shelstad
(b) Office hours	Mondays and Wednesdays: 11:00 am - 12:15 pm
(c) Location	Young 312
(d) Phone 3951	Alternative: _____
(e) E-mail	shelstad@camosun.bc.ca
(f) Website	_____

**2. Intended Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course a student will be able to:

1. Identify the key issues being debated by contemporary philosophers of mind.
2. Assess the differences among the fundamental theories of the nature of consciousness.
3. Subject these theories to critical examination.
4. Write about and discuss the importance of this area of philosophical research activity to our understanding of the complexities of the human mind.

**3. Required Materials**

- (a) Texts: **Blackmore, Susan. 2012. *Consciousness: An Introduction*. OUP.**

**4. Course Content and Schedule**

Lectures: Mondays and Wednesdays 12:30 pm – 1:20 pm YOUNG 300

Seminar A: Mondays – 1:30 – 2:20 pm YOUNG 300

Seminar B: Wednesdays – 1:30 – 2:20pm YOUNG 300

## 5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

- (a) Assignments: 10% - Self-assessment Homework - see course outline  
(late or emailed homework NOT accepted, please submit while attending the relevant class, please type).
- (b) Tests: 40% - 2 tests at 20% each
- (c) Exams: 25% - Final exam, in the exam period
- (d) Other: 10% - Seminar attendance and participation  
5% - Seminar discussion leader  
10% - Presentation (last week of class)

## 6. Grading System

- Standard Grading System (GPA)
- Competency Based Grading System

## 7. Recommended Materials to Assist Students to Succeed Throughout the Course

Various videos and articles as listed on the reading schedule.  
See Susan Blackmore's website, <http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites>

## 8. College Supports, Services and Policies



### Immediate, Urgent, or Emergency Support

If you or someone you know requires immediate, urgent, or emergency support (e.g. illness, injury, thoughts of suicide, sexual assault, etc.), **SEEK HELP**. Resource contacts @ <http://camosun.ca/about/mental-health/emergency.html> or <http://camosun.ca/services/sexual-violence/get-support.html#urgent>

### College Services

Camosun offers a variety of health and academic support services, including counselling, dental, disability resource centre, help centre, learning skills, sexual violence support & education, library, and writing centre. For more information on each of these services, visit the **STUDENT SERVICES** link on the College website at <http://camosun.ca/>

### College Policies

Camosun strives to provide clear, transparent, and easily accessible policies that exemplify the college's commitment to life-changing learning. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of College policies. Policies are available on the College website at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/>. Education and academic policies include, but are not limited to, Academic Progress, Admission, Course Withdrawals, Standards for Awarding Credentials, Involuntary Health and Safety Leave of Absence, Prior Learning Assessment, Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal, Sexual Violence and Misconduct, Student Ancillary Fees, Student Appeals, Student Conduct, and Student Penalties and Fines.

A. GRADING SYSTEMS <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/index.html>

The following two grading systems are used at Camosun College:

#### 1. Standard Grading System (GPA)

Percentage	Grade	Description	Grade Point Equivalency
90-100	A+		9
85-89	A		8
80-84	A-		7
77-79	B+		6
73-76	B		5
70-72	B-		4
65-69	C+		3
60-64	C		2
50-59	D		1
0-49	F	Minimum level has not been achieved.	0

## 2. Competency Based Grading System (Non GPA)

This grading system is based on satisfactory acquisition of defined skills or successful completion of the course learning outcomes

Grade	Description
COM	The student has met the goals, criteria, or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.
DST	The student has met and exceeded, above and beyond expectation, the goals, criteria, or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.
NC	The student has not met the goals, criteria or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.

## B. Temporary Grades

Temporary grades are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/index.html> for information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

Temporary Grade	Description
I	<i>Incomplete:</i> A temporary grade assigned when the requirements of a course have not yet been completed due to hardship or extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.
IP	<i>In progress:</i> A temporary grade assigned for courses that are designed to have an anticipated enrollment that extends beyond one term. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course.
CW	<i>Compulsory Withdrawal:</i> A temporary grade assigned by a Dean when an instructor, after documenting the prescriptive strategies applied and consulting with peers, deems that a student is unsafe to self or others and must be removed from the lab, practicum, worksite, or field placement.

## **SEMINARS AND SELF-ASSESSMENT HOMEWORK**

### **SEMINAR LEADERSHIP, ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (15% of final grade)**

**Completing any assigned reading is essential preparation for seminar assignments as well as for self-assessment homework.**

The goal is engagement and discussion as well as increased familiarity with issues in philosophy of mind.

You also need to sign up (sheet available at the first class) to be a discussion leader for **one** seminar. There may be 2 spots for some seminars, but I definitely want at least one leader for each. If there are 2 of you, you will be working as a team in leading the class through that week's **practice and/or activity**. This is worth 5% of your grade. The **practices and activities** all come from the textbook.

I will take the first week's seminar (Sept. 9/11).

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### **Self-assessment homework (10%)**

Here is an edited paraphrase of Susan Blackmore's directions from her website about her intentions regarding the self-assessment questions and how to use them.

They are intended to help you revise your understanding of each chapter. Some questions invite you to record your own opinion on a critical issue. This can be fun to do, especially if you are ruthlessly honest and write down what you really think. You will probably find that your ideas and opinions change substantially as you work through the course and it can be fascinating to look back at what you once believed (I say this from experience, having rejected many of my own daft theories of consciousness over the years!) You might start out with your own theory of consciousness that you think solves all the problems, and then end up rejecting it as rubbish, or vice versa.

<http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites>

Read the relevant chapter(s) before Monday's class leaving yourself plenty of time to answer the self-assessment questions for the week. Use proper grammar, spelling and sentence-structure. Type and print out a hard copy and hand it in at the beginning of Monday's class. If you are emailing work to yourself to print on campus, give yourself enough time. **No late or emailed homework accepted.**

**\*\*\*At all times use the "PRINCIPLE of CHARITY."\*\*\***

There are 11 possibilities. You need to complete 10 for full marks (you get a "free" one).

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**A "Pecha Kucha" style presentation (10%) will be done at the end of term. More info later.**

## Phil 207-001 Reading Schedule (from the textbook)

Readings to be done before class; schedule subject to change if needed.

Self-Assessment Homework (using the textbook) usually will be due on Mondays at the beginning of class.

Late or emailed homework **NOT** accepted, please submit while attending the relevant class. Please type if possible.

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Remember to turn **OFF** your cell phone for class and put it away. Laptops, ipads, etc. may be used for note taking only. See "Classroom Technology Use." [Camosun.ca/learn/school/business/current-students/documents/ClassroomTechnologyUse.pdf](http://Camosun.ca/learn/school/business/current-students/documents/ClassroomTechnologyUse.pdf)

Missing classes: if you miss a class due to illness, etc., it is not necessary to notify me unless a test is missed. It is the student's responsibility to find out from another student what was covered. Check your reading schedule.

Policy on missed tests: make-up tests are permitted only in cases of illness/personal crisis. Documentation required.

Disruptive behaviour, such as carrying on conversations when the instructor or others are speaking, is a sign of disrespect and is not acceptable in class.

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**Week 1 Lecture:** Wednesday, Sept. 4: Introduction to the Mind-Body problem

\*\*\*NO Seminar\*\*\*

*Read the introduction (esp. "Putting in the practice" xv and p. 4) to prepare for seminar next week.*

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### **Week 2 Lectures: Problems in the Philosophy of Mind**

Monday, Sept. 9: Section 1.1 (What's the problem? p. 2 - 17)

Wednesday, Sept. 11: Section 1.1 cont'd.

***Seminar:** Practice: Am I conscious now? (p. 4)*

### **Homework assignment #1 (due Sept. 16)**

1. Describe the mind-body problem. Name some traditional solutions to it, including that of Descartes.
  2. Describe the "mysterious gap" in as many different ways as you can.
  3. Who described the 'hard problem' and what is it? Is this a "real" problem that needs solving?
  4. Why did behaviourism flourish and why did it ultimately fail?
  5. What does the term 'intentionality' mean?
  6. Are you a dualist or a monist? Why?
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### **Week 3 Lectures: The World**

Monday, Sept. 16: Section 1.2 (What is it like to be ...? p. 18 - 31)

Wednesday, Sept. 18: Section 2.4 (The theatre of the mind p. 50 - 66)

***Seminar:** Practice: What is it like being me now? (p. 21)*

### **Homework assignment #2 (due Sept. 23)**

1. Who asked 'What is it like to be a bat?'. And why?
2. What is it like to be a .... ? Finish the question in a variety of ways and consider how you would answer.
3. What is a quale? Give some examples.
4. Give 2 opposing answers to the question 'What does Mary learn when she comes out of her black and white room?'
5. What is the philosopher's zombie? List as many people as you can who believe that (a) a zombie could exist (b) a zombie could not exist. What do you think?

### **Week 4 Lectures: The World cont'd.**

Monday, Sept. 23: Section 2.6 (The grand illusion p. 82 - 100)

Wednesday, Sept. 25: Section 2.6 cont'd.

**Seminar:** Practice: *Where is this experience?* (p. 53) and *Where is this pain?* (p. 164)

### **Homework assignment #3 (due Sept. 30)**

1. Who coined the term 'Cartesian Theatre' (CT)? What is meant by it? What is wrong with it?
  2. Name three theories that avoid theatre imagery altogether.
  3. Explain, in your own words, Dennett's theory of multiple drafts.
  4. What is meant by the phrase 'grand illusion'?
  5. How might change blindness affect us in daily life?
  6. Why are magicians' tricks relevant to consciousness?
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### **Week 5 Lectures: The Self**

Monday, Sept. 30: Section 3.7 (Egos, bundles & multiple selves p. 102 - 116)

Wednesday, Oct. 2: Section 3.8 (Theories of Self p. 117 - 132)

**Seminar:** Practice: *Who is conscious now?* (p. 106) and *Am I the same me as a moment ago?* (p. 123)

### **Homework assignment #4 (due Oct. 7)**

1. Describe the difference between ego and bundle theories. Where did each get its name?
  2. What is the status of multiple personality disorder in psychiatry today?
  3. Describe a typical experiment for testing the two hemispheres of a split brain patient independently.
  4. How many selves are there in a split brain patient: 1, 2 or none? Describe at least one theory that gives each answer.
  5. Are you a bundle theorist or an ego theorist? How does this affect the way you live?
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### **Week 6 Lectures: The Self cont'd.**

Monday, Oct. 7: Section 3.8 cont'd. especially The Teletransporter

Wednesday, Oct. 9: Section 3.9 (Agency and free will p. 133 - 149)

**Seminar:** Practice: *Am I doing this?* (p. 134)

### **Homework assignment #5 (due Oct. 16)**

1. What did William James mean when he said that the thoughts themselves are the thinkers?
  2. In your own words explain Dennett's theory of the self.
  3. Do you feel as though you are, or have, a self? If so, how do you explain this feeling?
  4. What is the problem of free will?
  5. Explain Dennett's objection to Libet's experiment.
  6. According to Wegner, what causes the experience of will?
  7. Do you have free will?
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**\*\*\*Thanksgiving Day holiday – Monday, October 14 – college closed\*\*\***

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**Week 7 Lecture:** Wednesday, Oct. 16: **\*\*\*TEST 1\*\*\*(chapters 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9)**

**\*\*\*NO Seminar\*\*\***

### **Homework assignment #6 (due Oct. 21)**

1. What is meant by “the unity of consciousness”? Why is it a problem?
  2. Describe the binding problem(s).
  3. Explain Zeki’s theory of microconsciousnesses.
  4. How does Edelman and Tononi’s theory account for unity and diversity?
  5. What is synaesthesia, and how can it be tested?
  6. Do you think the unity of consciousness is an illusion?
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### **Week 8 Lectures: The Brain and Evolution**

Monday, Oct. 21: Section 4.11 (The unity of consciousness p.169 - 185)

Wednesday, Oct. 23: Section 5.13 (Evolution and consciousness p. 203 - 217)

***Seminar:** Practice: Is this experience unified? (p. 171) and Does this awareness have a function? (p. 213)*

### **Homework assignment #7 (due Oct. 28)**

1. What was the “argument from design” supposed to prove? Why does Blackmore think it's false?
  2. Describe some theories in which consciousness directs evolution. What is wrong with them?
  3. What is a selfish replicator?
  4. Describe two or three theories in which consciousness has no biological function.
  5. If you believe in the possibility of zombies, what is the function of consciousness?
  6. Do you personally believe that consciousness evolved by natural selection?
  7. What are memes? Compare two theories that make use of memes in understanding consciousness.
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### **Week 9 Lectures: Evolution cont'd.**

Monday, Oct. 28: Section 5.14 (The function of consciousness p. 218 - 233)

Wednesday, Oct. 30: Sections 5.13 and 5.14 cont'd.

***Seminar:** Activity: The Sentience Line (p. 219) and Practice: Is this a meme? (p.233)*

### **Homework assignment #8 (due Nov. 4)**

1. What does a frog see?
  2. How might you tell whether an animal (e.g. a cow, a fish on a hook, or a battery hen) is suffering? Can you be sure?
  3. Which animals can recognise themselves in a mirror? What does this tell us about self consciousness?
  4. List three or more skills which suggest that an animal has a theory of mind.
  5. Describe two experiments designed to find out whether an animal knows what another animal can see.
  6. Which species are capable of imitation? What implications does this have for consciousness?
  7. Do other species have language? Why is this relevant to consciousness?
  8. Which living things do you think are conscious, and why?
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### **Week 10 Lectures: Non-human Consciousness**

Monday, Nov. 4: Section 5.15 (Animal minds p. 234 - 250)

Wednesday, Nov. 6: Section 6.16 (Minds and machines p. 252 - 269)

***Seminar:** Practice: what is it like to be that animal? (p.236), Activity: Zoo choice*

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**\*\*\*Remembrance Day holiday – Monday, November 11 – college closed\*\*\***

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**Week 11 Lecture: Wednesday, Nov. 13: **\*\*\*TEST 2\*\*\* (chapters 11, 13, 14, 15, 16)****

**\*\*\*NO Seminar\*\*\***

### **Homework assignment #9 (due Nov. 18)**

1. List the main arguments against the possibility of conscious machines.
  2. What problems would you face in designing a test for whether a machine is conscious?
  3. In what ways is biology thought to be important for consciousness?
  4. What things do people claim machines could never do? What things do you think machines could never do?
  5. Describe the Chinese Room thought experiment. What is it supposed to show?
  6. How would you build a conscious machine? (assume you can have any components or apparatus you need.)
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### **Week 12 Lectures: Artificial Consciousness**

Monday, Nov. 18: Section 6.17 (Could a machine be conscious? p. 270 - 285)

Wednesday, Nov. 20: Section 6.18 (How to build a conscious machine p. 286 – 301)

***Seminar:** Practice: Is this machine conscious? (p. 278) and What is it that is conscious? (p. 293)*

### **Homework assignment #10 (due Nov. 25)**

1. Give an example of emergent intelligent action in a simple animal and a simple machine.
  2. People are generally bad at judging whether machines or other creatures have goals, desires or intentions. Give two or three examples that illustrate this.
  3. Compare Kurzweil's and Brooks's visions for the future of conscious machines.
  4. Give some examples of "Eureka moments". Why are they relevant to nonconscious processing?
  5. Describe some of the processes involved in creativity.
  6. In which ways have emotional responses to unconscious stimuli been demonstrated?
  7. What is intuition? are you an intuitive person?
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### **Week 13 Lectures: Borderlands**

Monday, Nov. 25: Section 7.19 (Unconscious processing) p. 302 - 319, "The concept of flow"

Wednesday, Nov. 27: Section 7.20 (Reality and imagination p. 320 - 336)

***Seminar:** Practice: Was this decision conscious? (p. 305) and Is this my normal state of consciousness? (p. 358)*

### **Homework assignment #11 (due Dec. 2)**

1. What factors are involved in reality monitoring?
  2. What are the differences between perceptions, imagery, hallucinations, and pseudo-hallucinations?
  3. Describe some of the ways in which hallucinations can be induced.
  4. Describe some of the drugs used by shamans and the worlds they claim to see.
  5. What is sleep paralysis? What are its most common features and why is it so frightening?
  6. What experiences have you had that hover on the boundary (if there is a boundary) between reality and imagination. Do any of these help you in thinking about the nature of consciousness?
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### **Week 14 Lectures: PECHA KUCHA**

Monday, Dec. 2: **Seminar A** (optional attendance for Seminar B)

Wednesday, Dec. 4: **Seminar B** (optional attendance for Seminar A)

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**\*\*\*FINAL TEST IN EXAM PERIOD\*\*\***

Make work schedules and travel plans accordingly; exams are part of the term.