



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

**PHIL-207-D01**  
**Philosophy of Mind**  
**Fall 2020**

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

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This session will be delivered online in an asynchronous format using the D2L platform.

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

Please 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**

<b>(a) Instructor</b>	Elena Holmgren, BA Hon (Uvic), MA (Uvic), PhD (UBC - in progress)
<b>(b) Office hours</b>	Virtual meetings available by appointment
<b>(c) Location</b>	Young Bdg, Room 312 (when in-person classes resume)
<b>(d) Phone</b>	please contact by email
<b>(e) E-mail</b>	HolmgrenE@camosun.bc.ca
<b>(f) Website</b>	D2L

### **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. *Consciousness: An Introduction*. 3rd Ed. Routledge, 2018.

### **4. Course Content and Schedule**

## **Instruction Method:**

Pre-recorded lectures will be posted every Tuesday by 1 pm on the D2L course site. The course also includes a discussion component. Every Wednesday at 1 pm, a new discussion question is posted on the course site (under "Discussions"). Discussion topics close after one week. There will also be 7 homework assignments, of which you must complete 5. The first one, which will be assigned in week 2, is mandatory. In subsequent weeks, you can write on any 4 other topics that interest you out of the 7 provided. Finally, there will be 3 take-home exams. You will have 48 hours to complete and submit the exams to D2L. See the late policy below.

## **Expectations for Student Behaviour:**

In order to be successful in this class, you will need to log in to the course D2L website at least three times per week in order to access course materials and to participate actively in the class. Students are expected to view all pre-recorded lectures, develop class and study notes, as well as read all assigned materials *before* contributing to the week's discussion thread on the course forum and before completing any homework assignments.

On the discussion forum, students are expected to post one response to that week's question, as well as reply to two other students' posts. For full marks, students must contribute to the discussion forum in this way for ten weeks. Thus, they must make 10 replies to the weekly discussion prompt on 10 separate weeks that they choose, as well as post 20 replies to other students, 2 on each separate week chosen.

Students are expected to engage respectfully with all opposing views presented in class discussions. The goals are: to develop critical thinking and debate skills by engaging with views that we may initially find to be deeply counterintuitive, to develop stronger argumentative writing skills, and to learn to defend and to provide support for our respective views. See below and consult the discussion assignment rubric on the course website for more details.

Email me any time if you require any clarification at all, or if you just wish to chat about philosophy of mind!

## **Key Topics:**

In this course, we will explore the strengths and limits of some of the dominant philosophical theories of consciousness today. Some questions we will consider are:

- What is consciousness, and how do we go about defining it?
- How does consciousness fit in the material world?

- How do we reconcile our first-person, subjective accounts of our conscious experience with third-person, objective, scientific accounts of consciousness?
- What are the prospects of a scientific explanation of consciousness? Can all the properties of the mind be explained in terms of properties of the brain?
- What are the boundaries of consciousness? Is consciousness solely “in the head?” Does it extend out into the body? Or does it extend even further, into our natural, social and cultural environments?
- What is the self? Is it one, or many? Is it a center of perspective, or a fictional construct?
- How do the myriad distributed processes of the brain give rise to the unity of conscious experience?
- Is consciousness just a subtle, elaborate, all-pervasive illusion?

Aside from introducing you to the various problems in consciousness research today, my larger goal in this course is to give you a sense of what philosophy is like as an activity. My hope is that this course will get you started doing philosophy for yourselves, so that you can subject your own (and others’) most mundane experience to attentive scrutiny and start to see the obvious and the taken-for-granted features of that experience as a source of wonder and puzzlement.

### **Tentative Schedule:**

A tentative schedule, listing the particular topics to be covered and the dates for exams, is provided below. The assigned readings are presented after each bullet point, and the dates that the lectures will be posted on D2L are included in brackets after the week number. For guidance on strategies for reading philosophy, see:

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>

Every effort is made to ensure that we stick to the schedule; however, it may require amendment as the course progresses. If that occurs, the instructor will inform students as soon as is practically possible, usually by email. Please note that students are responsible for keeping track of any such changes by regularly checking their emails and the news posted on the course site.

#### **Week 1 (Sept 8): Introduction to Philosophy of Mind; The Problem of Consciousness**

- Blackmore: *Putting in the Practice* [p. 4-5]
- Blackmore: *Chapter 1*

#### **Week 2 (Sept 15): The Problem of Consciousness cont’d; The Cogito**

- Descartes: *Meditations I & II* [online]

**Homework Assignment #1 (Due Friday Sept. 18):** Practice 1.1, p. 13 of Blackmore text

**Week 3 (Sept 22): Problems With the Cogito; Behaviourism; Type-Identity Theory**

- Ryle: *Descartes' Myth* [online]
- Smart: *Sensations and Brain Processes* [online]

**Week 4 (Sept 29): What Consciousness Does and What Consciousness Is Like**

- Putnam: *The Nature of Mental States* [online - p.214-220]
- Blackmore: *Chapter 2*

**Week 5 (Oct 6): The Qualia Wars**

- Nagel: *What Is It Like to Be a Bat?* [online]
- Churchland: *The Rediscovery of Light* [online]

**Week 6 (Oct 13): Intentionality and the Hard Problem**

**Take-Home Test 1 Assigned Wednesday, Oct. 14**

- Zahavi: *Intentionality and Phenomenality: A Phenomenological Take on the Hard Problem* [online]

**Take-Home Test 1 Due Friday, Oct. 16**

**Week 7 (Oct 20): The Grand Illusion; The Boundaries of Consciousness**

- Blackmore: *Chapter 3*
- Clark, Chalmers: *The Extended Mind* [online]

**Week 8 (Oct 27): The Brain; The Theater of the Mind**

- Blackmore: *Chapter 4*
- Blackmore: *Chapter 5* (up to p.117)

**Week 9 (Nov 3): The Theater of the Mind Cont'd; The Unity of Consciousness**

- Blackmore: *Chapter 5* (117-end)
- Blackmore: *Chapter 6*

**Week 10 (Nov 10): Eliminative Materialism**

- Churchland: *Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes* [online]
- Churchland: *The Hornswoggle Problem* [online]

**Week 11 (Nov 17): Evolutionary Explanations of Consciousness**

**Take-Home Text 2 Assigned Wednesday, Nov. 18**

- Blackmore: *Chapter 10* [p.249-top of 256]
- Blackmore: *Chapter 11*

**Take-Home Test 2 Due Friday, Nov. 20**

**Week 12 (Nov 24): Conscious Machines**

- Blackmore: *Chapter 12*

### **Week 13 (Dec 1): First-Person Methods**

- Zahavi and Gallagher: excerpt from *The Phenomenological Mind* [online]

### **Week 14 (Dec 8): Theories of Self**

- Blackmore: *Chapter 16*
- Dennett: "The Reality of Selves," Chapter from *Consciousness Explained* [online]

**Take-Home Final Exam Assigned: Monday, Dec. 14**

**Take-Home Final Exam Due: Wednesday, Dec. 16**

## **5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)**

### **(a) Three Take-Home Exams (70% of total course marks):**

The first two exams are worth 20% each. The final exam is worth 30%.

### **(b) Discussion Forum Posts (20% of total course marks):**

10 Discussion Posts (1% each) - 10% total  
20 Replies to Peer Posts (.5% each) - 10% total

### **(c) Homework (10% of total course marks):**

5 homework assignments on 5 separate weeks (2% each) - 10% total

### **Assignment Formatting:**

- Submit all completed assignments in the assignment Drop Box on the D2L course site.
- All assignments must conform to their respective assignment rubrics and to the "Guidelines for Philosophical Writing" document, both of which will be provided on the D2L site.
- In-text citations for quotes, paraphrasing, and references must be consistent with either MLA or APA standards. Students are responsible for ensuring that all assignments (including the homework and discussion posts) include proper citations and formatting. You can choose either APA or MLA citation style, but whichever you choose, follow it consistently. See the following link for guidance on citation styles: <https://camosun.libguides.com/cite>
- You must submit your own work. Unless otherwise specified, no collaborating is permitted on any of the assignments. Any collaborated work will be considered in violation of the Student Conduct Policy and will receive a grade of 0.

<http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.5.pdf>

- You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the college's policy on plagiarism; ignorance is no excuse. Any assignment that violates this policy will receive a grade of 0 and will be reported to the department chair:  
<http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.5.1.pdf>

### **Late Assignments:**

Students are allowed an automatic extension of a maximum of 7 days. No justification or documentation is required in order to get these 7 extension days. Students can use this extension **only** on the take-home exams (i.e. there is no extension for any of the homework assignments, or for the discussion forum posts). In order to extend the deadline for any of the take-home tests, write "claiming # extension days for this assignment" in the top left-hand corner of the assignment above your name. Students can claim these 7 extension days in any combination: e.g., they can use them all for one assignment, or use portions thereof to extend the deadline for different assignments. **Note:** if you're trying to extend the deadline for an assignment by a portion of a day (e.g. one hour), that will count as a full extension day. **Also note:** all assignments must be submitted by the end of the final exam period, Dec. 22. No extension is allowed past this date.

Any assignments that are handed in late (i.e. after all 7 of the extension days are used) will lose 10% per 24 hours. Assignments that are submitted more than 2 days (48 hours) late will receive a grade of 0.

### **6. Grading System**

Standard Grading System (GPA)

Competency Based Grading System

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

Additional materials (e.g. videos, hand-outs, assignment rubrics, exam review sheets) will be posted on the D2L course site. Check the news section of the site regularly for information on additional recommended materials.

### **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.