

Introduction to Philosophy of Mind and Animal Cognition
Sample Syllabus

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Course Description

In this course, we will discuss key topics in the philosophy of mind and animal cognition. Traditionally, the philosophy of mind concerns the investigation of the nature of consciousness, intentionality, and the relation between mental states and the physical world. We will discuss the main arguments and positions on these traditional topics. Then, we extend these discussions to the case of non-human animals and ask whether they also have consciousness and intentionality. We will investigate both the philosophical and empirical literature on non-human animal minds. We also compare humans and non-human animals in terms of communication abilities, rationality, and social behavior.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should have a broad knowledge of the central debates in philosophy of mind and animal cognition. More specifically, they should be able to identify and analyze the main views and arguments present in that literature. Students should also be able to evaluate the merits and problems of those views and arguments. Students should present these evaluations both in oral and written form. Finally, students should be able to engage in constructive, respectful debates and provide feedback to each other's work.

Course Assessment I (2nd or 3rd-year undergraduate course)

6 Discussion questions: Once a week, students provide a written question about one of the readings of the week and a brief explanation of why this question is relevant and open to discussion. The instructor will provide precise guidelines in class. – 18%

Midterm and Final Exam: In-class exams will take 90 minutes of class. Each exam consists of 2 essay questions. Versions of the questions will be provided beforehand for study purposes. – 60% total

Report: students have to write a 1000 words report. The report summarizes and compares the views and arguments present in the two readings of a chosen topic. The instructor will provide precise guidelines in class. – 22% total

Course Assessment II (4th-year undergraduate course)

11 Discussion questions: Once a week, students provide a written question about one of the readings of the week and a brief explanation of why this question is relevant and open to discussion. The instructor will provide precise guidelines in class. – 33%

Research Question for Paper: Students provide a 500 description of the research topic they want to conduct in the final paper. This description should motivate their research problem, which should be summarized as a single question. - 10%

Paper Outline: Students provide an outline for the final paper and discuss it with the instructor. The outline has to contain the structure of the paper (the main idea to be advanced in each section), the main thesis of the paper, and basic bibliography – 27%

Paper: students write a 5000-6000 words paper on one of the topics of the course. The instructor will provide specific guidelines for the paper. Students have to submit a hard copy to the instructor on the due date. – 30%

Source Books:

Andrews, K. (2014). *The animal mind: An introduction to the philosophy of animal cognition*. Routledge.

Andrews, K., & Beck, J. (Eds.). (2017). *The Routledge handbook of philosophy of animal minds*. Taylor & Francis.

Chalmers, D. J. (1996). *The conscious mind: In search of a fundamental theory*. Oxford university press.

Chalmers, D. J. (2002). *Philosophy of mind: Classical and contemporary readings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dennett, D. C. (1993). *Consciousness explained*. Penguin uk.

Hurley, S. E., & Nudds, M. E. (2006). *Rational animals?* Oxford University Press.

Kim, J. (2018). *Philosophy of mind*. Routledge.

Papineau, D. 2002. *Thinking about Consciousness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stegmann, U. (Ed.). (2013). *Animal communication theory: information and influence*. Cambridge University Press.

Tomasello, M. (2010). *Origins of human communication*. MIT press.

Topics and Readings

Topic 1 – Introduction to Mental States and the Mind-Body Problem

Kim, J. Philosophy of Mind Chapter 1 and 2

Descartes, R. (2013). *René Descartes: Meditations on first philosophy: With selections from the objections and replies*. Cambridge University Press.

Anthony, Louise (2009). The mental and the physical. In Robin Le Poidevin (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Metaphysics*. Routledge. 555-567.

Bennett, Karen (2007). Mental Causation. *Philosophy Compass* 2 (2):316-337

Topic 2 – Metaphysical Theories of Consciousness

Carnap, R., Psychology in Physical Language (*excerpts*) In Chalmers Classic Readings

Putnam, H. (1968). Brains and behaviour. *Analytical Philosophy*, 11.

Smart, J. J. (1959). Sensations and brain processes. *The Philosophical Review*, 68(2), 141-156.

Block, N. J. (1982). Functionalism. In *Studies in Logic and the Foundations of Mathematics* (Vol. 104, pp. 519-539). Elsevier.

Block, Troubles with Functionalism. In Chalmers Classic Readings

Churchland, Paul. Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes. In Chalmers Classic Readings

Chalmers The conscious mind chapter 4

Topic 3 – Can we explain human consciousness?

Jackson, F. (1986). What Mary didn't know. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 83(5), 291-295.

Lewis, D. What Experience Teaches (in Lewis, *Papers in Metaphysics and Epistemology*, Cambridge, 1999; in Lycan)

Nagel, T. What Is It Like to Be a Bat?

Irvine, Elizabeth (2014). Explaining What? *Topoi*:1-12

Dennett Consciousness explained Part III

Papineau, D. 2002. *Thinking about Consciousness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 5

Topic 4 – Do non-Human Animals have consciousness?

Andrews, K. The Animal Mind Chapter 3

Key, B. (2015). Fish do not feel pain and its implications for understanding phenomenal consciousness. *Biology & philosophy*, 30(2), 149-165.

Schilhab, T. S. (2004). What mirror self-recognition in nonhumans can tell us about aspects of self. *Biology and Philosophy*, 19(1), 111-126.

Saidel, E. (2016). Through the looking glass, and what we (don't) find there. *Biology & Philosophy*, 31(3), 335-352.

Prinz, J. (2017). Attention, Working Memory, and Animal Consciousness. In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Animal Minds* (pp. 185-195). Routledge.

Topic 5 – Intentionality and Mental Content

Rosenthal, D. Explaining Consciousness, In Chalmers Classic Readings

Von Eckardt, Barbara (2012). The representational theory of mind. In Keith Frankish & William Ramsey (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Cognitive Science*. Cambridge University Press

Fodor, J. Propositional Attitudes, In Chalmers Classic Readings

Millikan, Ruth G. (2000). Naturalizing intentionality. In Bernard Elevantch (ed.), *The Proceedings of the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy*. Philosophy Documentation Center 83-90.

Dennett, D. True Believers: The Intentional Strategy and Why It Works, In Chalmers Classic Readings

Putnam, H. The Meaning of "Meaning", In Chalmers Classic Readings

Topic 6 – Can non-human animals think?

Andrews, K. The Animal Mind Chapter 4

Call, J. (2006). Descartes' two errors: Reason and reflection in the great apes.

Camp, E., & Shupe, E. (2017). Instrumental Reasoning in Nonhuman Animals 1. In *The Routledge handbook of philosophy of animal minds* (pp. 100-108). Routledge.

Allen, C. (2006). Transitive inference in animals: Reasoning or conditioned associations. *Rational animals*, 175-185.

Beck, J. (2017). Do nonhuman animals have a language of thought?. In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Animal Minds* (pp. 46-55). Routledge.

Bermúdez, J. L. (2017). Can nonlinguistic animals think about thinking?. In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Animal Minds* (pp. 119-130). Routledge.

Topic 7 – Mindreading: Human and non-human animals

Andrews, K. Animal Mind Chapter 6

Tomasello, M., & Call, J. (2006). *Do chimpanzees know what others see--or only what they are looking at?*. In Hurley and Nudds Rational Animals

Povinelli, D. J., & Vonk, J. (2004). We don't need a microscope to explore the chimpanzee's mind. *Mind & Language*, 19(1), 1-28.

Lurz, R. W., & Krachun, C. (2011). How could we know whether nonhuman primates understand others' internal goals and intentions? Solving Povinelli's problem. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 2(3), 449.

Topic 8 – Animal Language and Communication

Andrews Animal Mind Chapter 5

Bar-On, D., & Moore, R. (2017). Pragmatic interpretation and signaler-receiver asymmetries in animal communication. In Andrews and Beck Handbook

Stegmann The content of animal signals In Andrews and Beck Handbook

Brown, R. L. (2017). What they are, and why they matter. In Andrews and Beck Handbook

Horsick, C., & Cocroft, R. B. (2013). Animal signals: always influence, sometimes information. In Stegmann *Animal Communication Theory*

Tomasello Origins of Human Communication Chapters 1-3