

Phil 315: Philosophy of Mind  
Spring 2021

Meeting Time: TTH 4-5:15  
Mode of Instruction: Synchronous online

Instructor: Dr. Zoe Jenkin  
Email: zoejenkin@wustl.edu  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4, by appointment via Canvas (see below for sign-up instructions)

Assistant Instructor: Benjamin Storer  
Email: bdstorer@wustl.edu  
Office Hours: TBA

**Course Description:** What is a mind and how does it work? This course confronts the nature of the mind from philosophical and psychological perspectives. In unit 1, we will consider the relationship between the mind and the body. Are they both physical entities, or is the mind a fundamentally different kind of thing? In unit 2, we will study the nature of consciousness in humans and other animals. In unit 3, we will consider how much of our knowledge is innate, and how much do we learn from experience. In unit 4, we will focus on how human thought works. Do we think in language? If so, how does it facilitate and constrain our thought? In unit 5, we will study perception, including its relationship to belief and imagination. Readings for the course will include both historical texts and contemporary work.

**Format:** We will meet synchronously on Zoom twice a week for lecture and discussion. Course materials, announcements, Zoom links, grading rubrics, discussion board, and office hours scheduling can all be found on the Canvas site.

**Course Goals:**

- You'll develop a working knowledge of some of the major topics in philosophy of mind.
- You'll become familiar with some experimental methodologies in psychology.
- You'll hone your abilities to understand and explain theories, arguments, and empirical results.
- You'll learn to use empirical data to critically assess philosophical theories.
- You'll learn to construct arguments that incorporate both empirical and theoretical considerations.
- You'll develop your own views on the nature of the mind.

**Requirements:**

*Readings:* There is a reading assignment for each class meeting. Readings include both philosophy and psychology articles, as well as both historical and contemporary texts. The lectures will presuppose familiarity with the assigned reading, so be sure to complete the assigned reading in advance of each lecture. Most of the readings are fun and captivating, but they can also be argumentatively tricky. I suggest reading each article twice, and taking notes on the most important considerations each author offers in support of their view.

*Attendance:* Attendance is mandatory. You are required to attend each meeting synchronously, unless in case of illness or another legitimate excuse. Any unexcused absences will detract from your attendance and participation grade. If you miss class, please let me know as soon as possible (in advance if it is a pre-scheduled absence) and I can provide you with a recording of the course meeting.

*Participation:* Philosophy lives in discussion, so this will not be solely a lecture course. We will have regular question and answer periods as well as group work during our meetings. You should aim to make at least one contribution to class per week, either via a question or group work. Your participation will factor into your attendance and participation grade. If you do not feel comfortable asking questions in lecture, you have two alternatives: 1) type your question/comment in the chat, or 2) after class, email your question/comment to Ben (bdstorer@wustl.edu).

*Discussion Board:* We will use the Canvas discussion board to supplement discussion. We will use the Canvas discussion board to supplement discussion. Each week there will be a topic posted on **Tuesday evening**. These topics will typically be fun and easy to respond to, if you've been following along in class. You are required to contribute one comment per week, by the following **Monday at midnight**. Your post can be as short as a sentence or as long as a paragraph. These will be graded as submitted/not-submitted.

*Papers:* There will be three papers for the course. Paper assignments will be distributed two-weeks in advance of the due date. The first two papers will be each be 1,000 words. This short length is to help cultivate the skills of clarity and concision. For the third paper, you will have two options: 1) revising and expanding your ideas from paper 1 or 2 into a 2,000 word paper, or 2) a new 1,000 word paper. You'll also submit a cover letter with each paper, including an abstract and reflections on your work. There will be opportunities for peer-review before each paper.

## **Grading:**

Attendance and participation: 10%

Discussion Board: 10%

Paper 1: 25%

Paper 2: 25%

Paper 3: 30%

## **Course Policies:**

Academic Integrity: The WashU Academic Integrity Policy can be found at <https://wustl.edu/about/compliance-policies/academic-policies/undergraduate-student-academic-integrity-policy/>. Please read it in full. Students who violate the academic integrity policy will receive an F on any plagiarized work and risk failing the course.

Collaboration: While all work submitted should be your own, you should feel free to discuss ideas with your classmates, read each other's paper drafts, and offer feedback. Some of the best

philosophy happens this way. If you use an idea that originates with a classmate, you can cite them in your paper.

Late Papers: For each day a paper is late, it will lose 1/3 of a grade (e.g. from A- to B+). After 10 days I will not accept late papers.

Extensions: Extensions will be granted for good reasons. Good reasons include illness, family issues, multiple simultaneous deadlines for other courses, and job interviews. If you ask for an extension in advance (i.e. 2-3 days before the deadline), I will typically be willing to grant it. In any event, please email or talk to me rather than just turning in the paper late.

Email: You are welcome to email me with questions about the course, but I won't discuss substantive philosophical issues over email. For such discussions, set up a time to meet in office hours.

Prof. Jenkin's Office Hours: Office hours are **Tuesdays from 2-4**, by appointment. Please make your appointment before **9 pm on Monday night** (I may make other appointments for times that are still unreserved on Tuesday morning). To make an appointment, go to Canvas → calendar → find appointments → select a timeslot → reserve. If you are not free during regular office hours time, you can email me to set up an alternate time.

Zoom Etiquette:

- 1) Mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
- 2) Leave your camera on whenever possible. This helps everyone stay engaged, and improves discussion. It is fine to turn your camera off occasionally for a quick stretch break or snack, if you'd like privacy.
- 3) Limit distractions during class by turning off notifications on your computer and phone, just as you would during an in-person class.
- 4) Use the "raise hand" function in the participants tab to raise your hand to ask a question or make a comment. I will pause at dedicated points during lecture to answer questions, but it is fine to raise your hand any time.

**Texts:**

All of the readings will be available on Canvas.

**Schedule:**

*Tues., Jan. 26*                      Introduction

**Unit 1: The Mental and the Physical**

*Thurs., Jan. 28*                      Descartes, Meditation II

Tues., Feb. 2	Descartes, Meditation VI
Thurs., Feb. 4	Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, "Correspondence with Descartes"
Tues., Feb. 9	Berkeley, <i>Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous</i> , Dialogue 1 <b>Paper 1 Assignment Distributed</b>
Thurs., Feb. 11	Skinner, "Why I am not a cognitive psychologist"
Tues., Feb. 16	Chomsky, "A Review of B. F. Skinner's Verbal Behavior," Sections 1-4 and 11

## Unit 2: Consciousness

Thurs., Feb. 18	No reading- Writing Workshop Day <b>Paper 1 Draft Due</b>
Tues., Feb. 23	Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes" <b>Paper 1 Due</b>
Thurs., Feb. 25	Turing, "Computing Machinery and Intelligence"
Tues., Mar. 2	<b>NO CLASS – WashU Wellness Day</b>
Thurs., Mar. 4	Nagel, "What is it Like to be a Bat?"
Tues., Mar. 9	Godfrey-Smith, <i>Other Minds</i> , ch. 4, "From White Noise to Consciousness"

## Unit 3: Empiricism and Nativism

Thurs., Mar. 11	Hume, <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i> , part I.1 section 1
Tues., Mar. 16	Carey, <i>The Origin of Concepts</i> , ch. 2, "The Initial Representational Repertoire," 27, 40-46 and 55-65 <b>Paper 2 Assignment Distributed</b>
Thurs., Mar. 18	<b>NO CLASS – Philosophy/PNP Study Day</b>
Tues., Mar. 23	Prinz, "The Return of Concept Empiricism"
Thurs., Mar. 25	Pinker, <i>The Blank Slate</i> , Ch. 1, "The Official Theory,"

## Unit 4: Thought

Tues., Mar. 30	Fodor, <i>The Language of Thought</i> , Introduction: "Two Kinds of Reductionism," 1-19 <b>Paper 2 Due</b>
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- Thurs., Apr. 1* Fodor, *The Language of Thought*, ch. 1, “First Approximations,” 27-38
- Tues., Apr. 6* Fodor, *The Language of Thought*, ch. 2, “Private Languages, Public Languages,” 55-64
- Thurs., Apr. 8* Fodor, *The Language of Thought*, ch. 3, “The Structure of the Internal Code: Some Psychological Evidence,” 174-184
- Tues., Apr. 13* Cowie, *What’s Within?* ch. 4, “The Case Against Empiricism,” section 4.1

### Unit 5: Perception and Imagination

- Thurs., Apr. 15* Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery*, ch. 1, “Observation”
- Tues., Apr. 20* Pylyshyn, “Is Vision Continuous with Cognition?” sections 1-3  
**Paper 3 Assignment Distributed**
- Thurs., Apr. 22* Siegel and Byrne, “Rich or Thin?”
- Tues., Apr. 27* Wilson, “The Sommeliers of Everything”
- Thurs. Apr. 29* Gendler, “The Puzzle of Imaginative Resistance”
- Tues. May 4* No reading  
**Paper 3 Due**

### University-Wide Policies

#### COVID-19

Any Danforth Campus student who is **currently diagnosed with COVID-19, is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or has had direct contact with a person with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis must remain home and isolate themselves from others.** Students who have symptoms and/or do not pass the screening protocol described below must call the Habif Health and Wellness Center at 314-935-6666 for additional instructions.

#### Statement on Military Service Leave

Washington University recognizes that students serving in the U.S. Armed Forces and their family members may encounter situations where military service forces them to withdraw from a course of study, sometimes with little notice. Students may contact the Office of Military and Veteran Services at (314) 935-2609 or [veterans@wustl.edu](mailto:veterans@wustl.edu) and their academic dean for guidance and assistance. See: <https://veterans.wustl.edu/policies/policy-for-military-students/>.

#### Preferred Names and Gender Inclusive Pronouns

In order to affirm each person’s gender identity and lived experiences, it is important that we ask and check in with others about pronouns. This simple effort can make a profound difference in a person’s experience of safety, respect, and support. See: <https://registrar.wustl.edu/student-records/ssn-name-changes/preferred-name/>

### Reporting Sexual Assault

If a student discusses or discloses an instance of sexual assault, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if a faculty member otherwise observes or becomes aware of such an allegation, they will keep the information as private as possible, but as a faculty member of Washington University, they are required to immediately report it to the Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University's Title IX Director, at (314) 935-3118, [jwkennedy@wustl.edu](mailto:jwkennedy@wustl.edu). Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards or by contacting WUPD at (314) 935-5555. Students who wish to speak with a confidential resource may wish to reach out to the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) at 935-8761 or by visiting the fourth floor of Seigle Hall.

### Accommodations for Sexual Assault

The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations (e.g., a no-contact order, course changes) to students who are victims of relationship or sexual violence, regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. If you a student needs to request such accommodations, please have them contact the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) at [rsvpcenter@wustl.edu](mailto:rsvpcenter@wustl.edu) or (314) 935-3445 to schedule an appointment with an RSVP confidential and licensed counselor. Information shared with counselors is confidential. However, requests for accommodations will be coordinated with the appropriate University administrators and faculty.

### Accommodations for Disabled Students

Washington University in St. Louis supports the rights of enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity and, in compliance with federal, state, and local requirements, is committed to reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities. Disabled students for whom accommodations may be necessary must be registered with, and provide their instructors official notification through, WUSTL's **Disability Resources** (<https://students.wustl.edu/disability-resources/>). Once established, responsibility for disability-related accommodations and access is shared by DR, faculty, and the student. Please contact Disability Resources at 314.935.5970 or [disabilityresources@wustl.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@wustl.edu).

### Emergency Preparedness

Before an emergency, familiarize yourself with the building(s) that you frequent. Know the layout, including exit locations, stairwells and the Emergency Assembly Point (EAP). Review the "Quick Guide for Emergencies" that is found near the door in many classrooms for specific emergency information and instructions. For additional Information and EAP maps, visit [emergency.wustl.edu](http://emergency.wustl.edu). To ensure that you receive emergency notifications, make sure your information and cell phone number is updated in SIS, and/or download. The WUSTL app and enable notifications.

To report an emergency:

Danforth Campus: (314) 935-5555

School of Medicine Campus: (314) 362-4357 North/West/South and Off Campus: 911 then (314) 935-5555

### **Resources:**

#### Disability Resources

At Washington University we strive to make the academic experience accessible and inclusive. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact Disability Resources at 314.935.5970, [disabilityresources@wustl.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@wustl.edu), or visit our website for information about requesting academic accommodations. See: <https://students.wustl.edu/disability-resources/>.

### The Writing Center

The Writing Center, located in Olin Library, offers free one-on-one writing tutorials to WashU students, as well as workshops designed to help students become better writers. The Writing Center staff can assist by providing feedback on the strength of an argument, clarity, and organization. Contact them at 935-4981 or [writing@wustl.edu](mailto:writing@wustl.edu).

### The Learning Center

The Learning Center works collaboratively with University partners to provide undergraduate students key resources, like academic peer mentoring, to enhance their academic progress. Contact them at [learningcenter.wustl.edu](http://learningcenter.wustl.edu) to find out what support they may offer for your classes.

### Mental Health Services

Mental Health Services' professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect a student's academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends and family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. For more information, visit: [www.students.wustl.edu/mental-health-services/](http://www.students.wustl.edu/mental-health-services/).

### Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP)

The Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) offers support for those who have experienced sexual violence, sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking. RSVP can help those who are not sure what steps they wish to take to respond to their experiences. They offer confidential support and can help arrange for necessary classroom accommodations. To get help, contact the RSVP Center at 935-3445 or [rsvpcenter@wustl.edu](mailto:rsvpcenter@wustl.edu). Their office is located in Seigle Hall, Suite 435.

### Bias Report and Support System (BRSS)

The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff, and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice, or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University's Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. To report an instance of bias, visit [www.brss.wustl.edu](http://www.brss.wustl.edu).

### WashU Cares

WashU Cares, within the Health and Wellness Unit, provides resources to all students on the Danforth Campus who may be having a hard time. WashU Cares is committed to helping create a culture of caring. Through proactive, collaborative, and systemic approaches, they work with students to identify interventions, resources, and supports that allow them to be successful. If there is a concern about the physical or mental well-being of a student, please file a report on their website. See: <https://washucares.wustl.edu/>.

### Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI)

The Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) supports and advocates for undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students from underrepresented and/or marginalized populations, collaborates with campus and community partners, and promotes dialogue and social change to cultivate and foster a supportive campus climate for students of all backgrounds, cultures, and identities. See: <https://diversityinclusion.wustl.edu/>