PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

New York University
SUMMER 2015, Session 1 (5/26/15 – 7/2/15)

Instructor: Andrew Y. Lee (ayl305@nyu.edu)
Time: MWTR 6pm-7:35pm
Location: BOBST 837
Office Hours: After class or by appointment

Course Description:
This course will examine central issues in the philosophy of mind, with a particular focus on the mind-body problem. Some of the questions examined will include: What is the concept of “consciousness” central to philosophical debates? What is the relationship between the mind and the brain? Can facts about subjective experience be explained in terms of physical facts? What are the theoretical commitments of various theories of consciousness? Readings will be comprised of contemporary texts and articles.

Assignments and Grading:
Attendance and Participation: 20%
You are expected to attend every class and participate in class discussions.

Short Response Papers: 40%
You are expected to submit a total of ten short response papers throughout the course. The response papers should be structured as follows. First, give a summary of an argument from the readings. Second, discuss either an objection you have to the argument, a point you think is unclear in the argument, or reasons you find the argument persuasive. Each response paper should be about 2-3 paragraphs long. Aim to be clear, explicit, and precise, rather than original or deep.

Response papers are due approximately every other class session, and can respond to any of the readings since after the last response paper was due (e.g., the short response paper due on 6/2 can respond to either to Block’s “Concepts of Consciousness” or Kim’s Philosophy of Mind: Chapter 2). Responses should be sent via e-mail to the instructor before 5pm on the day that they are due (e.g., the first response paper is due at 5pm on 5/28).

Final Paper: 40%
You are expected to write a 5-6 page final paper at the end of the term, due by 12pm on July 5th. The final paper should explicate an argument from the readings and critically assess that argument. Like the response papers, you should aim to make the final paper clear, explicit, and precise, rather than original or deep. You are encouraged to discuss your paper with the instructor beforehand, and are free to send in a draft of the paper before submitting the final version. The link below is a good resource for learning how to write a good philosopher paper:

http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html

**Texts Required:**


**Reading Schedule:**
(Bolded dates indicate when short response papers are due)

**Week 1**
5/26: Nagel / What Is It Like To Be A Bat? / 1974
5/27: Chalmers / Facing Up To The Problem of Consciousness / 1995*
5/28: Kim / *Philosophy of Mind: Chapter 1: Introduction*

**Week 2**
6/1: Block / Concepts of Consciousness / 1995
6/2: Kim / *Philosophy of Mind: Chapter 2: Mind as Immaterial Substance*
6/3: Jackson / Epiphenomenal Qualia / 1984

**Week 3**
6/8: Kim / *Philosophy of Mind: Chapter 4: The Identity Theory*
6/9: Kripke / Naming and Necessity (Excerpt) / 1972
6/10: Levine / Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap / 2001
6/11: Kim / *Philosophy of Mind: Chapter 5: Mind as a Computing Machine*
6/12: Searle / Can Computers Think? / 1983 (class held at 5:30pm in 5 Washington Place, Room 202)
Week 4

6/15: Kim / Philosophy of Mind: Chapter 6: Mind as a Causal System
6/16: Block / Troubles with Functionalism / 1978
6/18: Dennett / Quining Qualia / 1988
6/19: Churchland / The Rediscovery of Light / 1996 (class held at 5:30pm in 5 Washington Place, Room 202)

Week 5

6/22: Kim / Philosophy of Mind: Chapter 9: What is Consciousness?
6/23: Kim / Philosophy of Mind: Chapter 10: Consciousness and the Mind-Body Problem

Week 6

6/30: Stoljar / Two Conceptions of the Physical / 2001
7/1: Chalmers / Panpsychism and Panprotopsychism / 2013*
7/2: Parfit / Reductionism and Personal Identity / 1995

7/5: Final paper due by 12pm

* These articles will be sent via e-mail by the instructor.