



PHL 131

Mind and World

S1 Day 2017

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The unit introduces the big philosophical questions about human nature, personal identity and the meaning of life. Are human beings somehow unique in nature? Do we have distinct selves that endure through time? Do we have free will? What is the relation between our identity and the things that matter to us? We take a broadly historical approach, reading the classic philosophical texts as well as contemporary work. Three themes recur across the unit: the relation of mind and body, the quest for knowledge and the nature of the self. We begin with conceptions of the mind at the dawn of the modern period, asking whether mind is entirely physical or could in principle survive bodily death. We also explore the links between the self, time, and memory. The remainder of the unit introduces some key thinkers of the twentieth century; and we explore their views on freedom, lived experience, and our relations to others. The unit as a whole offers a detailed introduction to controversial questions about the nature of the mind, showing how historical understanding animates current debates, and demonstrating the relevance of philosophy to live modern issues about science, human nature, and culture.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are

available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level

You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level

You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.

You will be able to express and defend your own views with increased clarity

You will be able to contribute to the learning of the group by engaging constructively in philosophical discussion and activities

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Three online quizzes	15%	No	Week 4, 8 & 12
Tutorial participation	15%	No	Throughout
Reflective exercise	15%	No	7/4
First scaffolded essay	25%	No	28/4
Final scaffolded essay	30%	No	11/6

Three online quizzes

Due: **Week 4, 8 & 12**

Weighting: **15%**

Each quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions on the material from weeks 1-4, 5-8 and 9-12. Each quiz is worth 5%. Feedback on the quizzes will be provided in class in week 5, 9, and 13.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level

Tutorial participation

Due: **Throughout**

Weighting: **15%**

Participation in tutorials develops your skills in communication, collaboration, and awareness of diversity. Your participation in these discussions and activities will contribute to your overall assessment in two ways:

- (i) through active involvement in discussion during your tutorial
- (ii) by submitting a completed "reading sheet" for each session - a short set of questions relating to the reading that week.

Active involvement in your tutorial is especially important and includes discussion of material, debate, presenting and defending your own arguments, collaborating in philosophical analysis, giving and receiving feedback on ideas and comments, explaining and clarifying ideas, practising of technical philosophical skills, and more. This requires you to prepare well each week - you can do this preparation by completing the "reading sheet" ahead of your tutorial. The more prepared you are, the more you participate in these activities, the more likely you will do well in other assessments.

No grades are received for simply turning up - the way to do well is to prepare in advance and take part in discussion.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
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- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.
- You will be able to express and defend your own views with increased clarity
- You will be able to contribute to the learning of the group by engaging constructively in philosophical discussion and activities

Reflective exercise

Due: **7/4**

Weighting: **15%**

You will write a short reflection of 700 words on the meaning of Plato's allegory of the cave. You will need to identify the philosophical problem Plato raises, and write a brief reflective response, engaging with material from the unit and reflecting on it. Your reflection should be submitted online via Turnitin. Your reflection will be assessed based on clarity of exposition and understanding. A rubric for the essay will be made available and assessment criteria discussed

in class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.

First scaffolded essay

Due: **28/4**

Weighting: **25%**

You will write a short scaffolded essay of 1200 words on Cartesian dualism. This assignment will be to provide an analysis and response to a text by, or concerning, René Descartes (1596-1650). Your analysis will be 'scaffolded' by your answering a series of structured questions, each building on the next. This will allow you to do two things (i) understand the structure and form of a philosophy essay (ii) gauge your understanding of Descartes and the philosophical questions his work raises.

Your essay should be submitted online via Turnitin. Your essay will be assessed based on clarity of exposition, understanding, and argumentation. A rubric for the essay will be made available and assessment criteria discussed in class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.
- You will be able to express and defend your own views with increased clarity

Final scaffolded essay

Due: **11/6**

Weighting: **30%**

You will write a scaffolded essay of 1500 words on a topic from part 2 or 3 of the unit. This assignment will build upon the skills you developed during your first assignment. This assignment will be to provide an analysis and response to a text by one of the philosophers we discuss in weeks 8-12. Your analysis will be 'scaffolded' by your answering a series of structured

questions, each building on the next. This will allow you to do two things (i) understand the structure and form of a philosophy essay (ii) gauge your understanding of a particular philosophical topic and the philosophical questions it raises.

Your essay should be submitted online via Turnitin. Your essay will be assessed based on clarity of exposition, understanding, and argumentation. A rubric for the essay will be made available and assessment criteria discussed in class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.
- You will be able to express and defend your own views with increased clarity

Delivery and Resources

A course reader will be made available.

Unit Schedule

Section 1: History of the mind

1.1 Course Introduction: Teaching staff, content, assessment, etc.

1.2 The first philosophers: The Milesians, Thales

Jonathan Barnes. (1987). Introduction to *Early Greek Philosophy* (pp. 8-24). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

2 The first philosophers: The Milesians, Thales

Robin Waterfield. (2009). The Milesians, in *The First Philosophers* (pp. 3-21). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

R.E. Allen (ed.) (1966). *Greek Philosophy: Thales to Aristotle* (pp. 5-23; pp. 28-33; pp. 36-40). London: Collier McMillan.

3 Plato: Immortal souls and knowledge of ultimate reality

Plato. (1987). *The Republic* [around 375 B.C.] trans. by Desmond Lee (pp. 226-248; pp. 335-340). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Plato. (1973). Phaedrus in *Phaedrus and Letters VII and VIII*, trans. Walter Hamilton (pp. 49-61).

Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

4 Aristotle: The mind and the substance of things

Aristotle. (1986). *De Anima (On the Soul)*, trans. Hugh Lawson-Tancred (pp. 155-163.)
Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Aristotle. (1984). Metaphysics (extract from Book IX) in *Complete works of Aristotle*, revised
Oxford Translation, Vol. 2, ed. Jonathan Barnes (pp. 1655-1660). Princeton University Press.

5 Descartes: The mind-body problem

René Descartes. (1996). Second Meditation in *Meditations on First Philosophy, with Selections
from the Objections and Replies*, trans. John Cottingham (pp. 16-23). Cambridge University
Press.

Excerpt from the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry on “René Descartes: The Mind-Body
Distinction” URL: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/descmind/>

Section 2: Personal identity, agency and responsibility

6.1 Will it be me? Parfit and what matters for survival

Derek Parfit. (1984). Chapter 10. What we Believe Ourselves to Be of *Reasons and Persons* (pp.
199-209). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

6.2 Parfit and the no-self View

Derek Parfit. (1987). Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons. In C. Blakemore and S.
Greenfield, eds., *Mindwaves: Thoughts on Intelligence, Identity and Consciousness* (pp. 19-26).
Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

7.1 The Body and the boundaries of the self

Meredith W. Michaels. (2004). Persons, Brains and Bodies. In G Lee Bowie, Meredith W.
Michaels, and Robert Soloman (eds), *Twenty Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy* (pp.
323-325). Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth.

Jonathan Glover. (1991). The Body and Am I my body?, from *I: The Philosophy and Psychology
of Personal Identity* (pp. 69-87). Penguin Books.

7.2 No lecture due to public holiday

[Mid-semester break]

8.1 Memory, narrative reconstruction and agency

Marya Schechtman. (1994). The Truth About Memory. *Philosophical Psychology*, 7(1), 3-18.

8.2 A Puzzle case: Multiple personality and personal identity

Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Stephen Behnke. (2000). Responsibility in Cases of Multiple Personality Disorder. *Noûs*, 34(14), 301-323.

9.1 Memory, identity and responsibility

Jeanette Kennett and Steve Matthews. (2003). Identity Control and Responsibility: The Case of Dissociative Identity Disorder. *Philosophical Psychology*, 15(4), 509-526.

9.2 Experimental philosophy: What do the folk think about identity across time?

Nina Strohminger and Shaun Nichols. (2014). The Essential Moral Self. *Cognition*, 131(1), 159-171.

Section 3: Free will, consciousness and cognition

10 Free will

George Graham. (1998). Excerpt from chapter 9 of *Philosophy of Mind: An Introduction* (pp. 175-192). Blackwell Publishers.

11 Consciousness

David Armstrong. (2002). What is Consciousness? In J. Heil (ed.) *Philosophy of Mind: A Guide and Anthology* (pp. 607-616). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

12 Embodied and extended cognition

Andy Clark & David Chalmers. (1998). The Extended Mind. *Analysis*, 58(1), 7-19.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): <http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disr>

[ption_studies/policy.html](#)

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.
- You will be able to contribute to the learning of the group by engaging constructively in philosophical discussion and activities

Assessment tasks

- Three online quizzes
- Reflective exercise
- First scaffolded essay
- Final scaffolded essay

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to express and defend your own views with increased clarity

Assessment task

- Tutorial participation

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial participation
- First scaffolded essay
- Final scaffolded essay

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.

Assessment tasks

- Three online quizzes

- Tutorial participation
- Reflective exercise
- First scaffolded essay
- Final scaffolded essay

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.

Assessment tasks

- Three online quizzes
- Tutorial participation
- Reflective exercise
- First scaffolded essay
- Final scaffolded essay

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level

- You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.

Assessment tasks

- Three online quizzes
- Tutorial participation
- Reflective exercise
- First scaffolded essay
- Final scaffolded essay

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to explain important philosophical responses to problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.
- You will be able to express and defend your own views with increased clarity
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Assessment tasks

- Tutorial participation
- Reflective exercise
- First scaffolded essay
- Final scaffolded essay

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded,

sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to express and defend your own views with increased clarity
- You will be able to contribute to the learning of the group by engaging constructively in philosophical discussion and activities

Assessment task

- Tutorial participation

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
- You will be able to express and defend your own views with increased clarity
- You will be able to contribute to the learning of the group by engaging constructively in philosophical discussion and activities

Assessment task

- Tutorial participation