PHL 131
Mind and World
S1 Day 2017
Dept of Philosophy

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## General Information

### Unit convenor and teaching staff

**Lecturer and convenor**

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**Lecturer**

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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 [http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/](http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/)

Learning Outcomes

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

Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three online quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Week 4, 8 &amp; 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective exercise</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First scaffolded essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final scaffolded essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>11/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- 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.

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Reflective excercise

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.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

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

This Assessment Task relates to the following 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
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**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.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
- You will be able to identify key philosophical problems about the relationship between mind and world at an introductory level
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**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


2 The first philosophers: The Milesians, Thales


3 Plato: Immortal souls and knowledge of ultimate reality


### 4 Aristotle: The mind and the substance of things


### 5 Descartes: The mind-body problem


### Section 2: Personal identity, agency and responsibility

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


#### 6.2 Parfit and the no-self View


#### 7.1 The Body and the boundaries of the self


#### 7.2 No lecture due to public holiday
[Mid-semester break]

8.1 Memory, narrative reconstruction and agency

8.2 A Puzzle case: Multiple personality and personal identity

9.1 Memory, identity and responsibility

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

Section 3: Free will, consciousness and cognition

10 Free will

11 Consciousness

12 Embodied and extended cognition

Policies and Procedures
Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:


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/](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](http://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/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

**Learning Skills**

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://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 Enquiry Service**

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

**Equity 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.

**IT Help**

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

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

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

- Three online quizzes
- 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

**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**

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**Assessment tasks**

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**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

**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

http://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/72489/unit_guide/print
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 excercise
- 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

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