



PHL 131

Mind and World

S1 External 2018

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor and Lecturer

Michael Olson

michael.olson@mq.edu.au

Lecturer

Karola Stotz

karola.stotz@mq.edu.au

Lecturer

Adam Hochman

adam.hochman@mq.edu.au

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

General Assessment Information

Unless a Disruption to Studies request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for *timed* assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Fortnightly online quizzes</u>	30%	No	Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 ,10 & 12
<u>First Essay</u>	25%	No	13/4
<u>Final essay</u>	30%	No	8/6
<u>Participation</u>	15%	No	Throughout

Fortnightly online quizzes

Due: **Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 ,10 & 12**

Weighting: **30%**

Multiple choice questions will cover material discussed in class readings. Each quiz is worth 5%.

Marks are determined by the accuracy of your responses to the quiz questions.

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

First Essay

Due: **13/4**

Weighting: **25%**

You will write a short essay of 1200 words that raises and explains an objection to one of the authors we read in Weeks 1-6. This assignment will require students to summarise a key philosophical argument or idea in a clear, concise, and charitable manner before then introducing and developing a reasoned objection to that argument or idea.

This assessment will help help you to do two things: (i) understand the structure and form of a philosophy essay; and (ii) articulate your own response to a canonical philosophical question. 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 essay

Due: **8/6**

Weighting: **30%**

You will write an argumentative 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. Prompts for the essay will be provided in class, though you may write on a topic of your own choosing (in consultation with instructors).

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

Participation

Due: **Throughout**

Weighting: **15%**

Participation in tutorials or online discussion forums develops your skills in communication, collaboration, and awareness of diversity.

Active involvement in your tutorial or online discussion 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. The more prepared you are, the more you participate in these activities, the more likely you will do well in other assessments.

No marks are earned 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
- 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

Delivery and Resources

Required Reading

There will be a core text or texts to read for each week of the course. These will be available in the unit reader, which you will need to purchase. Additional optional readings will be made available electronically.

Technology Used and Required

We use an iLearn website, and the Echo360 lecture recordings. Any other material you need will be available through the iLearn website. We recommend you have access to a reliable internet connection throughout semester.

Assignment Submission

Assignments in this course will be submitted electronically, as word documents. **There is no need for a coversheet** - the iLearn assignment submission (Turnitin) involves declaring your details and honesty in submitting your work. Please note, we do not accept submission by email attachment.

Unit Schedule

--Section 1: Classic Studies of Mind, Knowledge, and Self--

Week 1: Plato

- Plato, *Republic*, trans. G.M.A. Grube and C.D.C. Reeve, in *Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 1132-1134.
- Plato, *Euthyphro*, trans. G.M.A. Grube, in *Complete Works*, 1-16.

Weeks 2 and 3: Descartes: Knowledge, Scepticism, and the Self

- René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Jonathan Bennett, Early Modern Texts Online (2017), Meditations One-Three, 1-17.

Week 4: Locke and Hume on Personal Identity

- John Locke, "A Defence of Mr. Locke's Opinion Concerning Personal Identity," in *The Works of John Locke*, 12th ed., 9 vols. (London, 1824), vol. 2, 301-319.
- David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, eds. T.H. Green and T.H. Grose, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and co., 1874), vol. 1, 533-543.

--Section 2: Personal Identity, Agency and Responsibility--

Week 5: Parfit: Personal Identity

- Derek Parfit, "What We Believe Ourselves to Be," in *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 199-209.
- Derek Parfit, "Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons," in C. Blakemore and S. Greenfield (eds.), *Mindwaves: Thoughts on Intelligence, Identity and Consciousness* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 19-26.

Week 6: The Body and the Boundaries of the Self

- Meredith W. Michaels, "Persons, Brains and Bodies," in G Lee Bowie, Meredith W. Michaels, and Robert Solomon (eds.), *Twenty Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy* (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2004), 323-325.
- Jonathan Glover, "The Body" and "Am I my body?," in *I: The Philosophy and Psychology of Personal Identity* (New York: Penguin, 1991), 69-87.

Week 7: Memory, Narrative, and Agency

- Marya Schechtman, "The Truth About Memory," *Philosophical Psychology*, vol. 7, no. 1 (1994), 3-18.
- Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Stephen Behnke, "Responsibility in Cases of Multiple Personality Disorder," *Noûs*, vol. 34, no. 14 (2000), 301-323.

--Section 3: The Human Difference--

Week 8: Human Nature

- David L. Hull, "On Human Nature," *PSA: Proceedings of the Biennial Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association*, 1986, vol. 2, 3-13.
- Patrick Bateson, "The Corpse of a Wearisome Debate. Review of 'The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature,' by Steven Pinker," *Science*, vol. 297, 2212-2213.
- Simon Blackburn, "Born Not Made," *New Scientist*, vol. 175, no. 2399, 56.
- Louis Menand, "What Comes Naturally: Does Evolution Explain Who We Are?," *The New Yorker* (25 November, 2002).

Week 9: Race

- Naomi Zack, "Philosophical Aspects of the AAA Statement on 'Race,'" *Anthropological Theory*, vol. 1, no. 4 (2001), 445-465.

Week 10: Free Will

- Robert Kane, "Free Will," in *A Companion to Metaphysics*, eds. Jaegwon Kim, Ernest Sosa, and Gary S. Rosenkrantz, 2nd ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 18-27.

Week 11: Consciousness

- David Chalmers, "Facing up to the problem of consciousness," *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1995), 200-219.
- Andy Clark, "Appendix II: Consciousness and the Meta-hard Problem," in *Mindware: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Cognitive Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

2001), 171-188.

Week 12: Extended cognition

- Andy Clark and David Chalmers, "The Extended Mind," *Analysis*, vol. 58, no. 1 (1998), 7-19.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/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

- Fortnightly online quizzes
- First Essay
- Final 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

- 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

- First Essay
- Final essay
- 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
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- You will be able to critically and reflectively respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.

Assessment tasks

- Fortnightly online quizzes
- First Essay
- Final essay
- Participation

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

- Fortnightly online quizzes
- First Essay
- Final essay
- Participation

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

- Fortnightly online quizzes
- First Essay
- Final essay
- Participation

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

Assessment tasks

- First Essay
- Final essay
- Participation

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

- 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

- Participation