

Sample questions for the Mind Comprehensive Exam

The University of Western Ontario

Department of Philosophy

1. Explain some varieties of Behaviorism in philosophy and psychology. Do any of them remain plausible?
2. Are intentional states multiply realizable? What implications does your answer have for the plausibility of the Identity Theory about mental states?
3. “One mental state being represented by another is both necessary and sufficient for the lower-order state to be a conscious one”. Explain and evaluate this claim.
4. Explain at least one causal-historical account of mental content. Explain its (dis)advantages. Is this even the right sort of approach for explaining the metaphysical underpinnings of content?
5. What is physicalism? Does the conceivability of zombies undermine physicalism? Can we genuinely conceive of zombies?
6. What role might “narrow content” play in philosophy of mind. Is there really any such thing as “narrow content”?
7. Explain Eliminative Materialism. Are there elements of the Eliminative Materialism movement that are worth embracing today?
8. Describe several bizarre-sounding thought experiments in philosophy of mind. Is appeal to such things a very reliable methodology?