

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Course Outline**

The Puzzle of Consciousness

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| Date/time TBA Room TBA | Instructor: David Bourget Office hours using online booking https://www.dbourget.com |
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DESCRIPTION

Consciousness ---the felt aspect of mental life--- is widely thought to pose a special challenge to scientific explanation. In this course, we will ask whether that is really the case or not, what explaining consciousness would involve, and whether there is any satisfactory explanation of consciousness in the offing.

TEXTS

We will read seminal articles by authors such as Nagel, Chalmers, Block, Jackson, Kind, and others.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students should:

- be able to explain and evaluate the main philosophical arguments and positions discussed in this course both orally and in writing;
- be able to appreciate the relevance of the topics discussed in this course to philosophy in general and bring to bear considerations in philosophy of mind to other topics;
- have acquired and/or improved upon general skills useful for critically engaging with philosophical ideas as well as other pursuits: skills involved in analyzing and critically evaluating arguments, skills involved in effective oral and written communication, and skill involved in fruitful engagement with peers.

REQUIREMENTS

- Weekly responses (10%).
 - **Those MUST be submitted on the OWL forum under the appropriate**

forum before the class for you to get the points. Each response is worth 1.5 points (from your course grade) and you max out at 10. This means you can miss 2 responses without being penalized.

- You are encouraged to read each other's' responses and engage in discussion if you feel that this would be productive.
- Participation (5%).
 - You get the 5% for participating at least a little. You're mainly expected to participate by talking during the seminar, but you can also contribute through the OWL forum.
- Writing workshop participation (10%).
 - A first version of your final paper (below) is due to be submitted on week 10 for **peer review**, that is, evaluation by other students. On week 11, the seminar is a workshop during which you will meet with the students that you've been paired with to discuss your feedback, with me going around to answer questions.
 - 10% of your essay mark will come from participating in this activity as both author and commentator.
- Final paper (75%).
 - The expected essay length is 3000-4000 words. 4000 is a hard limit. In the low 3000s is usually a good length.
 - Format your essay in 12pt Times New Roman, True Double Space with reasonable margins.
 - Late papers will be penalized by 3% per day late, including weekends, up to a maximum of 50%.
 - More specific expectations for papers will be provided in class.

AUDIT

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations

for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

PLAGIARISM CHECKING

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>
Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>
Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>
Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.