

AS.150.138: DO WE HAVE SOULS? IF SO, WHAT ARE THEY?

Interession 2020

Meeting times: MWF 10:30-12:30

Instructor: Tammo Lossau

Office hours: MF 1:00-2:00, Gilman 269a and by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

According to a view called "physicalism", our world is entirely physical, and therefore leaves no room for things like souls to exist. According to a different view called "dualism", there is a second type of substance aside from physical objects, which would leave room for souls. In this course, we will discuss arguments for and against those two views, but we will also look at further conceptions of what a "soul" might be which promise to offer a third way.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, you should have an understanding of the most important positions in play within the philosophical debate around souls: naturalism, dualism, hylomorphism, panpsychism, and immaterial realism. You should also understand some of the most influential arguments in favor of and against these positions, and you should be able to verbalize them yourself and critically discuss them. Like most philosophy courses, this course should also help to build your analytic thinking and verbal reasoning skills.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Like all Interession courses, this course is graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory. To receive a satisfactory grade, you must:

- Meet the attendance requirement (see below).
- Show active participation in the class.
- Complete two reading preparations and receive a satisfactory grade on both.

The reading preparations are critical summaries of the class readings for one of our meetings (except the first one). Those summaries should highlight the most important claims and lines of argument in that day's mandatory readings and offer your thoughts (such as applications, criticisms, further illustrations) about those readings. They should be around 3 pages long (i.e. 800- 1000 words) and must be submitted to me by email before 8pm the day before that meeting. Class preparations will be assigned at our first meeting.

COURSE POLICIES

- Attendance is required. You can miss one class without any penalty (and you don't have to send me an apology). Beyond that, you can only miss classes with a valid excuse. Missing more than one class without valid excuse will result in an unsatisfactory grade. (If you have a letter from the disability office that exempts you from attendance requirements, you can ignore this paragraph.)
- Research demonstrates that classes in which students are not allowed to use laptops and smartphones have far better learning outcomes. For that reason, laptops, smartphones, etc. are not allowed in class. The only exceptions to this policy are e-readers which do not have a browser function and students with disability accommodations that allow them to use electronics.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are a student with a disability or believe that you might have a disability that requires special accommodations, please contact Student Disability Services to obtain a letter from a specialist: Garland 385; (410) 516 4720; studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu. The terms of these letters will be honored.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate

dean of students and/or the chairman of the Ethics Board beforehand. See the guide on “Academic Ethics for Undergraduates” at <https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/policies-guidelines/undergrad-ethics/> for more information.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Detailed references are at the end of this syllabus.

Day	Topic	Readings	Notes
Jan 6	Introduction; Physicalism	Churchland	
I. A very brief historical tour			
Jan 8	Cartesian Dualism	Descartes (Husserl optional)	
Jan 10	Hylomorphism	Aristotle, Madden (Berkeley optional)	
II. The debate about consciousness			
Jan 13	Qualia (I): What is it Like to be a Bat? / The Knowledge Argument	Nagel, Jackson	
Jan 15	Qualia (II): The “Hard Problem”	Chalmers, Smart	
Jan 17	The Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism	Plantinga	
Jan 20	<i>MLK Day – no class</i>		
Jan 22	The Intentional Stance	Dennett	
Jan 24	Panpsychism	Sprigge, Carruthers & Schechter	

READINGS

Here are the full citations of the readings, listed in the order of the course schedule. All readings will be made available on Blackboard.

- Churchland, P. (2011). The Brain and Its Self. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 155: 41-50.
- Descartes, R. *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Transl. by John Cottingham. In: id., *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Vol. II. Cambridge University Press 1984. – First and Second Meditation, excerpt from Sixth Meditation (AT VII 17-34; 71-78).
- Husserl, E. (1954). *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. Transl. by David Carr. Northwestern University Press 1970. – Part II, sections 16-20 (pp. 73-83).
- Aristotle. *De Anima*. Transl. by Christopher Shields. Oxford University Press 2016. – Book II, Chs. 1-2 (pp. 22-26).
- Madden, J. (2013). Thomistic Hylomorphism and Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Religion. *Philosophy Compass* 8: 664-676.
- Berkeley, G. (1710). *The Principles of Human Knowledge*. Ed. by Jonathan Bennett. Available online at <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/berkeley1710.pdf>. – Introduction and Part I, par. 1-40 (pp. 1-21).
- Nagel, T. (1974). What is it like to be a bat? *The Philosophical Review* 83: 435-450.
- Jackson, F. (1982). Epiphenomenal Qualia. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 32: 127-136.
- Chalmers, D. (1995). Facing up to the problem of consciousness. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 2 (3): 200-219.
- Smart, J. (2004). Consciousness and Awareness. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 11 (2): 41–50.
- Plantinga, A. (1993). *Warrant and Proper Function*. Oxford University Press. – Ch. 12 (pp. 216-237).
- Dennett, D. (1971). Intentional Systems. *The Journal of Philosophy* 68: 87-106.
- Sprigge, T. (1998). Panpsychism. In: *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available online through library at <https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/panpsychism/v-1>.
- Carruthers, P. and E. Schechter (2006) Can Panpsychism Bridge the Explanatory Gap? *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 13 (10–11): 32–39.