PHIL 172/COGS 161: Experimental Philosophy
Instructor: Carolyn Dicey Jennings
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Office Hours: Tuesdays at 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. and Thursdays at 3 to 4 p.m.

Course Description
Consideration of how philosophers and cognitive scientists have tried to bring experimental methods to bear on philosophical debates.

Required Reading
All required reading will be provided through CROPS.

Grading Procedures
All students will be expected to turn in three papers of no more than 1,000 words. The topics for these papers will be announced in class one week before they are due. Each of these three papers is worth 10% of the final grade, together worth 30% of the final grade.

A single mid-term paper of no more than 2,000 words will be due approximately halfway through the course. The topic for the mid-term paper will be announced in class two weeks before it is due. The mid-term paper will be worth 30% of the final grade.

The final exam will be entirely composed of short-answer questions that will capture comprehensive knowledge of the course. The final exam will be worth 30% of the final grade.

Students are expected to complete the required reading, listed below, before the start of class on the days indicated. Participation in the course will be based on 10 pop quizzes based on the reading for the class in question. The pop quizzes will each worth 1 percent of the final grade, together worth 10% of the final grade.

Students can also earn up to half of this participation grade by giving a 10 minute in-class presentation on the reading for the class in question, replacing up to five pop-quizzes.

For every paper, quiz, and exam submitted in person, students are asked to write their names on the back of the final sheet of paper. For every paper submitted online, students are asked to leave their names off the paper entirely (the paper will be linked to the student’s ID upon submission in CROPS). This will enable anonymous grading.

Papers should be double-spaced with 1” margins and 12pt Times New Roman font. All papers should be submitted online through CROPS before the start of class on the dates indicated below.

Course Schedule (Subject to Revision)
August 28th, 2014—Course Overview
September 2nd & 4th, 2014—Introduction to Experimental Philosophy
Readings: “Philosophical Methodology” by Anand J. Vaidya and Michael Shaffer;
“Experimental Philosophy and Philosophical Intuition” by Ernest Sosa [14 total pages]

September 9th & 11th, 2014—Ethical Objectivity
Readings: “Error Theory” by J.L. Mackie; “Folk Meta-Ethical Commitments” by Jennifer Cole Wright and Hagop Sarkissian [12 total pages]
September 16th & 18th, 2014—Normative Ethics
Readings: “Normative Ethics” by Kevin Timpe; “Persons, Situations, and Virtue Ethics” by John Doris [18 total pages]

*First Paper Due September 23rd, 2014*

September 23rd & 25th, 2014—Epistemology
Reading: “Experimental Epistemology” by James Beebee [17 total pages]

September 30th & October 2nd, 2014—Science
Reading: “Experimental Philosophy of Science” by Paul Griffiths and Karola Stotz [13 total pages]

October 7th & 9th, 2014—Religion

*Second Paper Due October 14th, 2014*

October 14th & 16th, 2014—Perception

October 21st & 23rd, 2014—Consciousness
Reading: “Conscious Experience beyond Attention: From Phenomenal Consciousness to Conscious Entrainment” by Carolyn Jennings [15 total pages]

October 28th & 30th, 2014—The Self

*Midterm Paper Due November 4th, 2014*

November 4th & 6th, 2014—Free Will
Reading: “Free Will and the Scientific Vision” by Joshua Knobe [13 total pages]

November 13th & 18th, 2014—Intentional Action
Reading: “Philosophy’s New Challenge: Experiments and Intentional Action” by N. Angel Pinillos, et al. [20 total pages]

November 20th & 25th, 2014—Gender and Race
Readings: “Folk Feminist Theory: An Experimental Approach” by Peggy DesAutels; “Is Race-Thinking Biological or Social, and Does It Matter for Racism? An Exploratory Study” by Julie L. Shulman and Joshua Glasgow [17 total pages]

*Third Paper Due December 2nd, 2014*

December 2nd & 4th, 2014—Language
Reading: “Semantics, Cross-Cultural Style” by Edouard Machery, et al. [13 total pages]

December 9th & 11th, 2014—Final Review

*Final Examination is on December 19th, 2014*
Course Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to:

• CLO 1. Apply cognitive science concepts to debates within philosophy.
• CLO 2. Articulate and analyze experiments that aim to solve philosophical debate.

CLO 1 supports Philosophy Program Learning Outcome 2, “Topics: Identify and explain the central questions within major topics of philosophical research” and CLO 1 and 2 support PLO 4, “Application: Apply philosophical knowledge (from logic, topics, or ideas) to a subject in another discipline, and/or apply knowledge from another discipline to a subject in philosophy.”

CLO 1 supports Cognitive Science Program Learning Outcome 2, “Design, interpret, and evaluate simple behavioral and neuroscientific experiments” and CLO 2 supports PLO 4, “Argue for or against theoretical positions in cognitive science.”

Guiding Principles
This course supports the UC Merced guiding principles of communication, self and society, and scientific literacy.

• On communication: The paper requirements for this course should aid students in learning to communicate efficiently and effectively in writing. The in-class discussions should encourage students to communicate differences orally in a reasoned and controlled manner.
• On self and society: The questions discussed in this course are perennial, cross-cultural questions that are essential to understanding self and society.
• On scientific literacy: Articulating and analyzing cognitive science experiments will help students to improve their scientific literacy.

Resources, Policies, and Procedures
Academic Support: For free academic support, go to the Calvin E. Bright Success Center located at KOLLIG 222 or email learning@ucmerced.edu.

Students with Disabilities: Upon identifying themselves to the instructor and the university, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation. For more information, contact UCM Disabilities Services at SSB 230, (209) 228-6996, or disabilityservices@ucmerced.edu.

Lateness Policy: Late papers will be assigned a penalty of a third of a letter grade for every day that they are late. In the case of a verifiable emergency (e.g. a car accident), late papers may be accepted without penalty, pending approval by the instructor. In cases other than a verifiable emergency (e.g. illness), permission to turn in a late paper without penalty must be obtained before the day that the paper is due.

Academic Honesty Policy: Any student found guilty of cheating, plagiarism, or collusion (defined here) will be reported to Judicial Affairs and may be given a failing grade for the course. It is the responsibility of the student to turn in original work with proper citation and to understand the difference between, for example, plagiarism and paraphrasing (see here and here).

Laptop/Tablet/Cell Phone Policy: The use of laptops, tablets, cell phones, smart phones, or other mobile communication devices is disruptive, and is therefore prohibited during class. Except in emergencies or for students with prior approval from the professor, those using such devices will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period.