PHIL 172/COGS 161: Experimental Philosophy
Instructor: Carolyn Dicey Jennings
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Office Hours: Tuesdays from 10:30 to 12:30 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 CatCourses.

Grading Procedures
All students will be expected to participate in weekly online discussions. These will take place the same week that we cover that material in class, with a due date of the final session in which we cover that material, before class starts. Participation in a weekly discussion counts for up to 1% of the final grade per discussion for a total 12 possible discussions.

A midterm exam with short-answer questions will occur on October 25th in class, covering concepts from the first 6 topics covered. The mid-term exam will be worth 30% of the final grade.

A final project paper will be due on the last day of class, December 8th. This project will consist of an experiment and the paper will discuss that experiment. The experiment will be survey-based, in the style of experimental philosophy. The paper will discuss the motivation and background of the experiment, as well as the results. The paper should be around 1,500 words, double-spaced, with 1” margins and 12pt Times New Roman font (around 5 pages). The final project paper is worth 30% of the final grade.

The final exam, on December 12th, will be in the same style as the midterm exam, but will cover concepts from the second half of the course (topics 7-12). The final exam will be worth 30% of the final grade.

For submitted work, students are asked to write their names on the back of the final sheet of paper to enable anonymous grading.

Course Schedule (Subject to Revision)
August 25th — Course Overview, 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]

August 30th & September 1st — Ethical Objectivity
Readings: “Error Theory” by J.L. Mackie; “Folk Meta-Ethical Commitments” by Jennifer Cole Wright and Hagop Sarkissian [12 total pages]

September 6th & 8th — Normative Ethics
Readings: “Normative Ethics” by Kevin Timpe; “Persons, Situations, and Virtue Ethics” by John Doris [18 total pages]
September 13th & 15th, 2014— Epistemology
Reading: “Experimental Epistemology” by James Beebee [17 total pages]

September 20th & 22nd — Science
Reading: “Experimental Philosophy of Science” by Paul Griffiths and Karola Stotz [13 total pages]

September 27th & 29th — Religion

October 4th & 6th — Perception

October 11th & 13th — Consciousness
Reading: “Attention and Consciousness” by Christopher Mole [18 total pages]

October 18th & 20th— The Self

October 25th— Mid Term Exam
This will cover material up to October 6th/Perception.

November 1st & 3rd— Project Surveys
This week you will be taking project surveys from the other members of the class, and gathering responses from your own survey for your final project paper.

November 8th & 10th— Free Will
Reading: “Free Will and the Scientific Vision” by Joshua Knobe [13 total pages]

November 15th & 17th— Intentional Action
Reading: “Philosophy’s New Challenge: Experiments and Intentional Action” by N. Angel Pinillos, et al. [20 total pages]

November 22nd & 29th— 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]

December 1st & 6th— Language
Reading: “Semantics, Cross-Cultural Style” by Edouard Machery, et al. [13 total pages]

December 8th — Final Review, Final Project Papers Due

*Final Examination is on December 12th*

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.