

**Moravian College**  
**Phil/Psych 251 Z/PM: Philosophy of Psychology**  
**Fall 2011**

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**Instructor:** The Rev. Dr. William Falla  
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**Office Hours:** Comenius 205: MWF 9:30-11:00, R 2:00-3:00, ½ hour after class, by appt.

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to examine philosophical and empirical theories of the mind with special emphasis on psychology and its biological basis. Main questions will be: What is mind? How does the mind relate to brain and to behavior? How does the scientific study of the brain shape this discussion? In particular, we will focus on psychologists whose theories that use as their basic paradigm some form of the Darwinian model.

**Course Objectives:**

A. To come to understand the concept of mind and how it is related to brain and brain function from both a historical and contemporary perspective.

B. To examine historically how Darwinism has been used as a model for understanding mind/brain with special emphasis on specific psychologists who have utilized it.

C. To examine specifically how this relates to their ideas on mental states and decision making.

D. To be able to express ourselves cogently, clearly and coherently in both oral and written form with respect to this subject area.

**Required Texts:**

Richards, Robert, *Darwin and the Emergence of Evolutionary Theories of Mind and Behavior*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1987

Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza*, Harcourt, Orlando, 2003

**Supplemental Materials**

Articles and movies will be on reserve either electronically or in Reeves Library. Handouts and other materials will be made available as required.

**Evaluation:**

Your final course grade will be determined in the following manner:

Research Paper (30%): Starting from our current understanding of the brain and brain function you will write a 6-8 page research paper in which you will be asked to take a specific psychologist and analyze/critique his/her system with special emphasis on how he/she integrates mental objects/states/qualia (emotion, memory etc) into that system. You may write on a paper topic of your own choosing but you must have that topic approved by me no later than October 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be bibliographic instruction as well as further parameters for the paper given. Your paper will be evaluated on the quality of your research, the quality of your argumentation and the quality of your presentation.

Reflection Papers/Case Studies (50%): There will be four (4) Papers due on the dates indicated in the syllabus. These are to be 3-5 page papers in which you are to respond to a question that is based on material currently being discussed in class. Your papers will be evaluated on your understanding of the issues, your ability to apply the course materials to your answer as well as the quality of your argumentation and presentation. These papers will be used as a basis for our class discussion.

Class Participation (20%): This includes both class attendance and your active participation in class discussions. A class such as this is predicated on class discussion so that this is an important component. As a consequence, active participation is defined as the voluntary asking of questions and involvement in class discussions.

### **Grading Scale**

92.5 - 100 = A

89.5 – 92.4 = A-

87.5 – 89.4 = B+

82.5 – 87.4 = B

etc.

All final grades are rounded to the nearest integer.

### **Honor Code/Attendance:**

Students are expected to regularly attend class. Attendance contributes to your class participation and therefore is important. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor and to insure that arrangements are made to make up all missed assignments or material. You are also expected to hand in all assignments on time. If you must be late with your work, you must make arrangements with the instructor prior to the due date. Failure to do so may result in the lowering of the grade on late submitted work.

Students have an obligation to exhibit honesty in all their work. You will be found to have violated this obligation if you plagiarize or cheat. Plagiarizing is presenting the work of others as one's own; cheating is taking, giving or accepting illicit advantage

for any course work inside or outside the classroom. Any violation will result in the lowering of your grade.

### **Additional Aid/Consideration**

Students with special situations that may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Comenius Center Office or the Learning Center as soon as possible.

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

Sept. 1: Introduction to Brain/Mind

Damasio: pp. 3-24

Sept. 8: Brain/ Mind

Damasio: pp. 183-220

Sept. 15: Darwin & Mind I-Precursors

Richards: 20-40, 47-57,

Sept. 22: Darwin & Mind II-Origins

Richards: pp.30-98

**Paper #1 Due**

Sept. 29: Darwin & Mind III-Descent

Richards: pp. 185-242

Oct. 6: Herbert Spencer & Evolutionary Ethics

Richards: pp.253-315

Oct. 13: William James

Richards: pp.409-450

**Paper #2 Due**

Oct. 20: James Baldwin

Richards: pp. 451-480

Oct. 27: Modern Neuronal Models; Emotions

Damasio: pp. 27-80

**Paper #3 Due**

Nov. 3: Neuronal Models-Feelings

Damasio: pp. 83-133

Nov. 10: Emotions, Feelings & Choice

Damasio: pp. 137-179

**Paper #4 Due**

Nov. 17: Emotion, Memory & Mind

Damasio: pp. 267-289  
Movie: *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

Nov. 24: Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 1: Deviance, the Mind and Morality  
Movie: *A Beautiful Mind*

**Final Paper Due**