

## ***PHI 374. Philosophy of Mind: Mind-Body Problem***

Instructor: Gui Sanches de Oliveira

Course level: upper level

### **Course description:**

One of the central topics in the Western philosophical tradition is the challenge of understanding the ontological nature of the mind and its relation to the body. Over the past century the traditional *mind-body problem* has moved in two different directions, one drawing from developments in artificial intelligence and neuroscience, and the other inspired by work in the phenomenological tradition in philosophy and by work in embodied cognitive science. This course examines how these developments inform the philosophical debate and the extent to which they offer viable paths for solving the problem or even dissolving it.

### **Student Evaluation:**

- Critical reading responses (25%)
- Paper 1 (25%, due by week 7) and paper 2 (25%, due by week 11)
- Final project: philosophical critique of mind-body assumptions in mass media (25%)

### **Schedule overview:**

#### Weeks 1-2: The Mind-Body Problem

- Louise Antony (2009) "The Mental and the Physical"
- Thomas Nagel (1993) "What is the mind-body problem?" and discussion by Dennett, Humphreys, Velmans and others

#### Weeks 3-6: Brains, Machines, and the Mental

- Peter Carruthers (1986) "The Mind Is the Brain"
- Hilary Putnam (1975) "The nature of mental states"
- Paul Churchland (1981) "Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes"
- Brie Gertler (2007) "In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism"

#### Weeks 7-10: The Body of the Problem

- Barbara Montero (1999) "The Body Problem"
- Robert Hanna and Evan Thompson (2003) "The Mind-Body-Body Problem"
- Esther Thelen (1995) "Time-Scale Dynamics and the Development of an Embodied Cognition"
- Miriam Kyselo (2014) "The Body Social: An Enactive Approach to the Self"

#### Week 11 to end: Beyond Abstract Minds and Bodies—Feminist Perspectives

- Jennifer McWeeny (2021) "Feminist Philosophy of Mind"
- Iris Marion Young (1980) "Throwing like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment Motility and Spatiality"
- Nick Brancazio (2019) "Gender and the Senses of Agency"