

The following schedule includes readings and homework questions. The questions are to be answered in essay style for the dates given. Homework will be collected at the beginning of the class for which it is due. Answers must be based on information from the readings, your knowledge of psychology, and, if appropriate, your personal experiences, and must be comprehensive in nature. Please note that it is imperative that you use quotation marks and the proper format for citation if you quote from these or other sources. The grade for homework will be determined by taking the average of the 8 best marks. The homework marks constitute 40% of the final grade in the course.

September 13, 2017

Topics: Orientation, introduction, perspectives on consciousness, definitions of consciousness, definitions of materialism, history of materialism, disappearance of matter, intentionality, qualia, Turing test, computationalism, promissory materialism, Chinese room argument.

September 20, 2017

Topics: Scientism vs authentic science, consciousness as an emergent property, functionalism, binding problem, panpsychism, anomalous phenomena, beliefs about consciousness and reality, personality correlates of beliefs about consciousness and reality, intelligence correlates of beliefs about consciousness and reality, materialism as dogma.

Reading: Chapter 1.

Question 1: Describe the beliefs about consciousness and reality dimension found by Barušs and Moore. What difficulties does the existence of such a dimension pose for the study of consciousness? Optional, as part of answer: Fill out and score the BACARQ. If you wish, you can include information about your own scores on the BACARQ in your answer.

September 27, 2017

Topics: Shared mind.

Reading: Chapter 2.

Question 2: Evaluate the evidence for the contention that consciousness has nonlocal properties.

October 4, 2017

Topics: Time, precognition, retrocausal recall, life reviews during near-death experiences, anomalous temporality in altered states of consciousness.

Reading: Chapter 3.

Question 3: Discuss the nature of time.

October 11, 2017

Reading week. No class.

October 18, 2107

Review.

Question 4: What is the nature of consciousness?

October 26, 2017

Term Test

November 1, 2017

Topics: After-death communication, mediumship, possession, super-psi vs survival hypothesis, instrumental transcommunication.

Reading: Chapter 4.

Question 5: Do discarnate entities exist?

November 8, 2017

Topics: Mind separate from the brain, veridical perception during near-death experiences, the nature of survival.

Reading: Chapter 5.

Question 6: What is the evidence for the existence of consciousness without a brain? Evaluate that evidence.

November 15, 2017

Topics: Direct mental influence.

Reading: Chapter 6.

Question 7: To what extent can physical manifestation be affected directly by the mind?

November 22, 2017

Topics: Reintegrating subjectivity into consciousness research.

Reading: Chapter 7.

Question 8: Discuss the importance of self-development for understanding the nature of consciousness.

November 29, 2017

Topics: Theories of consciousness.

Reading: Chapter 8.

Question 9: Describe and evaluate the flicker-filter theory of consciousness.

December 6, 2017

Topic: Review.

Question 10: Trace the development of your own understanding of the subject matter of this course — in the context of the readings, lectures, and class discussions — from the beginning of the course to the present. In your answer you must specify the substance of your understanding.

December 10–21

Midyear examination period.