

**Philosophy Seminar:**  
*The Nature of Consciousness*

**Fall 1998**

**Professor: JeeLoo Liu**

**Class meeting time: T R 11:20am - 12:35pm**

**Class location: Welles 110**

**E-mail: Liu@uno.cc.geneseo.edu**

**Office: Welles 103**

**Office hours: 10:30am-12:30pm  
or by appointment**

**Text: *The Nature of Consciousness*, (eds.) Ned Block, Owen Flanagan & Güven Güzeldere (The MIT Press)**

**Course Description:** This course is designed as an upper-level seminar, with heavy emphasis on reading and writing. The reading materials are all from contemporary sources. We will cover topics such as the definitions of 'consciousness,' the neurophysiological basis of consciousness, the explanation of consciousness, and the possibility of forming a unified theory of consciousness. Student participation in class discussion is greatly encouraged.

**Grading:**

<b>Weekly Homework (2 pages)</b>	<b>20 %</b> (Choose 10 out of 12)
<b>1 Short Paper (5 pages)</b>	<b>20 %</b>
<b>1 Long Paper (10 pages)</b>	<b>25 %</b>
<b>Final Exam (cumulative)</b>	<b>25 %</b>
<b>Class Participation</b>	<b>10 %</b>

**General Policies:**

1. To succeed in this course, you must keep pace with the syllabus. Your regular attendance is strongly emphasized, and you are also expected to finish the reading assignments prior to each class.
2. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced.
3. Homework must be handed in **on the assigned date and in person**. You are allowed to skip two assignments without penalty. At the end of the semester, the whole set of homework will be collected to be assigned a total grade.
4. Papers should be handed in on time. **A 1/2 grade deduction will be made for each day delayed.** The topics for the short paper will be assigned. But you are free to choose your long paper topics as long as they are related to the reading materials.
5. To receive a final grade for the course, all assignments must be completed.

## Syllabus

<b>Date</b>	<b>Content of discussion</b>	<b>Assignments for this class</b>
<b>T 9/1</b>	Introductory Remarks	None
<b>R 9/3</b>	An Overview of the Mind-Body Theories	None
<b>T 9/8</b>	Chalmers: Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness	<b>Read:</b> [handouts] <b>HW#1:</b> What is the problem of consciousness and why is it a hard problem?
<b>R 9/10</b>	Armstrong: What Is Consciousness?	<b>Read:</b> pp. 721-728
<b>T 9/15</b>	Güzeldere: Is Consciousness the Perception of What Passes in One's Own Mind? respond to Armstrong's theory?	<b>Read:</b> pp. 789-800 <b>HW#2:</b> How does Güzeldere respond to Armstrong's theory?
<b>R 9/17</b>	Rosenthal: A Theory of Consciousness	<b>Read:</b> pp. 729-747
<b>T 9/22</b>	Lycan: Consciousness as Internal Monitoring	<b>Read:</b> pp. 755-767 <b>HW#3:</b> What is Lycan's analysis of consciousness?
<b>R 9/24</b>	Dretske: Conscious Experience	<b>Read:</b> pp. 773-786
<b>T 9/29</b>	Block: On A Confusion about a Function of Consciousness	<b>Read:</b> pp. 375-407 <b>HW#4:</b> Explain "P-Consciousness" and "A-consciousness" in detail.
<b>R 10/1</b>	[continued]	<b>Reread:</b> pp. 375-407
<b>T 10/6</b>	Dennett & Kinsbourne: Time and the Observer	<b>Read:</b> pp. 141-170 <b>HW#5:</b> What is the Multiple Drafts model of consciousness?
<b>R 10/8</b>	[continued]	<b>Reread:</b> pp. 141-170
<b>T 10/13</b>	<b>[Fall Break]</b>	
<b>R 10/15</b>	Patricia Churchland: Can Neurobiology Teach Us Anything about Consciousness?	<b>Read:</b> pp. 127-138
<b>T 10/20</b>	Crick & Koch: Towards a Neurobiological Theory of Consciousness	<b>Read:</b> pp. 277-290

**[Short paper due]**

- R 10/22** Farah: Visual perception and Visual Awareness after Brain Damage: A Tutorial Overview **Read:** pp. 203-233
- T 10/27** Kripke: The Identity Thesis **Read:** pp. 445-449  
**HW#6:** Explain Kripke's argument against the Identity Thesis.
- R 10/29** Searle: Reductionism and the Irreducibility of Consciousness **Read:** pp. 451-458
- T 11/3** Nagel: What Is It Like to Be a Bat? **Read:** pp. 519-526  
**HW#7:** What else do we need in order to know what it is like to be a bat?
- R 11/5** Jackson: What Mary Didn't Know **Read:** pp. 567-570
- T 11/10** Lewis: What Experience Teaches **Read:** pp. 579-595  
**HW#8:** Do you agree with Lewis that what Mary lacks is simply "know-how"?
- R 11/12** Shoemaker: The Inverted Spectrum **Read:** pp. 643-660
- T 11/17** Dennett: Quining Qualia **Read:** pp. 619-639  
**HW#9:** Do you agree with Dennett that we should get rid of the notion *qualia* ?
- R 11/19** McGinn: Can We Solve the Mind-Body Problem? **Read:** pp. 529-539
- T 11/24** Levine: On Leaving Out What It's Like **Read:** pp. 543-553  
**HW#10:** Has Levine successfully argued that there is an explanatory gap?
- R 11/26** **[Thanksgiving Break]**
- T 12/1** Rey: A Question about Consciousness **Read:** pp. 461-475  
**HW#11:** How do you answer Rey's question: What is added by claiming consciousness?

- R 12/3** Flanagan: Prospects for a Unified Theory **Read:** pp. 97-107
- T 12/8** Goldman: Consciousness, Folk Psychology and Cognitive Science **Read:** pp. 111-123  
**HW#12:** In your view, how can philosophers contribute to the investigation of consciousness?
- R 12/10** **Concluding Remarks** **Submit the whole set of**  
**homework essays for final** **evaluation.**

**FINAL PAPER DUE: December 14 (Monday) by Noon.**

**FINAL EXAM: December 21 (Monday) 8:00 - 11:00 AM**