

**Philosophy 315:  
Philosophical Argument and Writing**

**Theme: *From the First-Person Point of View: The First-Person Perspective of  
Consciousness, Introspection, and Self-Knowledge***

**Class meeting time:** TR 5:30-6:45 pm  
**Classroom:** H-513  
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**Instructor:** Dr. JeeLoo Liu  
**Office location:** H-311A  
**Office hours:** T R 3:45 - 5:15 pm  
or by appointment

**Required Text:**

1. *From the First-Person Point of View: The First-Person Perspective of Consciousness, Introspection, and Self-Knowledge* [Course packet prepared by JeeLoo Liu] Available at CopyCo [Located on the South East corner of Chapman Ave. and State College blvd. (714) 680-9800]
2. **Hugo Bedau, *Thinking and Writing About Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Bedford/St. Martin's.** Available at Little Professors or Campus bookstore.

**Course Description:**

This course is primarily a workshop on philosophical argument and writing, and different sessions have different themes depending on the instructor's design.

The content of this particular session will be on the first-person perspective of consciousness; namely, how we are conscious of the content of our mental states from *our own point of view*. Through introspection, we come to know what we believe or how we feel, and we are seldom wrong in our self-knowledge. Philosophers have been confident in the apparent reliability of our self-knowledge. Some have argued that we have *infallible* knowledge of the content of our thought; some have called our introspection a "privileged access" to our own minds. The self is posited as the philosophical foundation for self-knowledge, while "personal identity" is assumed to be a continued existence of the self that persists through time. However, neuroscientists tell us that there is no single nexus in the brain which processes a unified consciousness. There is also no region of the brain that handles the representation of the self. The subjective experience of a single "self" has no neural foundation in the brain. If that is the case, then how do we come to have a subjective sense of a unified "self"? If there is no "mind's eyes," how do we come to perceive what passes in our minds? If introspection is not an inner form of perception, then how do we know what we think and how we feel? If there is no neural correlate for the representation of a unified self, then how do we come to see ourselves as *the same* entity in different temporal/spatial locations?

This course will incorporate articles from various disciplines and different approaches. We will investigate the problems of the self from various angles. The selection cannot be exhaustive, but it will serve as an introduction to the different approaches.

### **Writing Requirements:**

This course will place heavy emphasis on writing. We will begin with weekly summary essays, and then build up to a short paper and a long paper with assigned topics. At the end of this course, students will produce a conference-length paper (3,000 words) with correct citation, references and notation. The instructor will give hands-on guidance toward this final goal. We will learn about how to compose an outline, how to do research on specific topics, how to formulate a succinct thesis and how best to structure the paper.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

This course satisfies the upper-division GE writing requirement for philosophy majors. By the end of the semester students should

- 1) be able to recognize and formulate philosophical argumentation.
- 2) be able to form and defend complex philosophical theses.
- 3) be able to understand the interdisciplinary discourse on the problems of the self.
- 4) be able to engage in independent philosophical research.
- 5) be able to write clearly and correctly, making few if any errors, while defending carefully thought-out philosophical claims that are substantive, precise and easily accessible.

### **Grading:**

<b>Mid-term exam</b>	<b>20 %</b>
<b>7 Weekly summary essays (2-3 pages)</b>	<b>20 %</b>
<b>1 short paper (5 pages)</b>	<b>20 %</b>
<b>1 final paper (10-12 pages)</b>	<b>20 %</b>
<b>Presentation of course material</b>	<b>10 %</b>
<b>General participation and peer editing</b>	<b>10 %</b>
<b>Full attendance</b>	<b>2 points extra credit</b>

**To receive a final grade for the course, no portion of your grade can be a “zero”.**

**COURSE GRADES: Calculated on the following scale:**

97-100	A+	94-96	A	90-93	A-
87-89	B+	84-86	B	80-83	B-
77-79	C+	74-76	C	70-73	C-
67-69	D+	64-66	D	60-63	D-
<b>Under 60</b>	<b>F</b>				

**Academic Dishonesty:**

“Academic dishonesty is comprised of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for work by the use of any dishonest, deceptive, fraudulent, or unauthorized means.” The most commonly observed form of academic dishonesty is copying others’ writings on the Internet. Even when you are merely borrowing a single sentence from someone else, doing so without proper quotation marks and author-attribution counts as plagiarism. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty will automatically fail the course and *the misconduct will be reported to the Dean of Students Office*. Students with questions about how to cite others’ work should see the instructor.

**Attendance Policy and Class Participation:**

Students must be conscientious about attending classes on a regular basis. Any consecutive absences must be given proper explanation. You are allowed up to three absences without explanation. After the second absence, every absence will constitute a half-grade reduction in your final grade. To excuse your absences from that point on, you will need to present credible documentation (busy at work is not an admissible excuse). Class participation includes active discussion in class, raising relevant questions, answering questions, and paying close attention in class. Participation will be graded on a letter scale. Everyone (each student as well as the instructor) is responsible for making this class interesting, engaging, and thought-provoking.

**Classroom Etiquettes:**

Classroom environment is for the instructor and all students to interact with one another in a professional and intellectual manner. Students are expected to observe common classroom etiquettes. Behavior that interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior. Such behavior includes (but not restricted to)

- (i) using laptops in class other than for taking notes
- (ii) constant late arrivals;
- (iii) early departures without proper explanation;
- (iv) chatting with your neighbors during lectures;
- (v) rudely interrupting other students’ comments;
- (vi) eating in class;
- (vii) doing things unrelated to the course in class, such as reading other books, doing assignments for other courses, or playing with your electronic devices.
- (viii) not silencing your cell phone in class.

**Students with repeated disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom.**



**General Policies:**

1. To succeed in this course, you should keep pace with the syllabus. You are expected to finish the reading assignments before class.
2. Attendance is highly emphasized in this class. (See Attendance Policy above). If you can't make it to class on any given day, you should send me e-mail before class to be excused.
3. All students with a full attendance (not even excused absences) record will receive two extra credits in their final grades (total average).
4. Students must make regular use of the Blackboard for checking announcements, assignments, and to submit papers to turnitin.com.
5. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and free of spelling errors. Unacceptable essays will be returned for retyping.
6. Homework must be handed in on the assigned date and in person (essays left in my mailbox will be counted as 'late'). Study questions for each weekly essay will be posted on Blackboard (under 'Assignment'). The weekly essay is due on a Tuesday, and students will exchange essays for peer editing. Edited essays with editors' comments will be collected on Thursday of the same week.
7. Each week we will pick one student's weekly essay for scrutiny. Hence, students must take turns submitting the weekly essay electronically.
8. Homework essays will not be graded individually. They are to be collected at the end of the semester for a total assignment of homework grades. Your grade will depend on the total effort you have put into these essays.
9. In the second half of the semester, students will team up (two in each group) to give presentation on course materials. The presentation takes about 30 minutes. Presenters should prepare an outline of the presented material as handouts. This is a chance for students to develop their ability to organize and present course materials.
10. You are to write one short paper (assigned topic) and one final term paper (topic of your choice pending my approval). To prepare for your final paper, you need to (i) make an outline, (ii) have a 20-minutes conference with me during my office hours, and (iii) write an abstract (one page) first.
11. Both short paper and final paper should be submitted both as a turnitin.com paper (via Blackboard set-up) and as a hard copy. Turnitin.com submission will be closed at 5pm on the due date. Hard copy must be submitted in class. The short paper is due on **April 8**, and the final paper is due by on the date of the final exam (in my office) by 5 pm. A half-grade deduction will be made for each day delayed (for both papers' deadlines).
12. The mid-term exam will be given in the form of essay questions (study questions will be given out in advance). No make-up exam will be given unless you obtain permission from me at least two days in advance or if you present your special reason with acceptable documentation. There will be no final exam for the course.



## Syllabus

<b>Date</b>	<b>Content of discussion</b>	<b>Assignments for this class</b>
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## Week 1

<b>T 1/22</b>	<b>Introduction</b> <i>First-person Methodologies: What, Why, How?</i>	<b>None</b>
<b>R 1/24</b>	Video: Consciousness	Read Bedau pp. 7-15 <i>Writing a Summary</i>

Self-Consciousness

## Week 2

\* You must have the reader packet before the second week of semester.

<b>T 1/29</b>	Keenan: <i>Face in the Mirror</i> (I) Chapters 1-2	[Packet #1] <b>Weekly essay #1</b>
<b>R 1/31</b>	Keenan: <i>Face in the Mirror</i> (II) Chapters 5-7	[Packet #2] Read Bedau pp. 38-40 <i>Outlining an Essay</i>

## Week 3

<b>T 2/5</b>	Nørretranders, <i>The User Illusion</i> (I) Preface, Chapters 6-7	[Packet #3] <b>Weekly essay #2</b>
<b>R 2/7</b>	Nørretranders, <i>The User Illusion</i> (II) Chapter 8	[Packet #4] Read Bedau pp. 106-111;125 <i>Drafting</i>

## Week 4

<b>T 2/12</b>	Nørretranders, <i>The User Illusion</i> (III) Chapter 9-10	[Packet #5] <b>Weekly essay #3</b>
<b>R 2/14</b>	Nørretranders, <i>The User Illusion</i> (IV) Chapter 11-12	[Packet #6] Read Bedau pp. 127-142 <i>Revising</i>

**Week 5**

<b>T 2/19</b>	Dennett, “Multiple Drafts versus the Cartesian Theater”	[Packet #7] <b>Weekly essay #4</b>
<b>R 2/21</b>	Thomas Nagel, “Brian Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness	[Packet #8]

**Introspection and Self-Knowledge****Week 6**

<b>T 2/26</b>	D. M. Armstrong, “Introspection”	[Packet #9] <b>Weekly essay #5</b>
<b>R 2/28</b>	Pierre Vermersch, “Introspection as Practice”	[Packet #10] Read Bedau pp. 161-176 <i>Quotes and Citations</i>

**Week 7**

<b>T 3/4</b>	Sidney Shoemaker, “Introspection and the Self”	[Packet #11] <b>Weekly essay #6</b>
<b>R 3/6</b>	Roderick M. Chisholm, “On the Observability of the Self”	[Packet #12]

**Week 8**

<b>T 3/11</b>	Sidney Shoemaker, “On Knowing One’s Own Mind”	[Packet #13] <b>Weekly essay #7</b>
<b>R 3/13</b>	Cynthia Macdonald, “Introspection and Authoritative Self-Knowledge”	[Packet #14]

**Week 9**

<b>T 3/18</b>	Research Workshop	Read Bedau pp. 177-186 <i>Library and Online Resources</i>
<b>R 3/20</b>	<b>APA Pacific Meeting [No Class]</b>	

**Week 10**

<b>T 3/25</b>	<b>Mid-term Exam</b>
<b>R 3/27</b>	<b>Philosophy Symposium [No Class]</b>

<b>T 4/1</b>	<b>Spring Recess</b>
<b>R 4/3</b>	<b>Spring Recess</b>

**Week 11**

<b>T 4/8</b>	Christopher Peacocke, "Mental Action and Self-Awareness"	[Packet #15] <b>Short paper due in class</b> <b>Turnitin.com closes at 5pm</b>
<b>R 4/10</b>	Jesse Prinz, "All Consciousness is Perceptual"	<b>Student presentation #1</b> [Packet #16]

**Personal Identity****Week 12**

<b>T 4/15</b>	Bernard Williams, "Personal Identity and Individuation"	<b>Long paper abstract due in class</b> <b>Student presentation #2</b> [Packet #17]
<b>R 4/17</b>	Bernard Williams, "Are Persons Bodies?"	<b>Student presentation #3</b> [Packet #18]

**Week 13**

<b>T 4/22</b>	Bernard Williams, "Imagination and the Self"	<b>Student presentation #4</b> [Packet #19]
<b>R 4/24</b>	Bernard Williams, "The Self and the Future"	<b>Student presentation #5</b> [Packet #20]

*Self-Reference and Language***Week 14**

<b>T 4/29</b>	G. E. M. Anscombe, "The First Person"	<b>Student presentation #6</b> [Packet #21]
<b>R 5/1</b>	Garth Evans, "Self-Identification"	<b>Student presentation #7</b> [Packet #22]

**Week 15**

<b>T 5/6</b>	John Perry, "The Problem of the Essential Indexical"	<b>Student presentation #8</b> [Packet #23]
<b>R 5/8</b>	<b>Open Discussion</b>	

**Final Exam Date: Thursday, May 15 5:00 PM**

**Final revised paper due at class time (H311-A).**

**No final exam.**

