

# Phil 150: Philosophy of Cognitive Science

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Library reserve code: MF150

Location: HSS 1128A  
Office: HSS 873  
Office Hours: Weds 3-4

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## Course Description:

This course will be a critical examination of a central debate in the cognitive sciences, between the establishment computational/representational view of the mind and its various competitors: ecological, embodied, embedded, enactive, and extended accounts of cognition. This is a fundamental disagreement about the very nature of the mind: to what extent, and in what way, might cognition be “embodied” or “embedded”? Assuming that cognition (broadly construed) is in some way embodied, what implications would that have for our investigations in the various cognitive sciences? We will start with some fundamental background readings, and work our way through the more important recent elaborations of the view.

## Required Texts:

All readings will be made available through library electronic reserves or through the TED site for the course. The password for the reserves is **MF150** and must be accessed from a UCSD IP address.

## Course Mechanics:

**TED:** There is a TED site for the course. All handouts, slides, homework assignments, and supplementary readings (if any) will be made available through this site. It is your responsibility to check this site regularly.

**Lectures and discussion:** I often lecture with slides. The slides will be used to focus discussion and organize complex material; they are not a substitute for the readings. The slides will be made available on TED a few days after lecture. Students are expected to take careful notes and will be held responsible for the material discussed in class not found on the slides or in the readings. There is no separate time devoted to discussion; please (politely) interrupt at any time with comments or questions.

**Reading Assignments:** Students are expected to read each selection prior to class (preferably more than once). You should take notes while reading, keeping track of questions or issues that arise. You should bring both the reading and the notes/questions to class. 3-4 times per quarter there will be a short, unannounced reading quiz in class.

## Grading:

There are two short essays, a final exam, and a quiz/participation grade:

| Assignments        | Value | Due Date         |
|--------------------|-------|------------------|
| Essay 1 (5-6 pgs)  | 30%   | Tues, April 29th |
| Essay 2 (5-6 pgs)  | 30%   | Tues, May 27th   |
| Quiz/Participation | 10%   | ?                |
| Final              | 30%   | 6/10             |

## Course Policies:

To avoid penalties for late assignments, students must provide official documentation explaining why the assignment could not be handed in on time. Late homework without documentation will not be accepted. Late papers without documentation will receive a late penalty of 1/3 letter grade for each day a paper is late, including weekend days (no exceptions).

**Turnitin boilerplate:** Students agree that by taking this course all required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism (via the TED interface). All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

## Tentative Reading Schedule (subject to change):

Part 1: The Establishment

- Week 1  
T: Introduction, background, format, etc.  
Th: Chomsky
- Week 2:  
T: Fodor, part 1 Th: Fodor, part 2

Part 2: Ecological Views

- Week 3:  
T: Gibson 1  
Th: Gibson 2

Part 3: Embodied Views and A.I.

- Week 4:  
T: Dreyfus  
Th: Thompson & Cosmelli (2011)
- Week 5:  
T: Brooks  
Th: Gallistel (TED)

Part 4: Enactive and Dynamic Views

- Week 6:  
T: Susan Hurley (via TED)  
Th: Alva Noë
- Week 7: T: Block and Prinz  
Th: Briscoe

Part 5: The Extended Mind

- Week 8:  
T: Clark & Chalmers 1  
Th: Clark & Chalmers 2
- Week 9:  
T: Adams and Aizawa  
Th: C&C Replies 2 (tba)

Part 6: Back to the Establishment

- Week 10:  
T: Van Gelder (1992)  
Th: Final Exam Review