

**PHIL 149: Philosophy of Psychology**  
Professor: Matthew Fulkerson  
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MWF: 1-1:50 (HSS 1128A)  
Office Hours: Weds 2-3 & by appt.  
Office: HSS 873

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### **Course Description:**

This course will examine the fundamental philosophical issues that arise in the field of psychology (broadly construed). The course will be divided into several self-standing modules. These include modules on explanation, reduction, emergence, laws, and methodology.

### **Required Texts:**

For this course there will be a textbook (**An Introduction to the Philosophy of Psychology, by Weiskopf and Adams, Cambridge, 2015**) supplemented by primary source readings. All primary source readings will be made available through TritonEd.

### **Course Mechanics:**

*TritonEd:* There is a TritonEd (formerly 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:* Occasionally, I 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 TritonEd 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 the appropriate book chapter prior to class on Monday. You should take notes while reading, keeping track of questions or issues that arise for discussion. You should bring both the reading and the notes/questions to class. Prior to class on Weds, you should read and be prepared to discuss the primary target article for that week. At random intervals throughout the course, there will be a short reading quiz at the beginning of

class. It will consist of two questions, one about the reading, another that can be directly answered. Each question is worth a point.

**Grading:**

Essay 1 (6 pgs)	20%	Due 2/1
Reading Quizzes	20%	Random
Essay 2 (6 pgs)	30%	Due 3/11
Final Exam	30%	3/18, 11:30am

**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 TritonEd 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):**

**NOTE: There will be NO CLASS on Friday, March 11th**

**Each Week (as described above):** Read the associated book chapter prior to class on Monday. Read the supplemental article prior to class on Weds.

**Week 1 (Jan 4, 6, 8): What is Psychology?**

George Miller, “The Magical Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two: Some Limits on Our Capacity for Processing Information.”

**Week 2 (Jan 11, 13, 15): Autonomy and Reduction**

Fodor: “Special Sciences”

**Week 3 (Jan 18, 20, 22): Modularity and Cognitive Architecture**

Samuels, Richard, “Evolutionary Psychology and the Massive Modularity Thesis”

**Week 4 (Jan 25, 27, 29): Nativism, Development, and Change**

Alison Gopnik & Wellman: “Reconstructing Constructivism: Causal Models, Bayesian Learning Mechanisms, and the Theory Theory”

**Week 5 (Feb 1, 3, 5): Beyond the Brain and Body**

Clark & Chalmers, “The Extended Mind”

**Week 6 (Feb 8, 10, 12): Perception and Action**

Susan Hurley, “Perception and Action: Alternative Views”

**Week 7 (Feb 17, 18; NO CLASS 15): Attention and Consciousness**

Wayne Wu, “What is Conscious Attention?”

**Week 8 (Feb 22, 24, 26): The Social Mind**

Wodak, Leslie, and Rhodes, “What a Loaded Generalization: Generics and Social Cognition”

**Week 9 (Feb 29, Mar 2, 4): Thought and Language**

Jose Luis Bermudez, “Language and Thinking about Thoughts”

**Week 10 (Mar 7, 9, NO CLASS 11): The WEIRD Crisis**

Reading: Henrich et al, “The Weirdest People in the World”