ARTS2301: Computers, Brains & Minds
S1, 2016

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# 1. Course Staff and Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Convenor &amp; Lecturer</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Dr. Peter Slezak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>(02) 9385 2422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:p.slezak@unsw.edu.au">p.slezak@unsw.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Time</td>
<td>Monday 11-12, Tuesday 11-12, Wednesday 10-11.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# 2. Course Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units of Credit (UoC)</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Description</td>
<td>Introduction to contemporary and historical discussions of mind, thought, intelligence and consciousness. Focuses on the issues which arise in connection with the so-called cognitive sciences – disciplines including neuroscience, psychology, linguistics, philosophy of mind and artificial intelligence. Can computers think? Is the brain a computer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Aims</td>
<td>Students who successfully complete this course will have gained an understanding and also an ability to apply and think critically about key concepts and controversies in the philosophy of mind and cognitive science. These include the mind-body problem and consciousness, intelligence in artificial systems, language and innateness, intentionality and meaning, creativity and problem solving heuristics, neural nets, visual imagery, mental representation and decision-making.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Student Learning Outcomes

| 1. Awareness of central themes and debates in philosophy of mind and cognitive science. |  |
|Experience in engaging critically and reflectively with important issues and traditions in contemporary philosophy and their historical antecedents, and the argumentation surrounding these issues. |  |
|Experience in thinking systematically and critically in analysing controversial issues in philosophy of mind in contemporary and historical debates. |  |
|Development of skills of critical analysis and reflective thinking in relation to controversial theoretical issues in philosophy and cognitive science. |  |

## Graduate Attributes

| 1. Ability to read and interpret texts sensitively and carefully. |  |
|Ability to evaluate and critically analyse beliefs, ideas and information using a range of techniques of philosophical reasoning. |  |
|Appreciation of the importance of reasoned enquiry and an ability to apply tools of philosophical analysis to a range of issues including those in contemporary debates. |  |
|Skills of effective communication. |  |
3. Learning and Teaching Rationale

The teaching is conducted through lectures and tutorials. Lectures are designed to inform as well as provoke critical thinking, debate and to stimulate thoughtful reading of the primary and secondary literature.

Tutorials are intended to provide an opportunity to read important scholarly articles and to discuss and debate the central issues in an informal setting.

The Learning and Teaching rationale for this course is based on the belief that the best way to learn philosophy is by doing philosophy. For this reason there will be a special focus on fostering discussion in class, as well as an ongoing online discussion forum.

4. Teaching Strategies

The issues arising in philosophy of psychology and cognitive science are very controversial and are presented not as fixed, received dogma to be learned but as issues to be debated and discussed. Besides contemporary theories, the issues arising in the history of the subject are also matters of academic debate and will be presented as live questions to be debated rather than learned as accepted truth.

The teaching strategies for this course are based on the belief that the best way to learn philosophy is by doing philosophy. For this reason there will be a special focus on fostering discussion in class. The purpose of the lecture will be primarily to introduce new themes, questions, and arguments, which we will then discuss. The purpose of the tutorials is to help you develop your skills of critical thinking, as well as the ability to communicate complex ideas effectively, both face-to-face and in writing.

5. Course Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial presentation</td>
<td>Presentation write-up: 1000 words</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Critical thinking, analytical comprehension, rational argument and debate.</td>
<td>Class presentations to be assigned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>3,000 words</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Critical analysis and writing.</td>
<td>Week 12: May 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Test</td>
<td>1,000 words</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Knowledge &amp; Comprehension of ideas, theories.</td>
<td>Wk 6: April 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please Note: The Arts and Social Sciences Protocols and Guidelines state:
A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

The Attendance Guidelines can be found in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/

**Grades**

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see: https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/GuideToUNSWGrades.html

**Submission of Assessment Tasks**

Assignments must be submitted electronically through Moodle (http://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/). You must use your zID login to submit your assignments in Moodle.

There are two “Learning Activities” in Moodle labelled according to the appropriate assessment. Please electronically submit your assignment to the correct “Learning Activity”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment task to be submitted in Moodle</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial presentation write-up</td>
<td>One week after presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,000 word Essay</td>
<td>Week 12: May 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Test</td>
<td>Week 6: April 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Please note the deadline to submit an assignment electronically is 4:00 pm on the due date of the assignment.

When you submit your assignment electronically, you agree that:

I have followed the Student Code of Conduct. I certify that I have read and understand the University requirements in respect of student academic misconduct outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and the Student Misconduct Procedure. I declare that this assessment item is my own work, except where acknowledged, and has not been submitted for academic credit previously in whole or in part.

I acknowledge that the assessor of this item may, for assessment purposes:

- provide a copy to another staff member of the University
- communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (such as Turnitin) which may retain a copy of the assessment item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking.
Your assignment will be available with feedback in soft copy within three weeks of the due date.

You are required to put your name (as it appears in University records) and UNSW Student ID on every page of your assignments.

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Moodle/Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year).

If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on its system status on Twitter.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Late Submission of Assignments

The Arts and Social Sciences late submissions guidelines state the following:

- An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).
- The late penalty is the loss of 3% of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late.
- Work submitted 14 days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.
- Work submitted 21 days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.

The Late Submissions Guidelines can be found in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/

The penalty may not apply where students are able to provide documentary evidence of illness or serious misadventure. Time pressure resulting from undertaking assignments for other courses does not constitute an acceptable excuse for lateness.

6. Extension of Time for Submission of Assessment Tasks

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines apply to all assessed tasks regardless of whether or not a grade is awarded, except the following:

1. any form of test/examination/assessed activity undertaken during regular class contact hours
2. any task specifically identified by the Course Authority (the academic in charge of the course) in the Course Outline or Learning Management System (LMS), for example, Moodle, as not available for extension requests.

A student who missed an assessment activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines state the following:

- A student seeking an extension should apply through the Faculty’s online extension tool available in LMS.
- A request for an extension should be submitted before the due time/date for the assessment task.
- The Course Authority should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
- The Course Authority can only approve an extension up to five days. A student requesting an extension greater than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
- The Course Authority advises their decision through the online extension tool.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.

7. Attendance

The Arts and Social Sciences Attendance Guidelines state the following:

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.
- If a student is unable to attend all classes for a course due to timetable clashes, the student must complete the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Permitted Time Clash form (see information at Item 8 below). A student unable to attend lectures in a course conducted by the School of Education can apply for “Permission to Participate in Lectures Online”.
- Where practical, a student’s attendance will be recorded. Individual course outlines/LMS will set out the conditions under which attendance will be measured.
- A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.
- If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.
- Reserve members of the Australian Defence Force who require absences of more than two weeks due to full-time service may be provided an exemption. The student may also be permitted to discontinue enrolment without academic or financial penalty.
- If a Course Authority rejects a student’s request for absence from a class or activity the student must be advised in writing of the grounds for the rejection.
• A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance.

• A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course’s learning outcomes and/or volume of learning.

• A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

• The Dean will only grant such a request after consultation with the Course Authority to ensure that measures can be organised that will allow the student to meet the course’s learning outcomes and volume of learning.

• **A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).**

• A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without fail is made by Student Administration and Records.

Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the Student Misconduct Policy.

8. **Class Clash**

Students who are enrolled in an Arts and Social Sciences program (single or dual) and have an unavoidable timetable clash can apply for permissible timetable clash by completing an online application form. Students must meet the rules and conditions in order to apply for permissible clash. The rules and conditions can be accessed online in full at: [https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Rules.pdf](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Rules.pdf)

For students who are enrolled in a non-Arts and Social Sciences program, they must seek advice from their home faculty on permissible clash approval.

9. **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/](https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/). They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student’s work
or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here:  
### 10. Course Schedule

**To view course timetable, please visit:** [http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/](http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Commencing:</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lecture Content</th>
<th>Tutorial Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1    Feb 29</td>
<td>General Introduction</td>
<td>The Cognitive Revolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2    March 7</td>
<td>Historical</td>
<td>Plato to Descartes</td>
<td>Descartes, Dennett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3    March 14</td>
<td>Mind-Body Problem</td>
<td>Dualism &amp; Materialism</td>
<td>McGinn, Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4    March 21</td>
<td>Mind-Body Problem</td>
<td>Functionalism</td>
<td>Nagel, Block,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Semester Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5    April 4</td>
<td>Behaviourism</td>
<td>Watson, Skinner &amp; Chomsky</td>
<td>Chomsky review of Skinner MacCorquodale reply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6    April 11</td>
<td>Language &amp; Mind</td>
<td>Chomsky Revolution</td>
<td>Searle, Pylyshyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7    April 18</td>
<td>Language &amp; Mind</td>
<td>Generative Grammar</td>
<td>Slezak, Botha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8    April 26</td>
<td>Innateness</td>
<td>Plato to Chomsky</td>
<td>Plato, Hauser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9    May 2</td>
<td>Minds &amp; Machines</td>
<td>Turing Machines &amp; Gödel’s Theorem</td>
<td>Turing, Lucas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10   May 9</td>
<td>Artificial Intelligence</td>
<td>Minds, Brains &amp; Programs</td>
<td>Newell &amp; Simon, Searle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11   May 16</td>
<td>Neural Nets</td>
<td>Connectionism</td>
<td>Stich, Thagard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12   May 23</td>
<td>Mental Representation</td>
<td>Imagery Debate</td>
<td>Kosslyn, Pylyshyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13   May 30</td>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>Biases &amp; Heuristics</td>
<td>Tversky &amp; Kahneman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11. Course Resources

Articles for background reading and weekly tutorial discussions are available via hyperlinks on the Course Moodle website.

Additional Recommended Reading:

Steven Pinker, ‘How the Mind Works’
Steven Pinker, ‘The Language Instinct’
12. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students’ feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW’s Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

13. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre’s website at:
http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au

14. Grievances

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at:
https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html

15. Other Information

myUNSW

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:
https://my.unsw.edu.au
https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html

OHS

UNSW’s Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/

Special Consideration

In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.
Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at: https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/SpecialConsideration.html

Student Equity and Disabilities Unit

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at: http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.