

Huron Brief Course Outlines

Fall/Winter 2023-2024

Course Title: Embodiment

Course Number and Section

PHILOSOPHY

3750F - 550

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

In this course, we will investigate the philosophical implications of corporeal existence. In the history of Philosophy, bodies have been conceptually separated from minds, rationality, and personhood. That separation has profound social, political, ethical, and ecological effects. Using insights from Phenomenology; Feminist, Disability, and Critical Race Theory; and Cognitive Science, we will examine those effects and consider alternate theories of embodiment that avoid splitting the mental from the physical and the self from the body. These theories place people back into their bodies within sociomaterial, relational, and more-than-human worlds. But if we are not purely thinking things, who and how are we and what might that mean about how we should live?

Other questions may include: Are bodies something that we have or something that we are? Ought or can they be transcended? How should we respond to vulnerability and interdependence? What does bodily difference have to do with being human, or a person, and how does that difference come to be and be interpreted? Are our bodies discrete? What and where is the mind? Should we pursue genetic or surgical bodily enhancement? What can we learn from considering bodily experiences and capacities such as pregnancy, aging, eating, etc.? How are bodies racialized, gendered, or dis/abled? How have idealized images of the human affected political structures? Can you experience yourself as a subject and an object simultaneously? What do human bodies have to do with the more-than-human world? How do inter/subjectivity, selfhood, corporeality, and identity relate?

Learning Outcomes:

Comprehension, Analysis, Argumentation, and Critical Thinking: To develop student's abilities to identify, understand, construct, and critique arguments as well as to analyze concepts.

Area Specific Knowledge and Methodological Competence: To familiarize students with a central debate in metaphysics and to illuminate connections between metaphysics and social, moral, and political philosophy.

Creative Problem Solving, Epistemic Responsibility and Critical Thinking: To improve student's abilities to ask and answer questions, critique their own opinions, and identify weaknesses in their own arguments.

Communication and Active Listening: To improve student's oral and written communication skills for the purposes of information seeking and sharing across disciplinary and intradisciplinary boundaries.

Self-knowledge and Application: To provide students with opportunities to connect theory with their lived experiences and to see how theory might matter in the world (pun intended).

Textbooks and Course Materials:

50 Concepts for a Critical* Phenomenology, (2020). ed. Gail Weiss, Ann V. Murphy, and Gayle Salamon. Northwestern University Press. Available on-line through UWO Libraries.

All other readings can be found either on the internet, via UWO Libraries, or in the Resources section of OWL. Addresses for web-based readings are given in the Reading List on OWL.

Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Participation	Ongoing	10%
Essay	self-chosen	20%
Journal Exchange One	Oct. 12	5%
Journal Exchange Two	Nov. 21	5%
Journal	Dec. 8	15%
Exam, in person	TBA	25%
Experiential Learning Assignment	Oct. 25 or Nov. 8 (depending on which farm you visit)	20%

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.