“Begin at the beginning,” the King said, very gravely, “and go on till you come to the end: then stop.”
— Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*
PHENOMENOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY OF MIND
PHIL 298 - FALL 2014

Dr. Christian Coseru
4B Glebe Street, # 205
Phone: 953-1935; Email: coseru@cofc.edu
Office hours: Mon/Wed 2:00-4:00 p.m. and by appointment

Days & Time: TR 1:40-2:55
Location: MYBK 206

COURSE DESCRIPTION

For much of the twentieth century philosophical work on the mind has followed two distinct streams: phenomenology and analytic philosophy. The phenomenological approach began in the late 19th century Europe with Brentano, and reached maturity in the 20th century in the work of such influential figures as Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty. After the Second World War, and especially in the Anglophone world, new approaches and methods for studying the mind were developed, often drawing from research in psychology, linguistics, neuroscience, and the interdisciplinary field of cognitive science. As the century progressed so the gulf between phenomenology and analytic philosophy of mind widened. This course surveys recent work that aims to bring together these two streams of thought by focusing, on the one hand, on work in phenomenology that is significant to current analytic research, and, on the other, on work that deploys the tools of analytic philosophy to address central phenomenological concerns. It also draws from recent philosophical contributions to the study of mind and cognition from a cross-cultural perspective. We will consider several of the most fundamental issues in the philosophical study of mind: (i) the nature, content, and character of consciousness; (ii) the problem of intentionality; (iii) approaches to perception, action, and emotion; and (iv) conceptions of self/no-self and subjectivity.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the College Bookstore)

Additional readings on OAKS.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Smith, David Woodruff & Thomasson, Amie (eds.). 2005. Phenomenology and Philosophy of Mind, OUP. PPM
Zahavi, Dan (ed.). 2012. The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Phenomenology, OUP. OHCP
Velmans, Max & Schneider, Susan (eds.). 2007. The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness, OUP. BCC

TENTATIVE READING ASSIGNMENTS

Sep 2-4 Classical Prejudices and the Return to Phenomena. Readings: Merleau-Ponty (PM: 1-66); Siewert ‘Respecting Appearances: A Phenomenological Approach to Consciousness’ (OHCP 48-69 on OAKS)
Sep 16  Readings: Polger, ‘Extent of Consciousness: Rethinking the evolution of consciousness’ (BCC: 72-86 On OAKS).

Sep 18  FIRST PAPER DUE


Sep 30 - Oct 2  Readings: Carman, ‘On the Inescapability of Phenomenology’ (OAKS); Coseru ‘Taking the Intentionality of Perception Seriously: Why Phenomenology is Inescapable’ (OAKS)

Oct 7-9  Readings: Siegel, ‘Which Properties are Represented in Perception’ (OAKS)


Oct 21  SECOND PAPER DUE

Oct 23  Readings: Gallagher and Zahavi, ‘Action and Agency’ (PM: 171-190); Bermúdez, ‘Bodily Awareness’ (PPM: 295-315); Noë ‘Experience without the Head’ (OAKS)

Oct 28-30  Readings: Heinämaa, ‘Sex, Gender, and Embodiment’ (OHCP: 216-242 on OAKS); Legrand ‘Phenomenological Dimensions of Bodily Self-Consciousness’ (OAKS)

Nov 4-6  SELVES, SUBJECTIVITY, AND CONSCIOUSNESS. Readings: Gallagher & Zahavi, (PM: 219-238). Thompson, ‘Self, No-Self: Memory and Reflexive Awareness’ (OAKS); Ganeri, ‘Immersion and Subjectivity’ (OAKS)

Nov 11  THIRD PAPER DUE

Nov 11-13  Ganeri, ‘Subjectivity, Selfhood and the Use of the Word ‘I” (OAKS); Zahavi, ‘The Experiential Self’ (OAKS)

Nov 18-20  Coseru, ‘Consciousness as Discernment and Sentience’ (OAKS); Zahavi and Kriegel, ‘For-me-ness: What it is and what it is not’ (OAKS).

Dec 9  FINAL EXAM (12:00-3:00 p.m.).