Course description: This is a course in the philosophy of mind. We consider three main topics: animal cognition, human cognition and consciousness, computers & cognition. The course is lecture and discussion with much time devoted to discussion. In addition to quizzes on lecture and discussion and on readings, there will be short “thought” papers where students defend their own ideas on a topic or controversy covered in lecture and readings. In addition, students will answer homework questions handed out with each of the readings. Lastly, there will be an in-class final exam during final exam period.

This course contributes to the following Departmental and General Education learning goals, as indicated.

Programmatic Learning Goals for the B.S. in Cognitive Science:
1. Communicate scientific ideas and methods (i.e. discuss and solve scientific problems and/or provide data or arguments in support of a scientific hypothesis), clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
2. Critically assess scientific research (primary source articles and/or lab reports), methods, and/or problem solving related to cognitive science, linguistics, and speech pathology.
3. Synthesize multiple methodological or disciplinary research perspectives to analyze a scientific problem and make improvements that advance the issue, debate, or research.

The course meets these goals because it is an interdisciplinary course. The readings are from anthropology, computer science, cognitive ethology, linguistics, psychology, and philosophy. Students must read and interpret the data or arguments given in the readings from a diversity of scientific and humanistic perspectives. Students must answer questions on homework assignments and quizzes on the readings. They must also formulate their ideas and present and defend them in their “thought” papers and exam essays. Hence, they critically assess and synthesize material from multiple research perspectives as they evaluate and advance the issues.

Ten General Education Goal set by the Faculty Senate of the University of Delaware.

1. Attain effective skills in oral and written communication, quantitative reasoning, and society at large.
2. Learn to think critically.
3. Be able to work and learn both independently and collaboratively.
4. Engage questions of ethics and recognize responsibilities to self, community, and society at large.
5. Understand the diverse ways of thinking that underlie the search for knowledge in the arts, humanities, sciences and social sciences.
6. Develop the intellectual curiosity, confidence, and engagement that will lead to lifelong learning.
7. Develop the ability to integrate academic knowledge with experiences that extend beyond the boundaries of the classroom.
8. Expand understanding and appreciation of human creativity and diverse forms of aesthetic and intellectual expression.
9. Understand the foundations of United States society, including the significance of its cultural diversity.
10. Develop an international perspective in order to live and work effectively in an increasingly global society.
Clearly, as students meet the three programmatic learning goals of the Cognitive Science major they also satisfy Gen Ed goals (1,2,3,5,6,8, and 10). In addition, this course address issues of animal rights and social treatment of animals. So it touches on Gen Ed goals (4, and 10) as well.

September

2 Opening Remarks—
04 Descartes
07 Labor Day…no classes
09 “Thoughtless Brutes” Norman Malcolm
11 “Thoughtful Brutes” Jonathan Bennett & “Monkey in the mirror” deWall, et. al.
11 “Rational Animals” Donald Davidson
14 “Holism” Stephen Stich
16 Catch up
18 “Brute Experience” Peter Carruthers
21 “Carruthers on Nonconscious Experience” Jamieson & Bekoff
23 “What it's like to be a bat?” Thomas Nagel
25 “What Mary didn’t know” Frank Jackson
28 Catch up
30 “Knowing Qualia: A reply to Jackson” Paul Churchland

October

05 What is Consciousness?” D.M. Armstrong
07 “Theory of Consciousness” David Rosenthal
09 “The Intentionality of Feelings and Experiences” Michael Tye
12 “What What It’s Like is Really Like” Michael Tye
14 “Qualia” Fred Dretske
16 Fall Break  no classes
19 “Conscious Experience” Fred Dretske
21-23 Externalism & Supervenience Fred Dretske
26 “The Tale of Mary and Mechanisms: A Theory of Perspectival Subjectivity” Michael Tye
28 Catch up
30 “Squabbles among the representationalists: The revenge of swampman” Adams * & Dietrich

November

02 “Computing Machinery and Intelligence” Alan Turing
04 “The Computer Model of the Mind” Ned Block
06 “Machine Consciousness” Bill Lycan
09 “Minds, Brains, and Programs” John Searle
11 “Searle on What Only Brains Can Do” Jerry Fodor
13 “Afterthoughts: Yin and Yan in the Chinese Room” Jerry Fodor
16 “Yin and Yang Strike Out” John Searle
18 “Minds, Machines and Searle” Stephen Harnad
20 “Virtual Symposium on Virtual Mind” Stephen Harnad
23-25 “Computation is Just Interpretable Symbol Manipulation: Cognition Isn’t” Stephen Harnad
27 Thanksgiving break  no classes
30 “Machines and the Mental” Fred Dretske
December

02 “Meaning and the World Order” Jerry Fodor
04 “A Theory of Content II” Jerry Fodor
07-09 “Fodorian Semantics” Fred Adams & Ken Aizawa
If we go fast we will add:
“The Explanatory Role of Belief” Fred Dretske
“Biosemantics” Ruth Millikan
“A Continuum of Semantic Optimism” Peter Godfrey-Smith

Attendance: is required.

Grades: will be based upon a series of homework assignments, short “thought” papers, quizzes, and a final exam. Homework and short papers will be assigned on a regular basis upon the readings and class discussion. Short quizzes will be given at regular intervals on both readings and class discussion. A final exam will be given. Class participation will be taken into account in the final grade. Grading will be on a standard scale: 90% A-, 80% B-, and so on. All of these matters will be discussed in class. All assignments will be made in class. All quizzes and the final will be taken in class.