I. Administrative

A. Roll

B. Extra credit opportunities

C. Major and minor recruiting

D. Schedule review

E. Questions?

II. Introduction to the Mind/Body Problem

A. There are three principal questions:

1. What is the body?

2. What is the mind?

3. How do they relate to one another?

B. Throughout much of the debate, the first question has been regarded as the easiest of the three. The body is composed of matter, and so is the same kind of thing as the rest of the matter in the universe.

C. The tricky questions have been the second and third. This is so for several reasons.

1. We have access to minds in a way that differs dramatically from the access we have to bodies. I know that there is at least one mind in the universe, and this I know because I have first-person, introspective access to my own mind. This is the only thing in the universe I have access to in this way, which suggests that it will be very problematic to account for it in the way I account for the body; further, it will be difficult to relate the two because I am unable to occupy the same perspective on each.
2. A related point: we investigate bodies by employing objective, repeatable methods—methods that could be employed by anyone; we investigate mind by employing (in the first instance) subjective methods that could not be employed by anyone on our own mental lives. If the task of explanation and prediction is designed to help any interested and able rational agent understand the phenomena in question, it seems unlikely that we will be able to accomplish this task with respect to the mind.

3. We can imagine a body without a mind—it is conceivable that everything could be the same from a physical perspective and different from a mental perspective. As a result, it looks like the mind just swings free from the body, and this makes it appear all the more unlikely that we will be able to approach it in the same way we approach the body.

D. The Explanatory Project

1. The mind/body problem is a problem because of the difficulty associated with explaining a certain class of phenomena: that class of mental phenomena, such as pains, convictions, thoughts, desires, dreams, goals, decisions, etc. etc. Among the more salient aspects are:

   a. Consciousness
   b. Perspective
   c. Emotion
   d. Soul
   e. Instinct
   f. Memory
   g. Dependence on (or relation with) the body

2. In seeking to explain these, you want to do so in a way that accounts for their differences while at the same time making sense out of the apparent fact that they all appear to be modifications of the same kind of thing. This explanation should be principled and should allow for prediction as well as explanation.

3. We will look at three theories:
a. **Cartesian dualism**, according to which you consider the mental as a realm all to itself, and so seek to explain behavior with it alone.

b. **Behaviorism**, according to which the mental is really just the behavioral, and so you explain the mind in terms of behavior.

c. **Physicalism**, which reduces the mind to the brain and the explanatory project to that of neurobiology; on this view, mental states are identical with states of the central nervous system. This can be seen as a synthesis of dualism and behaviorism.

4. Of these, *physicalism* is the one that has gained prominence in contemporary cognitive science. However, it is not without its critics. In what follows, we will consider some criticisms of this view.

E. In the next two weeks we will consider these three theories, each of which is an attempt to solve the problem in the logical space first mapped by Descartes.

   1. In this space, the concept of body is of an external, mechanistic, extended thing and the concept of mind is of an internal, conscious, non-extended thing.

   2. The challenge to anyone working in this space is to answer the three questions in a way that respects these initial conceptual specifications.

   3. *Remember*: this is a topic that still has enormous currency, and it is a topic that philosophers have shaped to a very great extent; indeed, you can give Descartes some credit for putting the matter in a way that we still employ.

### III. Cartesian Dualism

A. **What is the body?**

   1. The body is composed of *extended substance*. This is physical stuff of the kind that constitutes our bodies. It has shape, mass, etc. It conforms to mechanical laws of the kind studied by physicists.

   2. It is external and can be accessed and understood in the same way
by anyone.

B. What is the mind?

1. The mind is composed of thinking substance. (He established the existence of this in Meditation II.) It is non-physical, non-extended, and non-mechanical. However, this does not mean it is not rule-governed—it just conforms to different rules than extended substances.

2. It is internal and is accessed through consciousness and introspection; thus, it is available only to the agent whose mind it is.

C. What is the relation between them?

1. In Meditation VI, Descartes' primary focus is on a particularly close association between these substances: the person.

2. They are fundamentally different.
   a. Step 1: He notes that if he clearly and distinctly perceives two things as distinct, then God can make them distinct from one another, which is to say that they are distinct. Descartes clearly and distinctly perceives that his mind and his body are distinct; therefore, since God can make them distinct from one another, they must be distinct.
   b. Step 2: This doesn't by itself prove that the body exists, only that it would be distinct if it did exist; the Argument for the Existence of Physical Objects does the rest—it establishes that physical objects exist, and in particular his body.
   c. Step 3: Thus, the mind and body are in fact distinct, and fundamentally so—they are each their own substance.

3. Yet, they interact. (E.g., perception/action.)

IV. Ryle on the Cartesian “Myth”

A. Ryle is out to do “logical geography” of concepts, which amounts to working out the logical relations among propositions (e.g., what propositions imply, and what they are implied by) within a particular area of inquiry—this is paradigmatic analytic philosophy.
B. Ryle focuses on the mind/body problem, and in our reading, on the problem as handled by Descartes.

C. The Official Doctrine: interactive, substance dualism

D. The Absurdity of the Official Doctrine:
   1. Category mistake
   2. The mind/body distinction is a category mistake: the conjunction, “body and mind,” exhibits the same absurdity as the conjunction, “left-hand glove, right-hand glove, and pair of gloves.
   3. The result is that the “Doctrine of the Ghost in the Machine” is absurd, and that the mind as the “not-body” does not exist. Dualism is false
   4. The rest of Ryle’s book, The Concept of Mind, is devoted to making this case.

V. Behaviorism

A. What is the body? As before, it is an external “soft machine” that is best understood via scientific inquiry.

B. What is the mind?
   1. The mind is constituted by dispositions to behave, which are conditionally specifiable properties attributed to people: If A happens, B will behave in such-and-such a way.
   2. These are not states or causes or even causal factors—they are simply conditional facts about the organism.
   3. Ryle introduces dispositions in order to respond to the objection that behaviorism can’t account for the fact that we can have thoughts that do not issue in behavior.
   4. The further point is a linguistic one: mental talk and behavioral talk are two different ways of talking about the same class of things.

C. What is the relation between them? The mind is reduced to aspects of the person’s physical behavior, so the mind is reduced to the body—this is a version of materialism. (Questions about this?)
D. Problems:

1. But isn't there something going on in a very real and robust sense when I think? Surely there is something there that must be explained by an account of the mind, and a dispositional account that is couched in terms of conditionals surely won't get it done. (Armstrong)

2. It is surely unnatural to say that the mind is the behavior—it may be expressed through behavior, but it shouldn't be identified with it.

VI. Identity Materialism (Also Physical State Materialism)

A. What is the body? As before.

B. What is the mind?

1. Armstrong rejects behaviorism, but he thinks the idea of looking at the mind through behavior is a good one. Armstrong's idea is to identify dispositions to behave with internal states of the organism. Thus, the mind is constituted by internal states of the organism—indeed, it makes physicalism of the kind he endorses possible.

2. Mental states can now be regarded as causes, or causal factors, that produce (or are apt to produce) a certain range of behavior.

   a. Note that this is a view developed in reaction to behaviorism and not dualism; indeed, this conclusion is quite compatible with dualism.

   b. Armstrong's own view, though, is that of current science: the character of the states is to be specified in physico-chemical terms.

C. What is the relation between them?

1. The mind is reduced to the body, and so this is a version of materialism.

2. Armstrong embraces a materialist view that has two parts. To be in a particular mental state is:

   a. To be in a particular physical state (in us, a state of the central
nervous system) that

b. Occupies a certain causal role.

c. Both of these identifications are contingent; that is, both could have been otherwise.

D. Problems

1. Can this account for consciousness? Armstrong suggests that is can, in terms of an internal state that is the perception of our internal goings on. (Does this work?)

2. What of differences between brains? Does this threaten identification?