

**The Ohio State University  
Colleges of the Arts and Sciences New Course Request**

**Philosophy Department**

Academic Unit

**Philosophy**

Book 3 Listing (e.g., Portuguese)

**Philosophy 468                      Philosophy of Perception**

Number                      Title

**Phil of Perception**

**UG**

**5**

18-Character Title Abbreviation

Level

Credit Hours

Summer

Autumn **X**

Winter

Spring

Year **2007**

Proposed effective date, choose one quarter and put an "X" after it; and fill in the year. See the OAA curriculum manual for deadlines.

**A. Course Offerings Bulletin Information**

Follow the instructions in the OAA curriculum manual. If this is a course with decimal subdivisions, then use one New Course Request form for the generic information that will apply to all subdivisions; and use separate forms for each new decimal subdivision, including on each form the information that is unique to that subdivision. If the course offered is less than a quarter or a term, please complete the Flexibly Scheduled/Off Campus/Workshop Request form.

Description (*not to exceed 25 words*): **A philosophical examination of the nature of sensory perception, its relationship to conceptual thought and to consciousness, and its role in action and knowledge acquisition.**

Quarter offered: **SP**

Distribution of class time/contact hours:

Quarter and contact/class time hours information should be omitted from Book 3 publication (yes or no):

Prerequisite(s): **Phil major, or 15 cr hrs of philos course work exclusive of 150, or permission of instructor**

Exclusion or limiting clause:

Repeatable to a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ credit hours.

Cross-listed with:

Grade Option (Please check): Letter **X** S/U  Progress  What course is last in the series? \_\_\_\_\_

Honors Statement: Yes  No **X**

GEC: Yes  No **X**

Admission Condition

Off-Campus: Yes  No **X**

EM: Yes  No **X**

Course: Yes  No **X**

Embedded Honors Statement: Yes  No **X**

Other General Course Information:

(e.g. "Taught in English." "Credit does not count toward BSBA degree.")

**B. General Information**

Subject Code \_\_\_\_\_ Subsidy Level (V, G, T, B, M, D, or P) \_\_\_\_\_

If you have questions, please email Jed Dickhaut at [dickhaut.1@osu.edu](mailto:dickhaut.1@osu.edu).

1. Provide the rationale for proposing this course:

**Perception is a central feature of conscious mental life, raising a variety of interesting and far reaching philosophical questions in a whole variety of philosophical subfields—epistemology, philosophy of mind, philosophy of psychology, and action theory to name but a few. Moreover, perception is an active area of research in cognitive science as well, and this course aims to also make connections between traditional philosophical issues and ongoing empirical work. As such, the course will provide a forum to bring in those perspectives and students interested in them (cognitive science, psychology, neuroscience and philosophy).**

2. Please list Majors/Minors affected by the creation of this new course. Attach revisions of all affected programs. This course is (check one):  Required on major(s)/minor(s)  A choice on major(s)/minor(s)  
 An elective within major(s)/minor(s)  A general elective:
3. Indicate the nature of the program adjustments, new funding, and/or withdrawals that make possible the implementation of this new course.

**The Philosophy Department recently hired 6 new faculty, several of whom have research interest in and/or special qualifications to teach in this area. While perception is a major concern in a number of different areas in philosophy, we are pleased now to be able to offer a course in which it is the central focus. We expect to be able to rotate this class with other new offerings in the philosophy of action and the philosophy of biology.**

4. Is the approval of this request contingent upon the approval of other course requests or curricular requests?

Yes  No  List: \_\_\_\_\_

5. If this course is part of a sequence, list the number of the other course(s) in the sequence: \_\_\_\_\_


6. Expected section size: **35-45** Proposed number of sections per year: **1**

7. Do you want prerequisites enforced electronically (see OAA manual for what can be enforced)? Yes  No


8. This course has been discussed with and has the concurrence of the following academic units needing this course or with academic units having directly related interests (*List units and attach letters and/or forms*):  
 Not Applicable

9. **Attach a course syllabus that includes a topical outline of the course, student learning outcomes and/or course objectives, off-campus field experience, methods of evaluation, and other items as stated in the OAA curriculum manual and e-mail to [asccurrofc@osu.edu](mailto:asccurrofc@osu.edu).**

**Approval Process** The signatures on the lines in ALL CAPS ( e.g. ACADEMIC UNIT) are required.

1.  Tamar Rudavsky  
 Academic Unit Undergraduate Studies Committee Chair Printed Name Date **8/07/07**

2. Justin D'Arms  
 Academic Unit Graduate Studies Committee Chair Printed Name Date

3.  Donald Hubin  
 ACADEMIC UNIT CHAIR/DIRECTOR Printed Name Date **8/2/07**

4. After the Academic Unit Chair/Director signs the request, forward the form to the ASC Curriculum Office, 105 Brown Hall, 190 West 17<sup>th</sup> Ave. or fax it to 688-5678. Attach the syllabus and any supporting documentation in an e-mail to [asccurrofc@osu.edu](mailto:asccurrofc@osu.edu). The ASC Curriculum Office will forward the request to the appropriate committee.

5. COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE Printed Name Date

6. ARTS AND SCIENCES EXECUTIVE DEAN Printed Name Date

7. Graduate School (if appropriate) Printed Name Date

8. University Honors Center (if appropriate) Printed Name Date

9. Office of International Education (if appropriate) Printed Name Date

10. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS Printed Name Date

**PHILOSOPHY 468**  
**THE PHILOSOPHY OF PERCEPTION**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will address the following questions: What is perception? How does it differ from thought? What is its connection to consciousness? How is hearing different from seeing? What does perception do for us?

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The aim of this course is to provide students with an introduction to a variety of central philosophical issues and debates that arise in connection with perception. Students will be expected to become acquire an analytical understanding of these issues and the principal arguments in favor of the various theses held in connection with them. Students will also be expected to learn how to critically analyze and assess differing opinions, develop arguments in favor of their own views on them, and to learn how to express these views clearly and incisively in discussion and in writing.

**COURSE TEXTS:**

*Alva Noë and Evan Thompson, Vision and Mind, The MIT Press, 2002.*  
*David Milner and Melvyn Goodale, Sight Unseen, Oxford, 2005*  
*Other Papers will be available at the Course Web Site (Carmen)*

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS:**

***Sensory Modalities: What Are These?***

*We will discuss what a perceptual or sensory modality is.*

Lecture 1: H.P. Grice, Some remarks about the senses (in Noë and Thompson).

Lecture 2: Paul Bach-y-Rita, Sensory substitution and qualia (in Noë and Thompson).

***Blindness***

*What is blindness? What would it be like to be blind? What difference would this make?*

Lecture 3: Oliver Sacks, The mind's eye: what the blind see (New Yorker) On reserve.

Lecture 4: Gareth Evans, Molyneux's Question (in Noë and Thompson).

***What is Vision?***

*What is Vision? What is it for? What objects do we see in the world?*

Lecture 5: David Marr, Selections from Vision (in Noë and Thompson).  
Lecture 6: Richard Gregory, Perceptions as hypotheses (in Noë and Thompson).  
Lecture 7: James J. Gibson, A theory of direct visual perception (in Noë and Thompson).  
Lecture 8: Jerry A. Fodor and Zenon Pylyshyn, How direct is visual perception? (in Noë and Thompson).  
Lecture 9: Dana H. Ballard, On the function of visual representation (in Noë and Thompson).  
Lecture 10: Mark Johnston “Better than Mere Knowledge? The Function of Sensory Awareness”

### ***The Argument from Illusion***

*How do we explain the peculiar sensory aspects of perception?*

Lecture 11: A. D. Smith, The Problem of Perception, selections.  
Lecture 12: P. F. Strawson, Perception and its objects (in Noë and Thompson).

### ***Hallucination***

*How can we explain hallucination? What is it that one sees when hallucinating?*

Lecture 12: A. D. Smith, The Problem of Perception, selections.  
Lecture 13: Mark Johnston “That Obscure Object of Hallucination”

### ***Perception and Thought***

*How is perception different from and similar to thought?*

Lecture 14: Fred Dretske, Conscious experience (in Noë and Thompson).  
Lecture 15: Christopher Peacock, Sensation and the Content of Experience, (in Noë and Thompson).  
Lecture 16: Michael Tye, Visual Qualia and Visual Content, On Reserve

### ***Perception, Action and Consciousness***

*What role does perception play in action? Is consciousness unnecessary?*

Lecture 17: David Milner and Melvyn Goodale, *Sight Unseen, Excerpts*.  
Andy Clark, Visual Experience and Motor Action: Are the Bonds Too Tight?

### ***Change Blindness/Inattentional Blindness***

*Do we experience a rich and detailed world? Are we blind to many aspects of it?*

Lecture 18: Daniel Simons, *Change Blindness: Past and Present*  
Alva Noe, *Is the Visual World a Grand Illusion?* Selections.  
Arien Mack and Irvin Rock, *Inattentional Blindness*, Selections

## ***The Causal Theory of Perception***

*Does the object we see have to cause our experience?*

Lecture 19: H.P. Grice, The causal theory of perception. This article is on reserve in Howison.

Lecture 20: David Lewis, Veridical hallucination and prosthetic vision (in Noë and Thompson).

Paul Snowdon, Perception, vision and causation (in Noë and Thompson).

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS:**

This course will be run as a discussion course, peppered with appropriate lectures. I expect all participants to take an active role in discussion. The expectation is that you will read each paper carefully, come to some initial thoughts on the issues, and be ready to present your thoughts and defend them the next day.

Ideally, we'll cover a paper each meeting. For every paper, I will present you with a detailed study guide (available on the course website), which includes some summary, exposition, and sets of questions to think about. We shall then meet to discuss the paper and the questions raised in the guides, with the hope that we might come to some consensus and settled opinions.

Assignments will be limited to three types (all must be typed, double-spaced):

(1) ***Questions (10% of final grade)***: For every meeting (when a new paper is discussed) you will type at least one question regarding the reading (I will not accept handwritten responses). This question can be one concerning clarification or, better, philosophical. You should leave a space in your response, for hopefully, as class goes on, you'll be able to write down the answer to those questions.

(2) ***Exercises (50% of final grade)***: With every study guide, there is a question or suggestion entitled 'Exercise' which you will need to complete before our meeting on the paper in question. (no more than 2 pages/exercise).

(3) ***Two Papers (40% of final grade)***: You'll be asked to write a five page paper and a 10 page paper. The 10 page paper can be an expanded version of the five page paper.

### **STANDARDS FOR GRADING**

Papers are assigned grades according to the following criteria (failure to meet some of the criteria results in a mark down, e.g. A to A-; exception performance, e.g. originality, can push you up, say B+ to A-).

- **A:** Paper shows solid grasp of materials; thoughtful; original when appropriate; well-written, no spelling and grammatical mistakes.

- **B:** Some minor misunderstanding of materials; not overly original; more unclear, less well written, with occasional spelling and grammatical mistakes.
- **C:** More substantial misunderstanding of material, though an adequate grasp; more substantial writing, spelling and grammatical inadequacies.
- **D:** Shows evidence of having read the material but not much else.
- **F:** No effort, work suggests that you haven't read the material or tried to take the assignment seriously.

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource\\_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp)).

### **DISABILITY SERVICES**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.