

PHIL 551A (sec. 001)
The Structure of the Mind

Professor Eric Margolis

Do people with radically different background theories perceive the world in different ways? Is the human mind composed of innate special-purpose cognitive systems that have been shaped by natural selection? Is language essential to some forms of cognition? What role does emotion play when you are thinking about the right way to act? What features of the mind underlie distinctively human intellectual achievements? Questions like these—questions about the structure of the mind—are of enormous philosophical interest but can't be answered without paying close attention to developments in the cognitive sciences. This seminar will focus on a few topics that illustrate important connections between philosophical theorizing and empirical research. We will start with the issue of what mental modules are and whether the mind is massively modular. After that, the exact topics covered will depend upon the interests of the seminar participants. Please note this course has been designated a *core seminar* for the 2017-2018 academic year. Core seminars are suitable for philosophy graduate students with varying levels of background in a given subject area, including first-year graduate students, and may be used to satisfy the PhD course distribution requirement. For more information about core seminars, see the Philosophy Department's graduate regulations:

<http://philosophy.ubc.ca/grad/graduate-degree-requirements/>

Texts

- Fodor, *The Modularity of Mind*
- A mix of philosophical and scientific articles and chapters. The complete list and links will be available on the course website (under construction).

Permission is required to take this course for students who are not members of the UBC Philosophy graduate program. Please e-mail professor Margolis for further information.