

Soul Beliefs: Causes and Consequences (Spring 2017)

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 12-1 pm and Thursdays 10:30-11:30 am or by appt.

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Welcome to Soul Beliefs: Causes and Consequences (4 cr) We will explore the causes and consequences of various beliefs about the soul. We will discuss topics such as the self, mind/body dualism, evolution, culture, death anxiety, afterlife, religious and political conflict. I look forward to your perspective and experiences with the course material.

Course Reader: _

Ogilvie, D. & Hamilton, L. (2014) *Soul Beliefs: Causes and Consequences* Pearson etext. This is a collection of materials compiled by Profs. Ogilvie and Hamilton.

Course Website

The course is online aside from the 3 in class meetings and will be presented on Ecollege- <https://onlinelearning.rutgers.edu/ecollege>

Learning Goals:

Core Curriculum Learning Goals Met by this Course- 21st century challenges

Course Materials

The weekly readings will be available through the etext that can be purchased on the course site (see the "course home"). Other readings will be linked to the weekly tab. These readings will include journal articles, essays by authorities in the field, book chapters, videos, court rulings, etc. You will also be encouraged to find related resources on their own and share these references in the discussion forum.

Facebook Site:

I created a Facebook group for this class called Soul Beliefs <https://www.facebook.com/groups/173436286152542/> I will be posting articles and course related issues to enhance your knowledge of the area. Feel free to use this site to communicate with me and other students in the class. I find that many of you have the same questions and this is a place for you to clarify any topics which are confusing.

Course Goals

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to

- Explain how life experiences shape people's worldviews.
- Analyze a contemporary global issue from a multidisciplinary perspective.
- Analyze the relationship that science and technology have to a contemporary social issue.
- Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.
- Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas or history of science.
- Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.

Grading Policies

| | |
|----------------|---|
| 20 pts | Introduction Quiz |
| 55 pts | Quizzes (5 pts x 11) |
| 100 pts | Mid-term exam 1 (50 questions x 2) |
| 100 pts | Mid-term exam 2 (50 questions x 2) |
| 100 pts | Take-home final exam |
| 80 pts | Assignments |
| <u>105 pts</u> | Discussion posts (15 pts x 7-there will be 8 discussion posts-the lowest will be dropped) |
| 560 pts | TOTAL |

A: 504-560, B+: 476-503, B: 448-475, C+: 420-447, C: 392-419, D: 336-391, F: 0-335

Academic Integrity

You are expected to be honest with yourself and fair to your fellow students. We will enforce the University's regulations on academic integrity, and we ask your individual assistance in reporting any suspected violations to us or to the Office of Student Conduct. The University's regulations are appropriately strict, and if you are tempted to violate them, you should first read the regulations and potential consequences: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

The Camden Plagiarism Tutorial (INTERACTIVE):

<http://library.camden.rutgers.edu/EducationalModules/Plagiarism/>

Consult Don't Plagiarize: Document Your Research! For tips about how to take notes so that you don't plagiarize by accident. http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/avoid_plagiarism

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources-for-students>

Attendance Policies:

University attendance and religious holiday policies are at http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug_current/pg1354.html

An interfaith calendar can be found at

<http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/index.htm>

SAS attendance policy is at <http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/academics/courses/registration-and-course-policies/attendance-and-cancellation-of-class>

Students with Disabilities:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Online Learning Tools:

Online Learning Tools from Rutgers University Libraries including Rutgers RIOT, Searchpath and RefWorks

<http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/tutorials>

Optional: Academic Support Programs: <http://newbrunswick.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-support>

Logistics of the class:

You are welcome to access the course lectures at your own pace. The syllabus is just a general guide to pace your studying. I suggest that you do not wait until the last minute to access the lectures given that you will have discussion posts due for most weeks. For each lecture, recordings of the lectures, divided into 20-30 minute clips, PowerPoint slides, readings and associated videos will be listed under each week tab. I suggest breaking up your viewing sessions by the 20-30 min. sections.

Because this is an online class, the recitations will be carried out on the discussion boards. Each week, you will be assigned to a group and required to post a response to the group topic with your classmates. In addition, you reply to another student in your group and another student in a different group. Your initial post to your group will be due on Thursdays by 11:59pm. Your reply to a student in your group and a student in a different group will be due on Fridays by 11:59pm. Since students, and possibly myself, will reply to your posts, by 11:59pm on the next Monday, you will respond to those replies. These posts are to be discussions, not just isolated posts or responses such as “I agree” and “you are right” or asking a question. Each week, your posts will be graded out of 15 points based on quality and timeliness-please see the course site for the grading rubric.

By Thursday at 11:59pm: Response to your group. **You should make sure to not post information that has already been posted to the group. Make sure you add new information from the lecture material and feel free to express any experiences you would like to share.**

By Friday at 11:59pm, you should post a response to another student’s post in your group and a response to another student's post in a different group. These responses must add more information to the topic. I will give an extra credit points if you correct someone who posts inaccurate information.

By Monday at 11:59pm: 1) Respond to my follow up questions to **all of your** posts (not just the initial post-look at your replies to students)
2) Respond to any classmate responses to your posts.

In addition to posting on the discussion board, you will submit 5 assignments. Assignments should be uploaded to the dropbox. The weekly tab also includes a description of the assignment and the grading rubric.

If I cannot open your assignment, you will receive a 0.

Your assignments should be double spaced, 12 points font include in-text citations and a reference page.

Final Essays

You will have 2 final essays due toward the end of the semester. Please make sure that you cite the lecture/reading in the text (in-text citations) and have a separate reference page/ For the lecture videos, please use the format for podcasts which can be found below.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/03/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/05/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/06/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/07/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/08/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/09/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/10/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/11/>

Cheating and Plagiarism:

Short version: Don't cheat. Don't plagiarize.

Longer version: Cheating on tests or plagiarizing materials in your papers deprives you of the educational benefits of preparing these materials appropriately. It is personally dishonest to cheat on a test or to hand in a paper based on unacknowledged words or ideas that someone else originated. It is also unfair, since it gives you an undeserved advantage over your fellow students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will take cheating very seriously. All suspected cases of cheating and plagiarism will be automatically referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs, and we will recommend penalties appropriate to the gravity of the infraction. The university's policy on Academic Integrity is available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy> I strongly advise you to familiarize yourself with this document, both for this class and for your other classes and future work. To help protect you, and future students, from plagiarism, we require all papers to be submitted through Turnitin.com.

Since what counts as plagiarism is not always clear, I quote the definition given in Rutgers' policy:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.

- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution.

Quiz Questions

Each week, you will have a Quiz due on Thursday nights. These are just 5 multiple choice questions which are untimed. These are to ensure that you are engaging with the course material.

Because this is an online class, I would like you to feel free to contact me via email with any questions. In addition, you may also contact me by phone if you would like extra help.

LECTURE TOPICS AND READING:

| Week | Topic | Reading | Assignments Due |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| Week of 1/16 | Introduction to the Course | | See and download Assignment 1 on week 2 tab NOW . You will need the extra time in order to prepare. |
| | What I was told to believe | | |
| 1/20 | MANDATORY IN CLASS MEETING | In class meeting- 3:20-4:40 Tillet 232 | |
| Week of 1/23 | Historical Foundations of Soul Beliefs – Part I | Chapter 1: <i>A Partial History of Soul Beliefs</i> , p. 1-20 (Ogilvie) | Thursday 1/26- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 1/27- reply to peer in your group and reply to peer in another group by 11:59pm |
| | Historical Foundations of Soul Beliefs – Part II | Chapter 1: <i>A Partial History of Soul Beliefs</i> , p. 21-36 (Ogilvie) Ted talk- Kelli Swazey: Life that doesn't end with death | Monday 1/30- all responses to your post and your replies to other students by 11:59pm Assignment 1 by 11:59pm |
| Week of 1/30 | Historical Foundations of Soul Beliefs – Part | Chapter 2: <i>The Evolution of Religious Behavior</i> (Wade) | Thursday 2/2 your post and quiz due by 11:59pm |

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| | III | | Friday 2/3- reply to peer in your group and reply to peer in another group by 11:59pm |
| | Functions of Religion in Ancient & Modern Times | TED talk- Jonathan Haidt: Religion, evolution, and the ecstasy of self-transcendence | Monday 2/6- all responses to your post and your replies to other students by 11:59pm |
| Week of 2/6 | Religions Under Attack | <i>The Four Horsemen of Atheism</i> Video Part 1 Video Part 2 | Thursday 2/9- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 2/10- reply to peer in your group and reply to peer in another group by 11:59pm |
| | Big Ideas and Big Controversies | <i>The Crime of Galileo and Scientific Revolution</i> http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1630galileo.asp | Monday 2/13- all responses to your post and your replies to other students by 11:59pm |
| Week of 2/13 | Darwin's Dangerous Idea | Chapter 3: <i>Essays on Darwin :Ever Since Darwin</i> essays (1) Darwin's Delay, (2) Darwin's Sea Change, (3) Darwin's Dilemma: The Odyssey of Evolution, and (4) Darwin's Untimely Burial. (Gould) Chapter 4: p 99-104- <i>The Development of Evolutionary Science</i> | Thursday 2/16- Quiz due by 11:59pm |
| | The Mind-Body Problem | Chapter 5: <i>My Brain Made Me Do It</i> (Gazzaniga) <i>Did Your Brain Make You Do It?</i> (Monterosso & Schwartz) http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/29/opinion/Sunday/neuroscience-and-moral-responsibility.html?_r=1 <i>The Mind-Body Problem</i> (Eliasmith) http://philosophy.uwaterloo.ca/MindDict/mindbody.html | Assignment 2 – Due 2/20 by 11:59 pm |
| Week of 2/20 | Exam 1 | Friday 2/24 3:20-4:40 Tillett 232 | |
| Week of 2/27 | Terror Management(Prof. Solomon) | Chapter 7: <i>Tales from the Crypt</i> (Solomon et al.) | Thursday 3/2- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 3/3- reply to peer in |

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| | | | your group and reply to peer in another group by 11:59pm |
| | The Undesired Self | Chapter 13: <i>The Undesired Self</i> (Ogilvie, Cohen, & Solomon) | Monday 3/6- all responses to your post and your replies to other students by 11:59pm |
| Week of 3/6 | Internalized Beliefs I | <i>Anatomy of Internalized Beliefs</i> (Ogilvie), p 1-21 | Thursday 3/9- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm |
| | Internalized Beliefs II: The Evolution of Senses of Self in Childhood | Chapter 8: <i>Religion is Natural</i> (Bloom) Chapter 9: <i>Mirror Neurons and Imitation: Learning</i> (Ramachandran) | Assignment 3 due by Monday 3/13 at 11:59pm |
| Week of 3/13 | NO CLASS | SPRING BREAK | |
| Week of 3/20 | After-Life, Out of Body, and Disembodied: What's the evidence? (Prof. Musolino) | Chapter 10: <i>Psychology and Scientific Thinking</i> | Thursday 3/23- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 3/24- reply to peer in your group and reply to peer in another group by 11:59pm |
| | After-Life, Out of Body, and Disembodied: What's the evidence? (Prof. Musolino) | Ted talk-Naomi Oreskes: Why we should trust scientists | Monday 3/27- all responses to your post and your replies to other students by 11:59pm |
| Week of 3/27 | The Brain and Our Emotional Future | | Thursday 3/30- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 3/31- reply to peer in your group and reply to peer in another group by 11:59pm |
| | Thinking and Feeling | Chapter 6: <i>Unpleasantness in Vermont</i> (Damasio) | Monday 4/3- all responses to your post and your replies to other students by 11:59pm |
| Week of | The Evolution of | Chapter 4, p 104-119 :Evolution, Heredity | Thursday 4/6- your post and |

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| 4/3 | the Human Brain | &Behavior | Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 4/7- reply to peer in your group and reply to peer in another group by 11:59pm |
| | The Biology of Thou Shalt Not | Neuroscience in Court (Kelland) http://news.yahoo.com/insight-neuroscience-court-brain-made-070322193.html | Monday 4/10- all responses to your post and your replies to other students by 11:59pm |
| Week of 4/10 | EXAM 2 | Friday 4/14 3:20-4:40 in Tillett 232 | |
| Week of 4/17 | Evolutionary Psychology | Cosmides & Tooby, Evolutionary Psychology: A Primer, http://www.cep.ucsb.edu/primer.html | Thursday 4/20- your Quiz is due by 11:59pm |
| | The Human Spark | NPR interview with Richard Leakey: http://www.npr.org/2011/04/15/135442954/richard-leakey-reflects-on-human-past-and-future | Monday 4/24- assignment 4 |
| Week of 4/24 | The Scopes Trial: Human Origins and the Public Classroom | Chapter 14: <i>Defeating Creationism in the Courtroom, But Not in the Classroom</i> (Berkman & Plutzer) <i>The Scopes Trial</i> http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/evolut.htm | Thursday 4/27- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 4/28- reply to peer in your group and reply to peer in another group by 11:59pm |
| | The Dover Board of Education: Intelligent Design and the Public Classroom | <i>Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District: Teaching Intelligent Design in Public Schools</i> (Lee) http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/crcf/vol41_2/lee.pdf | Monday 5/1- all responses to your post and your replies to other students by 11:59pm Assignment 5 |
| Week of 5/1 | Where Do We Go From Here? | | Final Essays due TBA |
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Assignment 1 – Due January 30 Talking About the Soul (10 pts)

According to a poll taken in 2008, ninety-six percent of adults in the United States report they believe each person possesses a soul and 82% believe heaven exists. This means there is a high probability that you and other people you know believe that souls exist and a large portion of that group believe in Heaven. But we don't have much information about what people believe comprises the soul and it is very

likely there are many versions of afterlife beliefs. Your kick-off written assignment is to help fill in some gaps regarding *what* people believe about the soul, whether or not it survives death, and *how* they came to believe whatever they believe.

Here are the mechanics of your paper.

1. Write your own answer to the question, "**What is the soul?**" Define it as clearly as you can. (Note that there is no correct answer and you won't be graded on your definition). Then, **state whether or not you believe it will survive your death (yes or no is enough)**, and, if yes, **What are the options for its final destination?**
2. Interview three (3) people about their definitions of, or beliefs about, the soul. Ask them the same question you answered: **What is the soul? Does it survive death? What are the options for its final destination?**
3. On the final page briefly compare all four responses (yours and the 3 people you interviewed).

Please use 12 pt. font, double spaced.

Assignment 2 -- Due February 20 Darwin's Theory and a New Worldview (20 pts)

Charles Darwin refused to make a distinction between "higher" and "lower" species in his theory of evolution, arguing that all species, including human beings, are products of natural selection. He delayed publishing *The Origin of Species* because he knew that his ideas severely challenged basic assumptions about how human beings "arrived" on Earth.

Write a 2-page paper that 1) summarizes Darwin's theory of "descent by modification", 2) how "natural selection" contradicted the prevailing worldviews of his time, and 3) provide evidence that resistance to the theory of evolution remains strong in some sectors of our society 150 years after his seminal work was published.

Please use 12 pt. font, double spaced with in-text citations and a reference page

Assignment 3 – Due March 13 Core Beliefs (20 pts)

The assigned reading titled *The Anatomy of Internalized Beliefs* deals with how beliefs about the soul can be transformed into unquestioned assumptions about how things are. These assumptions need not be conscious in order for them to direct the course of a life. But beliefs about the soul are not the only beliefs that can be internalized as assumptions. Early on in our lives or subsequent to childhood, we make various decisions about who we are. Some of these decisions can become

enduring and persistent beliefs that can be transformed as basic assumptions that covertly guide our thinking, decisions, and actions. Some of these non-conscious “who I am” assumptions can be sources of empowerment. Others can limit what we do, place restrictions on our relationships, and distort our self-perceptions. For the purpose of this exercise, these assumptions about ourselves will be referred to as *core beliefs*. If you are not able to articulate one of your core self-beliefs, select one of the above that comes close to describing how you sometimes feel.

In this assignment, identify one of your core beliefs about yourself and write a 2-page paper that includes the following elements:

A statement of the core belief

When and under what conditions do you think it was formed

How it has influenced your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in the past

How it currently influences your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors

Finally, after you have thought about one of your core self-beliefs, consider (in writing) if it “makes sense” to keep it or if the time has come to revise it or let it go.

One of the most difficult parts of this assignment is isolating a core self-belief because core self-beliefs tend to be elusive. In fact, you might not be able to identify a core belief, but you will be able to locate one of its neighbors. It might be useful to review the following examples of core self-beliefs that students have identified and written about in the past.

I am a special person, destined for fame

I am courageous

I am imposter – “I hope nobody ever discovers how weak and incompetent I really am”

I am under-rated by people around me

I am honest

I am stupid

I am unloved and unlovable

I am a person who is consistently misunderstood

I am polite

Underneath it all, I don't feel like I am a person of worth

I am invincible

I am unattractive

It's important to me that everyone like me

Underneath it all, I am a phony

I am outgoing

I am a good listener

I always keep my word

Please use 12 pt. font, double spaced.

Assignment 4 – Due April 24 Evolutionary Psychology (20 pts)

Cosmides and Tooby present the example that dung flies liking the smell of dung while humans hate the smell. Behind this example is an insight into the processes of evolution, both in terms of its time course and in terms of what adaptations do for us.

Using the dung example or another one, explain, in a 2 page paper, why the time course and function of evolutionary adaptations are relevant for understanding why some of our thought processes are adapted to a hunter-gatherer society instead of to the industrial, technological age that we live in.

Please use 12 pt. font, double spaced with in-text citations and a reference page

Assignment 5 – Due May 1 Soul Reversal (10 pts)

During the past few weeks, you've learned about different beliefs about the soul, how these beliefs have changed over time, and how they differ in the modern day depending on religious and cultural influences. You've also heard arguments declaring that there is no evidence that souls actually exist.

This assignment is a "what-if" exercise. Imagine a scenario in which your beliefs about the soul are found to be wrong. If you believe in souls, what if you found out that souls don't really exist? If you don't believe in souls, what if you found out souls really *do* exist? In a one page paper, describe how you'd feel, and if and how your life would change as a result.

Please use 12 pt. font, double spaced

Student-Wellness Services:

Just In Case Web App

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.
