

# **Soul Beliefs: Causes and Consequences (Spring 2020)**

Professor Lyra Stein, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 3-4pm and Thursdays 4:30-5:30pm

## **Undergraduate TAs**

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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.:30-

## **Course Materials:**

The readings will be linked to the respective 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.

When referencing any of the readings, you can use the following format:

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 Canvas-  
<https://tlt.rutgers.edu/canvas>

## **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 material 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>85 pts</u>	Discussion posts (12 pts x 7-there will be 8 discussion posts-the lowest will be dropped)
540 pts	TOTAL

A: 486-540, B+: 459-485, B: 432-458, C+: 405-431, C: 378-404, D: 324-377, F: 0-323

## Academic Integrity

You are expected to be honest with yourself and fair to your fellow students. I will enforce the University's regulations on academic integrity, and ask your individual assistance in reporting any suspected violations to myself 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://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](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug_current/pg1354.html)

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>.

## Logistics of the class:

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 discussion posts and assignments are due each week. For each topic, recordings of the lectures (divided into 20-30 minute clips), PowerPoint slides, readings and associated videos will be listed under each weekly tab. I suggest breaking up your viewing sessions by the 20-30 min. sections.

Given the nature of 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 to the group topic with your classmates. In addition, you will reply to another student's post in a different group. Your initial post to your group will be due on Thursdays by 11:59pm. Your reply to 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 should respond to those replies. These posts are discussions, please do not respond with "I agree" and "you are right" or simply ask a question. Each week, your posts will be graded out of 12 points based on quality and timeliness-please see the course site for the grading rubric.

By Thursday at 11:59pm: Response to the prompt in your group. **You should make sure not to post information that has already been posted to the group. You should add new information from the lecture material and share any relevant experiences.**

By Friday at 11:59pm, you should post a response to another student's post in a different group. These responses must add more information from the lecture.

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

In addition to posting on the discussion board, you will submit 5 assignments

**When submitting an assignment, be make sure that you are submitting the correct version of the correct assignment and verify that the assignment is submitted. If I cannot open your assignment, or you submit the wrong assignment/version, you will receive a 0. Please do not submit Google Docs**

**Your assignments should be double spaced, 12 points font with in-text citations and a reference page, see the following links for formatting.**

### **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 short Quiz due on Thursday nights. The quizzes are untimed and consist of 5 multiple choice questions.

### LECTURE TOPICS AND READING:

Week	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
Week of 1/20	Introduction to the Course		See and download Assignment 1 on week 2 tab <b>NOW</b> . You will need the extra time in order to prepare.
	What I was told to believe		Introduction quiz due by Friday 1/31
<b>1/24</b>	<b>MANDATORY IN CLASS MEETING</b>	<b>In class meeting- 3:20-4:40 Tillett 246</b>	
Week of 1/27	Historical Foundations of Soul Beliefs – Part I	<i>A Partial History of Soul Beliefs</i> , p. 1-20 (Ogilvie)	Thursday 1/30- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm  Friday 1/31- reply peer in another group by 11:59pm
	Historical	<i>A Partial History of Soul Beliefs</i> , p. 21-36	Monday 2/3- all responses

	Foundations of Soul Beliefs – Part II	(Ogilvie) Ted talk- Kelli Swazey: Life that doesn't end with death	to both of your posts by 11:59pm Assignment 1 by 11:59pm
Week of 2/3	Historical Foundations of Soul Beliefs – Part III	<i>The Evolution of Religious Behavior</i> (Wade)	Thursday 2/6 quiz due by 11:59pm
	Functions of Religion in Ancient & Modern Times	TED talk- Jonathan Haidt: Religion, evolution, and the ecstasy of self-transcendence	Assignment 2 due Monday 2/10 by 11:59pm
Week of 2/10	Religions Under Attack	<i>The Four Horsemen of Atheism</i> Video Part 1 Video Part 2	Thursday 2/13- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 2/14- reply peer in another group by 11:59pm
	Big Ideas and Big Controversies	<i>The Crime of Galileo and Scientific Revolution</i> <a href="http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1630galileo.asp">http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1630galileo.asp</a>	Monday 2/17- all responses to both of your posts by 11:59pm
Week of 2/17	Darwin's Dangerous Idea	<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)  p 99-104- <i>The Development of Evolutionary Science</i>	Thursday 2/20- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 2/21- reply peer in another group by 11:59pm
	The Mind-Body Problem	<i>My Brain Made Me Do It</i> (Gazzaniga)  <i>Did Your Brain Make You Do It?</i> (Monterosso & Schwartz) <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/29/opinion/Sunday/neuroscience-and-moral-responsibility.html?_r=1">http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/29/opinion/Sunday/neuroscience-and-moral-responsibility.html?_r=1</a>	Monday 2/24- all responses to both of your posts by 11:59pm
Week of 2/24	<b>Exam 1</b>	<b>Friday 2/28 3:20-4:40 Tillett 246</b>	
Week of 3/2	Terror Management(Prof. Solomon)	<i>Tales from the Crypt</i> (Solomon et al.)	Thursday 3/5- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 3/6- reply peer in another group by 11:59pm

	The Undesired Self	<i>The Undesired Self</i> (Ogilvie, Cohen, & Solomon)	Monday 3/9- all responses to both of your posts by 11:59pm
Week of 3/9	Internalized Beliefs I	<i>Anatomy of Internalized Beliefs</i> (Ogilvie), p 1-21	Thursday 3/12- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm
	Internalized Beliefs II: The Evolution of Senses of Self in Childhood	<i>Religion is Natural</i> (Bloom)  <i>Mirror Neurons and Imitation: Learning</i> (Ramachandran)	Assignment 3 due by Monday 3/16 at 11:59pm
<b>Week of 3/16</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
Week of 3/23	After-Life, Out of Body, and Disembodied: What's the evidence? (Prof. Musolino)	<i>Psychology and Scientific Thinking</i>	Thursday 3/26- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm  Friday 3/27- reply 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 3/30- all responses to both of your posts by 11:59pm
Week of 3/30	The Brain and Our Emotional Future		Thursday 4/2- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm  Friday 4/3- reply peer in another group by 11:59pm
	Thinking and Feeling	<i>Unpleasantness in Vermont</i> (Damasio)	Monday 4/6- all responses to both of your posts by 11:59pm
Week of 4/6	The Evolution of the Human Brain	p 104-119 :Evolution, Heredity &Behavior	Thursday 4/9- Quiz due by 11:59pm

	The Biology of Thou Shalt Not	The Biology of Thou Shall Not Re-Read: Religion is Natural(Bloom) Re-read <i>My Brain Made Me Do It</i> (Gazzaniga) Neuroscience in Court (Kelland) <a href="http://news.yahoo.com/insight-neuroscience-court-brain-made-070322193.html">http://news.yahoo.com/insight-neuroscience-court-brain-made-070322193.html</a>	Assignment 4 due Monday 4/13
<b>Week of 4/13</b>	<b>EXAM 2</b>	<b>Friday 4/17 3:20-4:40 in Tillet 246</b>	
Week of 4/20	Evolutionary Psychology	Cosmides & Tooby, Evolutionary Psychology: A Primer, <a href="http://www.cep.ucsb.edu/primer.html">http://www.cep.ucsb.edu/primer.html</a>	Thursday 4/23- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 4/24- reply peer in another group by 11:59pm
	The Human Spark	NPR interview with Richard Leakey: <a href="http://www.npr.org/2011/04/15/135442954/richard-leakey-reflects-on-human-past-and-future">http://www.npr.org/2011/04/15/135442954/richard-leakey-reflects-on-human-past-and-future</a>	Monday 4/27- all responses to both of your posts by 11:59pm
Week of 4/27	The Scopes Trial: Human Origins and the Public Classroom	<i>Defeating Creationism in the Courtroom, But Not in the Classroom</i> (Berkman & Plutzer) <i>The Scopes Trial</i> <a href="http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/evolut.htm">http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/evolut.htm</a>	Thursday 4/30- your post and Quiz by 11:59pm Friday 5/1- reply 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) <a href="http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/crcl/vol41_2/lee.pdf">http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/crcl/vol41_2/lee.pdf</a>	Monday 5/4- all responses to both of your posts by 11:59pm Assignment 5
Week of 5/4	Where Do We Go From Here?		Final Essays due Wed. 5/6

### Assignment 1 – Due February 3 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 10 Religion in Societies (20 pts)**

Historians and Anthropologists say that no society has existed without religion. Why do you think they say this? Be sure to include aspects of Wade's argument in your 2-page paper.

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

### **Assignment 3 – Due March 17 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 13 Bloom vs. Descartes (20 pts)**

In his Meditations, Rene Descartes sums up his central dualist thesis when he states: "There is a vast difference between the mind and the body, in that the body...is always divisible, while the mind is completely indivisible"

Although Paul Bloom also posits a sort of dualism in his work, it is somewhat different, as can be understood when he states: "[Children] are dualists in the sense that they naturally see the world as containing two distinct domains...'physical objects and real events' and 'mental states and entities'."

Although they may seem similar at first, consider the full implications of their stances. Then, in a 2-page paper, compare Descartes' version of dualism with the dualism of children proposed by Paul Bloom, using this week's readings as your primary sources.

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

### **Assignment 5 – Due May 4 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/](http://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/](http://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/>**

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### **Scarlet Listeners**

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

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

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