



PSYCHOL 3177F (670)
Consciousness
Fall/Winter 2026 - 2027

Instructor: Dr. Imants Baruss
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Course Information

Mode of Instruction: online asynchronous with in-person assessments

Calendar Description: Survey of contemporary issues in consciousness studies considered from a phenomenological perspective.

Prerequisite(s): [Psychology 2840F/G](#) (or [Psychology 2801F/G](#), [Psychology 2802F/G](#), the former Psychology 2800E, the former Psychology 2820E, [Psychology 2830A/B](#), [Psychology 2855F/G](#) or [Psychology 2856F/G](#)) and registration in the third or fourth year of Honours Specialization, Honours Double Major, Major or Specialization in Psychology, or Honours Specialization in Applied Psychology.

Antirequisite(s): None

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: PSYCHOL

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Psychology 3177F, Section 670
Consciousness

Course Syllabus

This is a fully online course that uses King's online learning management system OWL for course delivery. Students must have the requisite technology to be able to access and use the OWL site, including the ability to watch videos and submit their assignments through the course OWL site. This class is asynchronous in the sense that there are no designated class times. However, there are synchronous weekly due dates for assignments and weekly office hours in person and over Zoom which students can attend if they wish to discuss the subject matter of the course with the Instructor and other students who may be present. There will also be an in-person synchronous final examination on the King's University College campus during the final examination period.

1. Instructor Contact Information

Contact is by email: baruss@uwo.ca. Please note that the email must be sent from a student's Western email account. The Instructor will respond to students between 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, usually within a few days, although it may take up to a week to receive a response.

2. Office Hours

Office hours are in-person in the Instructor's office on campus and by Zoom or by appointment. The information is on the OWL site.

3. Course Description

Survey of contemporary issues in consciousness studies considered from a phenomenological perspective. Topics covered can include: domains of discourse in the study of consciousness, history of materialism, variations on materialism, post-materialism, definitions of consciousness, neuroscientific theories of consciousness, computationalism, consciousness as an emergent property, intentionality, qualia, the Turing test, promissory materialism, the Chinese room argument, scientism vs authentic science, the binding problem, panpsychism, beliefs about consciousness and reality, personality and intelligence correlates of beliefs about consciousness and reality, shared mind, experimental studies of shared mind, remote viewing, telephone telepathy, neurophysiological measures of telepathy, theories of shared mind, the notion of time in physics, the centrality of time to consciousness, conscious awareness of subjective time, nonconscious processing of events in time, precognitive dreaming, implicit precognition, precognitive remote viewing, potential mechanisms of nonconscious processing of events in time, life reviews during near-death experiences, altered temporality, the experience of timelessness, theories of time, after-death communication, mediumship, living agent psi vs survival hypotheses, unwanted anomalous intrusions, mind in a compromised brain, explanations of near-death experiences, mind in a silent brain, mind without a brain, mind in the afterlife,

random mechanical cascade, random event generators, two-slit experiments, remote healing, the Pauli effect, poltergeist activity, the Philip experiment, macro-pk, first-person observation in science, some problems with subjectivity in psychology, first-person methods in psychology, phenomenological investigation, integration of first- and third-person approaches to the study of consciousness, developing first-person observation skills, self-development for consciousness researchers, accurate intuitions about events in consensus reality, quantum theories of consciousness, filter models of consciousness, the brain as a by-product of consciousness, flicker-filter theory of consciousness, implications of consciousness research for clinical practice, implications of consciousness research for scientific discovery, the nature of consciousness, two-slit experiments, the theory of meaning fields, anomalous transformations of physical manifestation, macro-pk, planetary crises, psychological factors in planetary crises, subtle activism, persistent transcendent states of consciousness, inverting consciousness, and radical self-transformation. The study of consciousness is a multidisciplinary effort and material from psychology, philosophy, neuroscience, biology, anthropology, mathematics, statistics, physics, and religious studies may be discussed in this course. Students will be expected to know that material to the extent that it is reasonable to know it given the prerequisites for the course and explicit instruction given in the textbook and in class. This course is taught from a phenomenological perspective in that phenomena are considered essentially as phenomena without automatic reduction to a materialist interpretation of reality.

4. Learning Outcomes

1. Student engagement in the learning process.
2. Knowledge about the nature of consciousness.
3. Knowledge of anomalous phenomena associated with consciousness.
4. Knowledge of postmaterialist theories of consciousness.
5. Development of sensitive attitude toward course material
6. Development of critical thinking skills.
7. Development of effective writing.

5. Assignments

Students are expected to read the textbook, watch the video lectures, and submit weekly written essays of 500 to 1000 words in length. Students can confer with each other or use other sources of information when preparing their weekly assignments but must write the essays entirely by themselves and demonstrate, in the course of their answers, that they have read the assigned material from the textbook and watched the assigned video lecture. Students are not allowed to use AI to create or write their essays or to use language translators to translate their essays from other languages into English. There will be 12 essays due at 12:05 p.m. on the following dates: September 16 and 23, October 1, 7, 21, 28, November 4, 11, 18, 25, and December 2 and 9. The average of the ten best grades on the essays will make up 70% of the final grade in the course. More information about the readings, videos, and essay requirements is provided on the course OWL site.

Mode of Instruction: online asynchronous with an in-person final examination

6. Course Materials

Required textbooks:

Barušs, I. & Mossbridge, J. (2017). *Transcendent mind: Rethinking the science of consciousness*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. \$104.78

Barušs, I. (2021). *Radical transformation: The unexpected interplay of consciousness and reality*. Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic. \$27.53

7. Evaluation

Essays, 70%: The essay part of the grade will be an average of the 10 best essay marks. Essays must be submitted through Assignments on OWL by 12:05 p.m. on the dates that they are due. Essays will be accepted for the 24 hour period after that with a 10% grade deduction. After the 24 hour period they will not be accepted unless a student has received consideration from their dean's office. Because of the flexibility in assessment, taking the best 10 of 12 essay marks, students will not be given accommodation for failing to submit an essay.

Examination, 30%: There will be an in person final examination on the King's University Campus during the final examination period December 11, 2026, to December 22, 2026. The examination will be essay style in format and will cover all the material in the assigned readings and videos from the beginning of the course to the time of the examination.

Students who cannot attend an examination for medical or other extraordinary reasons should obtain proper documentation and contact their dean's office as soon as possible. Allowance will not be made for tests and assignments in other courses, employment, or family responsibilities. All students who cannot write a regularly scheduled test or examination and who receive accommodation from their dean are required to write an appropriate alternate test or examination. All alternate tests and examinations will be essay style in format and will also be written on the King's University College campus. Please note, Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

8. Bonus Marks

Students can earn 2% bonus marks for participating in a research study that consists of two online surveys: one survey is filled out in September, and the second survey is filled out in December. The surveys will be accessed from OWL. In order to receive the 2% bonus credit, students must answer at least 90% of the questionnaire items. Alternatively, students can earn the 2% bonus credit by writing a 500 word essay about the impact that the course material could have on a student's well-being. The essay would be written at the time of the final examination in person immediately after the final examination in the examination room. All grading in the course will be done by the instructor and the instructor will only receive information about who

receives the bonus marks and who does not immediately prior to submitting the grades, and will not know, in any case, if a student chose to participate in the study or write the essay.

9. Class Policy Concerning Intellectual Property

Course content created by an Instructor is the Instructor's intellectual property; it should not be distributed, shared in any public domain, or sold by a student or other third party without prior written consent of the Instructor.

10. Academic Integrity

Students are expected to abide by the policies for academic integrity set out by Western University. The following is the Western Scholastic Discipline policy:
https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

The Department of Psychology expects that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial). The use of generative AI tools or language translators, is not permitted for any submitted course work. Students should not have AI tools or translators write any part of their assignments or papers, either by copying and pasting or by paraphrasing the output. Unauthorized use of AI or translators constitutes an academic offence and will be subject to academic discipline. Please see additional information below.

Department of Psychology Policies Related to AI Tools

1. Policy on the Use of Generative AI Tools

The Department of Psychology expects that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial).

The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted for any submitted coursework unless express permission has been granted by your instructor.

Students **should not have AI tools write any part of their assignments or papers, either by copying and pasting or by paraphrasing the output.** Unauthorized use of AI constitutes an academic offence and will be subject to academic discipline.

Additional information: Students can use AI tools to clarify questions they have about course content (e.g., you can ask ChatGPT about a course concept to help with your understanding), but students should be aware that the response may be inaccurate or inconsistent with the course content. Asking your instructor is a more effective strategy. Students should note that information provided by AI tools such as ChatGPT can include mistakes, inaccuracies, biases, and outdated information. Whenever these tools are used, students should cross-verify the information provided to them. This means verifying that the sources used by AI exist and have been accurately summarized, consulting multiple original and reputable up-to-date sources to verify information, and being cautious of bias that could be present in the information provided.

2. Policy on Use of Translation Tools*

The Department of Psychology views the unapproved use of translation or language applications as an academic offence.

Any usage of translation applications or language generation by students to complete specific assigned work for this course **must be approved** by the instructor **prior** to submitting the work **and noted by the student in the submitted work** itself.

Writing text and then feeding it into a computer application to improve or translate your own words, changing a few words, and then submitting this text as if it was your own **constitutes plagiarism.** You must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs to organize, synthesize, interpret information with your own mind. When you borrow language or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be acknowledged with quotation marks and/or citations.

Why do we have this policy?

- Translation is intellectual work and produces intellectual property, thus any text which is translated must cite the translator.
- Psychology endeavors to advance students' linguistic, analytic, and reasoning competencies – this can not happen outside of specific language competencies.
- Earning a university degree signals that an individual has advanced literacy and communicative skill in the language of instruction at the university; this is English at King's University College at Western University. If translation machines are used by students without regulation, we will have no way of certifying whether these competencies exist and fewer mechanism for encouraging students to do the hard work to develop them.

** Based on the policy developed by the Department of Child and Youth Studies*

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help:
<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see

<https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.

