

# Paper assignment # 1

PHIL 20208  
Jeff Speaks

Due: Thursday, October 5

Below are four topics for your first paper. You are welcome to come up with your own topic, though you must get my approval by e-mail first. If you do this, the question that I approve should be on the first page of your essay. The papers should be at most 5-7 pages in length, double-spaced and with reasonable margins and font.

A late penalty of 3 points per day, including weekends, will be assessed for any papers which are handed in late. Papers should be handed in either in class or to my office at 205 Malloy Hall.

If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted under the honor code, please contact me.

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1. Explain and evaluate Kim's central argument against dualism. How should the dualist respond? Explain and evaluate Kim's argument against the idea that immaterial souls might be extended in space.
2. At the end of "Sensations and Brain Processes", Smart considers several objections to his view of sensations. Explain Smart's theory and say which (two or three) of these objections you think is the most challenging to that theory. Say how you think Smart should respond to these objections.
3. Does Descartes' argument for dualism depend on the view that identities are necessary, if true? What does Smart think of this claim? Is it true?
4. Explain the "multiple realizability" problem faced by identity theories of mental properties. Does this problem show that identity theories are false? What is functionalism, and how does it attempt to solve this problem? Which, if either, of functionalism and identity theory is most plausible?
5. Explain (at least one version of) the functionalist approach to mental properties. Explain and evaluate Blocks' 'absent qualia' argument against functionalism. How should the functionalist respond to this argument?