PHIL 4443: Philosophy of Mind

Instructor: Dr. M. Merritt

Group Presentation Assignment

**Description of Assignment**

Along with a small group of your classmates, you will read one of the “Supplemental Readings” listed on the syllabus, prepare a brief synopsis and critical commentary of that reading, and deliver a presentation to the class on the specified date.

**Directions**

On the syllabus, there are several readings listed as “Supplemental.” You will sign up for one of these readings, noting the date upon which the reading occurs. Once everyone has signed up for a reading, you will meet the other members in your specific group and begin planning your presentation. The presentation will occur on the date for which the reading is listed. This is the date you must also turn in a short synopsis and critique of the assigned reading. The idea for this assignment is that you and your group members will be the ‘experts’ for the particular day you are presenting. You will lead the class for roughly 20 minutes, overviewing your assigned reading, offering critical reflection on that reading, and weaving it into the discussions and readings we have already covered.

**Guidelines**

1. You must read the supplemental reading AND the other required readings for that day. As well, you should be up to date on all other readings and be able to discuss how your assigned reading fits in with the dialectic so far.

2. Your synopsis and critical commentary should be roughly 3-4 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, a normal font, 1-inch margins all around, and any sources you cite must be listed in a ‘works cited’ or bibliography.

3. The presentation should ideally follow the structure of the synopsis/commentary. Aim for 20 minutes total presenting time. You should plan to devote a solid 10 minutes to laying out the basic argument(s) of the reading, and then devote the other half of the presentation to providing your own critical reflections, objections, points of comparison/contrast with other readings, clarifications, suggestions, etc., as well as any interactive activities you have planned.

4. You do not have to use powerpoint or prezi, but be sure to utilize some form of audiovisual aide – using the whiteboard, providing a handout, etc.

5. Try to involve the rest of the class, whether by activities, surveys, or other interactive means. A large part of your grade for this assignment will be based on your creativity in conveying the information. Remember, very few of us will have read this article. Your job is to get the class interested in what you read, provide them with all the essential steps in the argument(s) of the paper, and encourage critical reflection among your peers.

6. You will also provide a peer review of your group members. This is to ensure that everyone worked well together. I expect everyone to participate in the presentation, but if someone is less participatory, and I find out, for instance, that they wrote the whole synopsis, I will assume they did their fair part in the assignment. However, I still require that all members of the group *email me a short statement* as to the performance of your peers. This can be as simple as stating “everyone did their part and I have no complaints,” or it can involve some critique. These will be strictly confidential.

**Rubric for Grading Presentations/Synopses**

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| Comprehensiveness: Did you cover the entire article/reading in a concise yet comprehensive manner? Did you clearly convey the central claims and support for those claims? Was your synopsis written clearly and did it meet the guidelines? | 4 points |
| Cohesion: How well did you tie your article in with the rest of the course so far? Did you provide comparisons/contrasts with other readings? Did you mention discussions we have had pertaining to related issues?  | 4 points |
| Critical Commentary: How insightful were you in recognizing potential problems or strengths with the arguments in your reading? Did you find unique ways to interpret/explain the issues? To what extent did you critically engage in all claims made in the reading? Was your synopsis more than just a summary (i.e. did you provide analysis and critical exposition as well?)  | 4 points |
| Creativity/Delivery: Did you involve the class? Did you stay within the time limit? Did you spend enough time? What about audiovisual aides?  | 4 points  |
| Peer Review: How did your peers rate you (on a scale of 0-4, 4 being the best) in terms of cooperation, willingness to participate, work ethic, etc.? Did you remember to email Dr. Merritt and provide your own peer review of your group members?  | 4 points |
| Total: 20 Possible Points |