

## Mind-Body Studies

PSYC 8002 | Spring 2019 | 4 credits  
Mondays and Wednesdays 5PM-6:40PM

Professor: Dr. Nisha Gupta

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*"We do not have bodies; we are bodies. We came from the belly and hips and we must return there."  
– Celeste Snowber, 2012*

### Course Description:

Psychology has traditionally treated the body as a biological object separate from the mind. Yet phenomenologists have been at the forefront of collapsing this mind-body/subject-object dualism. Merleau-Ponty announced that "the body is our general medium for having a world," and Drew Leder elaborates that "it is through our embodied perception and motility, reflection and expression — not just a purified rationality — that we experience a world of objects, people, and meanings" (Merleau-Ponty; 1945; Leder, 2004). So what does it mean to live as a body—to be a "lived body," to be an embodied subject—in the first place? This course approaches mind-body studies from the perspective of phenomenological psychology. The phenomenological approach to mind-body studies places embodied experience at the center stage of all psychological understanding.

Phenomenological psychology also acknowledges the deeply social nature of embodiment and the intermingling of consciousness, body and world. Our bodies are always situated within social, cultural, and political contexts. As such, our phenomenological study of embodiment will be interdisciplinary, spanning the spectrum of cultural studies, medical discourses, Buddhist/contemplative practices, neurophenomenology, affect/emotion studies, trauma studies, critical race theory, queer theory, disability studies, feminist and liberation politics, psychotherapy and research. We will seek to explicate the embodied experience of being-in-the-world across these varied domains.

Students will also select a phenomenological research topic about a lived experience of embodiment that interests them. Throughout the semester, they will be expected to conduct a hermeneutic phenomenological research study about their chosen topic, including conducting a literature review, collecting data, and writing interpretive phenomenological themes about the phenomenon. They will submit a phenomenological research paper by the end of the course, and also present their research to the class during the final weeks.

### Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of fundamental aspects of the theory and methodology underpinning phenomenological psychology.
- Describe how phenomenologists conceptualize the "lived body"
- Articulate the relationship between embodiment and emotion/affect.
- Analyze embodiment in the context of culture, society, and politics.
- Describe the role of embodiment in psychotherapy and research.
- Articulate the role of neuroscience in a study of embodiment.

- Demonstrate the ability to conduct and write a hermeneutic phenomenological research study and literature review.

### Required Texts:

All readings will be available as PDFs on courseden.

### Class Format

Classes will be conducted primarily in seminar format. As such, it is critical that students come to class prepared to discuss the assigned materials in-depth. Treatment of the week's assigned readings will begin with students' selections. In addition, we may engage in various experiential practices in class (i.e. meditation) in order to apply the course material to our own lived experiences.

### Evaluation and Grading:

The course goals will be met and evaluated on the basis of the class assignments below.

Class Participation	20%
Short Essays: Phenomenological Description, Interpretation, Lit Review	20%
Class Presentation: Phenomenological Research Study	20%
Final Paper: Phenomenological Research Study	<u>40%</u>
	100%

#### Class Participation (20%):

You are expected to bring the assigned reading materials to class so that we can refer to passages together, enabling collective textual analysis. All *students are expected to class prepared in the following way* designed to promote critical reading and fruitful discussion.

- Carefully read the assigned materials for a given class period and bring them to class so that we can refer to specific passages together, enabling collective textual analysis.
- For each text assigned for a given class, identify what you regard to be one to two central passages, and be prepared to justify your choice.
- Develop one or two questions for stimulating discussion that pertain specifically to the overall readings for that class. I may call upon you in class to read your question and facilitate discussion of it.

Although this preparatory material will usually not be collected on paper, you should have it written down in a manner that makes it easily shared in class. Your questions should be thoughtfully crafted toward that end. I will provide advance notice if, on a given week, I decide to collect your materials.

#### Short Essays (20%)

Throughout the semester, you are expected to write three short essays that will contribute to your final research project about a phenomenon of embodiment that you are interested in. Each of these assignments are meant to help lead you to a publishable phenomenological research paper, which you will submit at the end of the semester.

1. **Phenomenological Description (2/13):** Select any phenomenon of embodiment that interests you, and write a detailed, descriptive anecdote of your embodied lived experience pertaining to this phenomenon. Alternatively, you can collect data from research participants by asking others to write a detailed, descriptive anecdote of the phenomenon under inquiry. Alternatively, you can identify and accumulate pre-existing written descriptions via published memoirs, etc.

2. **Phenomenological Interpretation (3/13):** Submit a preliminary written phenomenological interpretation of your research topic, by coding meaning units and unearth thematic insights from within (and across) the written anecdotes collected above.
3. **Literature Review (4/15):** Submit a literature review pertaining to your research topic, which puts your phenomenological interpretation/research findings in dialogue with existing psychological, philosophical, sociological, cultural, political, scientific and/or historical literature.

**Class Presentation: Phenomenological Research Study (20%)**

Share your research findings, interpretations and lit review with the class in a research presentation, similar to how you might present it at a conference (30 minute presentation, 15 minute Q&A).

**Final Paper: Phenomenological Research Study (40%)**

Submit a final synthesized research article of your description, interpretation and literature review, suitable for publication.

***Supplementary Phenomenological Research Article Examples (available on Courseden)***

Van Manen: “Technics of touch in the neonatal intensive care.”

Toombs: “The Lived Experience of Disability”

LeBeau: “Maternal Guilt”

Downey: “Listening to Capoeira”

**Attendance:**

Since this is a small seminar doctoral-level class that is dependent on student attendance and participation, more than three unexcused absences (without appropriate documentation) will result in a failure in the class.

**Grading Information and Policy:**

There are a total of 100 points possible in the course. These 100 points will be used to calculate a percentage grade according to the standard percentage point divisions (see table below):

Grading structure and point scale

90-100 points	90% - 100%	A
80 points - 89 points	80% - 89%	B
70 points - 79 points	70% - 79%	C
< 70 points	< 70%	F

**Syllabus**

As this document corresponds with a dynamic entity (a class), this syllabus is subject to change.

**Semester Schedule:**

Date	Topic	Reading due	Assignment due
M 1/7	Introduction and syllabus		

W 1/9	<b>Doing Phenomenology:</b> Learning how to think and write phenomenologically	Kafle: "Hermeneutic phenomenological research method simplified" Van Manen: "Practicing Phenomenological Writing" Finlay: "Writing the Pain"  <i>Suggested reading: "Merleau Ponty: Preface"</i>	
M 1/14	<b>The Lived Body:</b> how does phenomenology understand embodiment?	Bullington "The Lived Body" Gallagher "The Embodied Mind" Strauss "The Upright Posture"	
W 1/16	<b>Diverse Bodies:</b> how is our lived experience of embodiment situated in our social identities and cultural contexts?	Young: "Throwing Like a Girl" Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness" Ahmed: "The Phenomenology of Whiteness"	
M 1/21	MLK Holiday: closed		
W 1/23	<b>Diverse Bodies (cont'd):</b> how is our lived experience of embodiment situated in our social identities and cultural contexts?	Brooke: "The Upright Posture Revisited" Rusczek: "Living the Upright Posture with a Disability" Arroyo: "On Checking the Box Marked Other" O'Connor, C: "Fluidity and intersubjectivity" Larson: "Thinking outside the gender dichotomy in the work of Straus and Young"	
M 1/28	<b>The Absent Body:</b> how does our lived experience of embodiment rescind in our everyday awareness?	Leder: "The Absent Body" Intro, Ch 1, 2	
W 1/30	<b>The Body in Pain:</b> how do we experience our body in pain and illness?	Leder, "The Absent Body" Ch 3 Leder: "The experiential paradoxes of pain" Van Manen: "Modalities of Body Experience in Illness and Health"	
M 2/4	<b>The Body in Movement:</b> how do we experience our body amidst movement/exercise?	Sheets-Johnstone: "The Primacy of Movement" Lewis: "The Climbing Body" Chisholm: "Climbing Like a Girl"	

W 2/6	<b>The Mindful Body:</b> What is the relationship between phenomenology and contemplative practices?	Varela: "What do we mean by human experience?" Caldwell: "Mindfulness & Bodyfulness: A New Paradigm" Pagis: "Embodying enlightenment"	
M 2/11	<b>The Mindful Brain:</b> What can neuroscience tell us about contemplative practices and embodied experience?	Lutz: "Investigating the Phenomenological Matrix of Mindfulness-Related Practices from a Neurocognitive Perspective" Lutz and Thompson: "Neurophenomenology" Dor-Ziderman: "Mindfulness-Induced Selflessness"	
W 2/13	<b>The Feeling Body:</b> how does our body experience feelings & emotions?	Roald: "Affective Incarnations" Ratcliffe, "Feelings of Being" Intro, Ch 1	Essay #1 due
M 2/18	<b>The Feeling Body (cont'd):</b> how does our body experience feelings & emotions?	Ratcliffe, "Feelings of Being" Ch 2, 3	
W 2/20	<b>The Feeling Body (cont'd):</b> how does our body experience feelings & emotions?	Ratcliffe, "Feelings of Being" Ch 4 Eder: "Films and Existential Feelings"	
M 2/25	<b>The Mourning Body:</b> how do we experience our body amidst psychological suffering, melancholy and mourning?	Ratcliffe: "Feelings of Being" Ch 5, 6 Ratcliffe: "Depression and the Body" Dubose: "The Phenomenology of Bereavement, Grief, and Mourning"	
W 2/27	<b>The Traumatized Body:</b> How is trauma imbedded in our bodies?	Crawford: "If the Body Keeps the Score..." Cates: "Insidious Emotional Trauma: The Body Remembers" McDonald: "Trauma, Embodiment, and Narrative"	
M 3/4	<b>Healing the Traumatized Body:</b> What therapeutic interventions facilitate embodied trauma healing?	Wilkinson: "Mind body brain: Healing trauma" Levine: "Somatic Experiencing" Knipe: "EMDR toolbox" Ch 1, 2 Rhodes: "Claiming peaceful embodiment in the aftermath of trauma"	
W 3/6	<b>Healing the Oppressed Body:</b> How do marginalized communities experience and heal from the embodied trauma of oppression?	Johnson: "Oppression Embodied: The Intersecting Dimensions of Trauma, Oppression and Somatic Psychology" Johnson: "Grasping and transforming the embodied experience of oppression" Walters: "Bodies Don't Just Tell Stories, They Tell Histories"	

M 3/11	<b>Collective/Sociopolitical Bodies:</b> How do cultures experience embodied emotion; how does this impact our participation in the political sphere?	Ahmed: "The Cultural Politic of Emotion" Introduction, Ch 1, 2	
W 3/13	<b>Collective/ Sociopolitical Bodies (cont'd):</b> How do cultures experience embodied emotion; how does this impact our participation in the political sphere?	Ahmed: "The Cultural Politic of Emotion" Ch 3, 4	Essay #2 due
3/18 - 3/20	No class: spring break		
M 3/25	<b>Collective/Sociopolitical Bodies (cont'd):</b> How do cultures experience embodied emotion; how does this impact our participation in the political sphere?	Ahmed: "The Cultural Politic of Emotion" Ch 5, 6	
W 3/27	<b>Collective/Sociopolitical Bodies (cont'd):</b> How do cultures experience embodied emotion; how does this impact our participation in the political sphere?	Ahmed: "The Cultural Politic of Emotion" Ch 7 Gupta: "illuminating the Trauma of the Closet"	
M 4/1	No class: prof out of town	N/A	
W 4/3	<b>Embodied Justice:</b> How do cultures experience embodied emotion; how does this impact our participation in the political sphere?	Ahmed: "The Cultural Politic of Emotion" Ch. 8, Conclusion Johnson: video on "Embodied Activism" <a href="https://somaticperspectives.com/johnson-embodied-activism/">https://somaticperspectives.com/johnson-embodied-activism/</a>	
M 4/8	<b>Intersubjective Bodies</b>	Svenaesus_ "Edith Stein's Phenomenology of Empathy" Zahavi: "Beyond empathy" Decety: "Human Empathy through the Lens of Social neuroscience" Gallager: "Neurons, neonates, and narrative"	
W 4/10	<b>The Therapist's Body</b>	Totton: "Embodied relating" Totton: "Practicing embodied relating" Ross: Body talk"	

		Marks-Tarlow: "Interpersonal neurobiology of clinical intuition"	
M 4/15	<b><i>The Researcher's Body</i></b>	Finlay "Reflexive Embodied Empathy" Todres & Galvin: "Embodied Interpretation" Todres and Galvin: "Caring for a partner with Alzheimers Disease" Andres: "Embodied writing and reflections on embodiment" Snowber: "Embodied inquiry"	Essay #3 due
W 4/17	<b><i>The Body's Felt Sense</i></b>	Sharma: "Carrying forward" Gendlin "Focusing Oriented Psychotherapy" Ch 1, 2, 3	
M 4/22	<b><i>The Body's Felt Sense (cont'd)</i></b>	Gendlin: "Focusing Oriented Psychotherapy" Ch 6, 7, 12 Perl: "Felt sense: Writing with the Body"	
W 4/24	Class presentations: 1 & 2		
M 4/29	Class presentations: 3 & 4		
W 5/1	Class presentations: 5 & 6		
Friday 5/3			Final papers due @ noon

### Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook](#).

### Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

### Accessibility Services

**Accessibility Services:** Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services](#).

**Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:** If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and require assistance or support services, please seek assistance through the [Office for Accessibility Services](#). UWG also provides [Accessibility Statements for Technology](#) that you may be required to use for this course.

For more information on the Americans with Disabilities Act, UWG Email, Credit Hour, and UWG Honor Code policies as well as information on Academic Tutoring, Student Services, and Technical Requirements, Privacy Policy, and Accessibility Statements, please see the [Common Language for Syllabus](#) document.

### Academic Support

The [Center for Academic Success](#) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or [cas@westga.edu](mailto:cas@westga.edu)

The [University Writing Center](#) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or [writing@westga.edu](mailto:writing@westga.edu)

[Smarthinking](#) offers online tutoring services and resources (including the Writing Center) for UWG students/instructors in all courses. A link to Smarthinking is available in CourseDen under Resources in the navigation bar.



Here is a great resource of [Student Services](#) for all students at UWG, whether or not they are taking online courses. This link provides students with most of the information they need. If a student is experiencing distress and needs some help, check out [UWG Cares](#).

### **Additional Support Information**

**Technical Support:** Technical support for CourseDen, as well as the technological requirements, accessibility statements, privacy statements, tutorials, and other information can be found at [Technology Requirements](#).