WRITING ASSIGNMENT 3
Longer Essay: 30% of your final grade

Due Date
11:59 PM, Sunday, November 17, 2019
Papers must be turned in via the Turnitin assignments on CCLE.

Topic & Structure
Your assignment is to write a 1000 word (approximately 3 page) essay that critically evaluates the Computational Theory of Mind. For each paragraph, be sure to answer the questions listed. Within each section, it is <u>not</u> necessary to address the topics in the order listed (although that is fine to do).

Part 0	**Introduction: 1 paragraph** Briefly outline the paper. What will you be saying? What will you conclude?	5%
Part 1	**Computationalism: 2 paragraphs, covering the following topics (not necessarily in order):** (1) Explain the idea of computationalism. Address the roles played by symbols, computers, mental representations, and cognition. <u>Do not quote the definition of computationalism from the handout.</u> (2) Illustrate your discussion with an actual or hypothetical example that shows how computationalism is supposed to work. See some suggestions below.	30%
Part 2	**The Chinese Room Argument: 3 paragraphs, covering the following topics (not necessarily in order):** (1) Introduce the Chinese Room Argument: what is the set up, and the key facts? (2) Explain the point of the Chinese Room Argument, highlighting the two key premises. What does each say? Why is each plausible? (3) Explain the conclusion of the Chinese Room Argument. What does this conclusion tell us about computers and the mind? How is the argument related to the problem of meaning?	30%
Part 3*	**Evaluation: 2 paragraphs, covering the following topics (not necessarily in order):** (1) Explain either the Systems Reply or the Robot Reply. Suggestions: explain both the negative and positive claims involved in this reply. How is the reply supposed undermine the argument? What does to say about the problem of meaning instead? (2) Evaluate: in light of your discussion, is the Chinese Room Argument successful (i.e. does it prove that computationalism is false)? If you think the argument works, how to you respond to the reply discussed above? If you think the reply discussed above defeats the argument, what reason do you have for believing that reply?	35%

Note about examples of computationalism:
You can use either an everyday example (e.g. estimating the trajectory of a ball in the air) or a more scientific example (e.g. path integration in desert ants). You can use an example discussed in class or one of your own design. Your example can be merely hypothetical, but it is good to be specific. Here is a list of examples we have (or will) discuss. Feel free to draw from this list:

- estimating the trajectory of a ball in the air
- path integration among desert ants
- calculating a simple mathematical function (like times 2, or binary +1)
- logical reasoning (if/then reasoning)
- visual perception
- blind sight
- implicit bias
- navigation
- memory

Note about the Chinese Room Case:
Feel free to change the languages / people involved in the Chinese Room Argument, as long as the basic structure of the argument is the same.

*Advanced Option:
For Part 3, develop your own reply to the Chinese Room Argument, then evaluate the argument in light of your reply. Use this option only if you have are feeling comfortable with the material. Include a note that says "Advanced Option" under your UID on the first page.

Writing Constraints
- The paper should be submitted anonymously. Do <u>NOT</u> include your name. <u>DO</u> include your student ID #.
- The paper must be no more than 1000 words. (Use the "word count" function in your word-processor.) Title, citations, and bibliography do not count towards the word limit.
- No limit on number of words per sentence.
- The paper must be double spaced.
- The font size must be 12 point.

Quotation Policy
(1) <u>Do not quote</u> any source, with the following exceptions:
    a. Boxed definitions from the handout. But do not quote the "core idea" text,
    b. Individual words or terms used by an author.
(2) Instead of quoting, describe the author's position in your own words.
(3) Remember that word-for-word paraphrase is a form of plagiarism, so when you describe someone's view, use your own phrasing. (Ask your TA if you aren't sure what a word-for-word paraphrase is.)

Citation Policy
(1) Use at least two readings as sources for your discussion. Citations from the handouts and outside readings do not count toward the two source minimum.
(2) Cite two readings within the body of the text.
(3) External sources are allowed, but discouraged. Of course they must be cited.
(4) If you quote material from handouts, you must include a citation and bibliography entry.
(5) Otherwise, you can use ideas (but not exact phrases) from handouts and lecture without citation.
(6) Do cite all readings (or external sources) which you use, in the following way: at the end of the series of sentences in which you make reference to that reading write (Author Date, Page) e.g. "(Huxley 1874, p.13)".
(7) Any sources that are cited in the text must be listed in the bibliography. Any readable and complete bibliography style is acceptable.

Evaluation
Your paper will be graded along four dimensions:
(1) <u>Understanding</u>. Have you correctly described the views and claims at issue? Have you done so without mixing in your own opinion?
(2) <u>Clarity & Precision</u>. Have you expressed yourself in a way that is both clear and precise? Have you avoided ambiguity and merely suggestive language?
(3) <u>Dialectic</u>. Do you understand how the various claims interact logically? Do you understand why some are compatible and others are not? Does your assessment of the claims make sense?
(4) <u>Writing policies</u>. Have you followed the citation and quotation policy? Are your sentences really under 18 words long?