COURSE DETAIL

VIRTUAL REALITY
Country Germany
Host Institution Humboldt University Berlin
Program(s) Humboldt University Berlin
UCEAP Course Level Upper Division
UCEAP Subject Area(s) Philosophy
UCEAP Course Number 134
UCEAP Course Suffix
UCEAP Official Title VIRTUAL REALITY
UCEAP Transcript Title VIRTUAL REALITY
UCEAP Quarter Units 4.50
UCEAP Semester Units 3.00

Course Description

The technological advances associated with Virtual Reality (VR), as well as its close cousins such as Augmented Reality (AR) and Extended Reality (XR), represent a fundamental shift in how humans experience the digital realm. Using devices such as VR-headsets, we can now access digital environments full of computer-generated simulations in a way that allows for a more intuitive kind of interactive experience than is typically afforded by more familiar uses of computers. In recent years, via devices such as the Oculus Rift, VR-technology has become increasingly accessible in the home and it is anticipated to become even more ubiquitous in the near future.

This class aims to examine a range of philosophical questions associatedwith VR. As we shall see, VR gives us new ways to both articulate classic philosophical problems and also to sharpen those problems. The relevant philosophical questions are wide-ranging, encompassing topics in epistemology (“Can you know you are not in a virtual world?”), metaphysics (“Are virtual worlds real?”), and value theory (“Can you live a good life in a virtual world?”). In examining these issues, we will focus on David Chalmers’ (2022) treatment of VR in his pioneering book Reality+, where Chalmers argues for a range of bold answers to these questions (and others): that we cannot know that we are not in a virtual world, that virtual worlds are just as real as non-virtual worlds, and that it is possible to lead a meaningful and valuable life in a virtual reality. By the end of the class, students will not only have been introduced to many of the most central philosophical problems, but will have further evaluated both the ways in which technology can shed light on old problems in philosophy and the ways in which philosophy can shed light on new problems about technology.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
51030

Host Institution Course Title
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Host Institution Course Details
https://agnes.hu-berlin.de/lupo/rds?state=verpublish&status=init&vmfile=no&publ...

Host Institution Campus
Humboldt University

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department
Institut für Philosophie

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