

History of Modern Philosophy – REVISED SYLLABUS

Philosophy 1170-001

Spring 2024

PCPE Auditorium TR 10:15-11:14 am

Description	The aim of this course is to present you with a survey of canonical thinkers and texts from the Early Modern period of philosophy. Thinkers such as Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Hume and Kant all struggled to balance concerns about skepticism and the limits of what we can know with the optimism of the European Enlightenment and new scientific advances. This struggle, in turn, motivated some of philosophy's most enduring and challenging questions about the existence of God, the basic structure of reality, the nature of causation, human freedom, and personal identity, as well as the sources and consequences of our moral capabilities. In order to capture the breadth and systematic structure of these philosophers' concerns, we will devote roughly half of our time to examining each thinker's theories of reality and knowledge, and the other half to the implications of these theories for ethics and morality.
Instructor:	Dr George Borg e-mail: gborg@sas.penn.edu phone : 215-898-7535
Instructor Office Hours:	Claudia Cohen Hall 426 M 11-12, W 11-12 and by appointment
Teaching Assistant:	Eugene Vaynberg eugenev@sas.upenn.edu Office hours: W 12-2, Cohen 403
Course website:	canvas.upenn.edu
Course Objectives	This course is primarily a philosophy course. As such, these are the intellectual goals that we will work toward throughout the semester: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How to read, analyze and articulate arguments and positions in historical texts.2. How to produce one's own arguments and how to express them clearly, both in writing and orally in class.3. Discover what the main problems and questions are that occupied philosophers in this period, in the domains of metaphysics, epistemology and value theory.

Required Texts

Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources, 3rd Edition. Ed. Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins. This should be available at the Penn Bookstore.

In addition, copies of Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature*, and Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* are available on the course's Canvas site (marked **C** in the reading schedule below), under 'Files.'

ALL READINGS ARE TO BE DONE BEFORE THE CLASS ON WHICH THEY ARE DUE.

Course Requirements	<p>This is a reading-intensive course, so in order to help you focus and organize your reading, I will provide a set of questions at the end of each class, on the next class's material (the questions will also be available on Canvas under 'Files'). You will be expected to write short answers to these questions on your own, before the class in which the reading is due. The questions will play an important part in our discussions in lecture and in the recitations.</p> <p>75% Three Exams (in-class)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% First Exam • 25% Second Exam • 30% Final Exam <p>25% Recitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% participation • 10% study questions <p>Study questions for each reading will be due. Please write a short answer to each question and turn them in at the recitations.</p>
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General Guidelines	I encourage participation (asking or answering questions, or contributing to the discussion) in the lectures. The three exams must be taken at the scheduled time; you can be excused from having to take a test, but only for compelling reasons (such as serious accident or illness) and only after proper documentation.
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Date	Topic	Reading and Homework Due
1. R, Jan 18	Introduction	
2. T, Jan 23	Descartes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Meditations 1-2</i>: Doubt and clear and distinct ideas 2. Study questions for <i>Meditations 1-2</i>
3. R, Jan 25	Descartes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Meditations 3-4</i>: God's existence and freedom 2. Study questions for <i>Meditations 3-4</i>
4. T, Jan 30	Descartes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Meditations 5-6, Discourse on Method Part 5</i>: Matter, the external world, mind, and body 2. Study questions for <i>Meditations 5-6, Discourse on Method Part 5</i>
5. R, Feb 1	Descartes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Objections and Replies II, III, and IV</i> 2. <i>Objections and Replies</i> study questions
6. T, Feb 6	Spinoza	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Ethics Part 1</i> (up to p. 188): Method and God 2. <i>Ethics Part 1</i> study questions
7. R, Feb 8	Spinoza	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Ethics Part 2</i> (pp. 192-215): Nature 2. <i>Ethics Part 2</i> study questions
8. T, Feb 13	Spinoza	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Ethics Part 5</i> (pp. 216-223) 2. <i>Ethics Part 5</i> study questions
9. R, Feb 15	Descartes & Spinoza review	No reading due

10. T, Feb 20	TEST 1 – ON CLASSES 1-8	
11. R, Feb 22	Leibniz	1. <i>Discourse on metaphysics</i> : God, substance, and the Problem of Evil 2. <i>Discourse on metaphysics</i> study questions
12. T, Feb 27	Leibniz	1. <i>Primary Truths and Monadology</i> : Substances and eternal truths 2. <i>Primary Truths and Monadology</i> study questions
13. R, Feb 29	Locke	1. <i>Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> (up to p. 370): The origin of ideas 2. <i>Essay</i> (up to p. 370) study questions
T & R, Mar 5 & 7	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	
14. T, Mar 12	Locke	1. <i>Essay</i> (pp. 370-387): Abstract ideas, freedom, power 2. <i>Essay</i> (pp. 370-387) study questions
15. R, Mar 14	Locke	1. <i>Essay</i> (pp. 387-397): The idea of substance, and secondary qualities 2. <i>Essay</i> (pp. 387-397) study questions
16. T, Mar 19	Berkeley	1. <i>A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge</i> : Idealism 2. <i>Principles of Human Knowledge</i> study questions
17. R, Mar 21	Hume	1. <i>Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> Sections I-V: Skepticism and Knowledge 2. <i>Enquiry</i> I-V study questions
18. T, Mar 26	Hume	1. <i>Enquiry</i> Sections VI-VIII: Causation and Freedom 2. <i>Enquiry</i> VI-VIII study questions
19. R, Mar 28	Review of classes 11-18	No reading due
20. T, Apr 2	TEST 2 – ON CLASSES 11-18	
21. R, Apr 4	Hume	1. <i>Enquiry</i> Sections X-XI: Miracles <i>Enquiry</i> Sections X-XI study questions
22. T, Apr 9	Hume	1. <i>Treatise</i> (C, 291-306): Moral sentiments 2. <i>Treatise</i> (C, 291-306) study questions
23. R, Apr 11	du Châtelet	1. <i>Foundations of Physics</i> : Space 2. <i>Foundations</i> study question
24. T, Apr 16	Kant	1. <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> (pp. 775-788): Synthetic <i>a priori</i> knowledge 2. <i>Critique</i> (pp. 775-788) study questions
25. R, Apr 18	Kant	1. <i>Critique</i> (pp. 788-795): Space and time 2. <i>Critique</i> (pp. 788-795) study questions

26. T, Apr 23	Kant	1. <i>Critique</i> (pp. 795-814): Causation and the ‘I think’: responses to Hume 2. <i>Critique</i> (pp. 795-814) study questions
27. R, Apr 25	Kant	1. <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (C, pp. 7-30) 2. <i>Groundwork</i> (C, pp. 7-30) study questions
28. T, Apr 30	Kant and review	1. <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (C, pp. 31-48) 2. <i>Groundwork</i> (pp. 31-48) study questions
29. M, May 6	FINAL EXAM—ON CLASSES 21-28	

We will use the following grading schema to calculate your grade:

Grades Scored Between	Will Equal
97 % and 100 %	A+
94 % and Less Than 97%	A
90 % and Less Than 94%	A-
87 % and Less Than 90%	B+
84 % and Less Than 87%	B
80 % and Less Than 84%	B-
77 % and Less Than 80%	C+
74 % and Less Than 77%	C
70 % and Less Than 74%	C-
67 % and Less Than 70%	D+
64 % and Less Than 67%	D
60 % and Less Than 64%	D-
0 % and Less Than 60%	F

Student Support Services:

The Weingarten Center offers a variety of resources to support all Penn students in reaching their academic goals. All services are free and confidential. To contact the Weingarten Center, call 215-573-9235. The office is located in Stouffer Commons, 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300.

Academic Support

Learning consultations and learning strategies workshops support students in developing more efficient and effective study skills and learning strategies. Learning specialists work with undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to address time and project management, academic reading and writing, note-taking, problem-solving, exam preparation, test-taking, self-regulation, and flexibility.

Undergraduates can also take advantage of free on-campus tutoring for many Penn courses in both drop-in and weekly contract formats. Tutoring may be individual or in small groups. Tutors will assist with applying course information, understanding key concepts, and developing course-specific strategies. Tutoring support is available throughout the term but is best accessed early in the semester.

Disability Services

The University of Pennsylvania is committed to the accessibility of its programs and services. Students with a disability or medical condition can request reasonable accommodations through the Weingarten Center website. Disability Services determines accommodations on an individualized basis through an interactive process, including a meeting with the student and a review of their disability documentation. Students who have approved accommodations are encouraged to notify their faculty members and share their accommodation letters at the start of each semester. Students can contact Disability Services by calling 215-573-9235.