

Modern Philosophy — 17th and 18th Centuries

PHIL 4033/5033 001; Spring 2006

TR 11:00-12:30; Main 425

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Main 312 – TR 9:30–11:00 – 575-5825 – jclyons@uark.edu –

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The aim of this course is to expose students to the philosophical work of some of the major figures of the modern period. We will spend most of our time on Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant, but we will also read some Galileo, Malebranche, and Reid. Our focus will be on their theories of mind, metaphysics, and epistemology.

Assignments:

There will be a number of short, unannounced quizzes to encourage students to keep up with the reading. Together these will make up 10% of the final grade. In addition, there will be a quiz on Kant on April 20, which is by itself worth 10%. A take-home exam (more or less equivalent to a 4-7 page paper) will be due March 13, a 6-9 page paper due April 18, and a final in-class exam on May 9. The exams are each worth 25% of your final grade, the paper worth 30%.

- Graduate students will receive a different, longer take-home exam and will write a 10-12 page paper.

Required and recommended texts:

All the readings for this class have been widely published and are available in different forms and editions. If you can find the relevant readings elsewhere, do so. The Ariew and Watkins anthology we will be using collects a number of important works and “associated texts” and does a fair job of editing some longer works, especially Locke’s *Essay*. If you already have all these or intend to get them and so don’t want to buy the anthology, at least consult it to find out what the selections are.

The other books listed have been chosen because they are fairly standard, in some cases, *the* standard edition for citation purposes. If you have another edition or translation, feel free to use it, though you’ll have to keep up with page references in class. Read ‘required’ with all this in mind.

Required:

Ariew, R. & E. Watkins, eds. (1998). *Modern Philosophy: an Anthology of Primary Sources*. Indianapolis: Hackett. – abbreviated below as “AW”

Descartes, R. (1985) *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, vol. I*. J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch, trans. & eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hume, D. (1978). *A Treatise of Human Nature*. D. F. Norton & M. J. Norton, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kant, I. (1998). *Critique of Pure Reason*. P. Guyer & A. W. Wood, trans. & eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Recommended:

Descartes, R. (1984) *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, vol. II*. J. Cottingham, R.

Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch, trans. & eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Leibniz, G. W. (1998). *Philosophical Texts*. R. S. Woolhouse & R. Francks, trans. & eds.
Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Note: you need Volume I of Descartes's writings; Volume II is optional.

Reading Schedule:

Jan. 17	Introduction (also read Galileo selection from AW)
Jan 19 – Feb 2	Rene Descartes, <i>Principles of Philosophy</i> (1644); Comments on a Certain Broadsheet (1648)
Feb 7	Nicolas Malebranche, <i>The Search after Truth</i> (1674-5): selections in AW
Feb 9 – 16	Leibniz, <i>Discourse on Metaphysics</i> (1686); <i>Monadology</i> (1714)
Feb 21 – Mar 7	John Locke, <i>An Essay concerning Human Understanding</i> (1690): selections in AW
Mar 9 – 28	George Berkeley, <i>Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge</i> (1710): Introduction; <i>Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous</i> (1713). All in AW SPRING BREAK Mar 20 – 24
Mar 30 – Apr 13	David Hume, <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i> (1739-40), Book I (skip the first 5 sections of Part II)
Apr 18	Reid, <i>An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense</i> (1764): Ch. 5, sect. 7; <i>Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man</i> (1785): Essay II, Ch. 13-14. ON RESERVE
Apr 20 – May 4	Immanuel Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> (1781/87): up through Transcendental Analytic; 99–383 in Guyer/Wood trans.

Final Exam: May 9, 12:30-2:30

Note on Reading:

I strongly recommend that you read everything here twice. The first time, you should skim the whole work to get a sense of the overall position. The second time you will read more slowly and try to understand the details. In the end, this is probably more time effective than a single slow and careful read. The Kant quiz on April 20 is designed to force you to read Kant this way, but you should do it with all the material. Discussions will be arranged topically by author and will not necessarily follow the order presented in the text. When we read two works by the same author, I will want us to have both of them in front of us at the same time, so have skimmed them both before the first day of class assigned to that author.

Miscellaneous:

I use the standard University weather policy; students with special needs will be accommodated; plagiarism will not be tolerated.