

PHIL 220 Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Philosophy
University of Redlands, Spring 2006
Tues/Thurs 2:30-3:50

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Course Description: This course will examine the history of early modern European philosophy, focusing on the “Quest for Certainty”. After a brief look at how the Renaissance and the Reformation brought about a crisis of skepticism and religious wars in the late Sixteenth-Century, we will trace the various attempts of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century philosophers to find a firm “foundation” for knowledge that could provide certainty and stability in the contentious fields of science, religion, metaphysics, ethics, and politics. *Prerequisite: One course in philosophy.*

Required Texts: Compared with many philosophy courses, there is a large amount of reading for this course. There is about 800 pages of reading assigned for this course which is an average of about 60 pages per week. I estimate that you should be able to read around 10 pages per hour (which doesn’t sound like much, but is actually quite fast for material of this difficulty), so that means you should plan on spending at least one hour per day reading with only one day off per week. If you cannot commit that amount of time to this course, then please consider taking another course.

The texts for this course are classics and are generally available in many editions. However, all students are required to have the exact edition of each text listed below. This will allow us all to be (literally) on the same page as we discuss the material in class. (The required editions are available in the university bookstore; if you wish to buy online, check the ISBN numbers.) I know I have not always chosen the most inexpensive edition of the texts, but I have taken cost into account. In choosing which edition of each text to use for this class, I have tried to balance various considerations such as translation, editorial notes, etc. as well as cost. I believe I have chosen the best editions at the most reasonable prices. If you cannot afford to purchase all of the required texts for this course, then please consider taking another course.

We will not be able to read all the books in their entirety, but students are encouraged to read as much of the book as possible. The required readings are listed in bold below each text. Sections in brackets are recommended but not required.

1. Montaigne, Michel de. *Apology for Raymond Sebond*. trans. Roger Ariew and Marjorie Grene (Hackett, 2003), ISBN 0872206793.

Read pages 1-12, 58-75, [75-85], 85-103, [103-121], and 121-164.

2. Descartes, René. *Meditations on First Philosophy* with selections from the *Objections and Replies*, trans. John Cottingham, rev. ed. (Cambridge, 1996), ISBN 0521558182.

Read all.

3. Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck, rev. student ed. (Cambridge, 1996), ISBN 0521567971.

Read “The Introduction”, Chapters 1-17 [18-20], 21, 29, [30-31], 46, and [“A Review and Conclusion”].

4. Locke, John. *An Essay on Human Understanding* (Prometheus, 1995), ISBN 0879759178.

Read [“Dedication”, “The Epistle to the Reader”]; Book I, Chapter i; Book II, Chs i-viii, [ix-xi], xii, xxiii, xxvii, [xxix-xxxii], xxxiii; Book IV, Chs i-iv, ix-xii, [xiii-xv], xvi, [xvii], xviii-xx.

5. Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *Theodicy*, trans. E.M. Huggard (Open Court, 1985), ISBN 0875484379.

Read [“Preface”]; “Preliminary Dissertation” sections 1-5, [6-21], 22-31, 39-45, 64-66; “Essays on the Justice of God” sections 1-75, 107-134, 241-251, [288-338], 339-357, and [“Summary”].

6. Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (Oxford, 2000), ISBN 0198751724.

Read “Intro”, Book I, Part 1, Sections 1-7; Part 2, Sect 6; Part 3, Sect 1-8, [9], 10, [11-13], 14-16; Part 4, Sect 1-7; Book II, part 1, Sect 1-7, [8], 11; Part 2, Sect 1-2; Book III, Part 1, Sect 2; “Appendix” and “Abstract”.

There are no specific due dates for the reading assignments. Rather, you should stay on the general schedule outlined below and read as much as you can before each class.

Tentative Schedule:	Montaigne	Week 1 (1/10-1/12)
	Descartes	Weeks 2-3 (1/17-1/19 and 1/24-1/26)
	Hobbes	Weeks 4-5 (1/31-2/2 and 2/7-2/9)
	Locke	Weeks 6-7 (2/14-2/16 and 2/21-2/23)
	<i>Spring Break</i>	Week 8 (2/28-3/2)
	Locke, cont.	Week 9 (3/7-3/9)
	Leibniz	Weeks 10-11 (3/14-3/16 and 3/21-3/23)
	Hume	Week 12-14 (3/28-3/30, 4/4-4/6 and 4/11-4/13)

Requirements:

Philosophy is practiced through reading, writing, and lecturing as well as through public dialogue and debate. Grades for this course will be based on the students' performance in all of these areas. In order to prepare for class discussion, students should bring something *in writing* to each class period relating to the scheduled reading for that day. These writing assignments should alternate between (1) a 500 word reconstruction of a particular argument and (2) a 1200 word general summary of a philosophical text as whole. Since the writing and presentation of these papers will measure the student's preparation, attendance, and participation for a given class period, ***no late papers will be accepted.*** The grading for the reconstructions will be based on the student's ability to identify the *philosophically interesting arguments* in the reading and to reconstruct these arguments clearly, concisely, and accurately. These are skills we will practice together throughout the course. The grading of the summaries will be based on the student's ability to discern and to explain each author's overall philosophical project and to locate that project in relation to the author's philosophical contemporaries. Note that students' overall course grades will also reflect in-class discussion. Therefore students should be prepared not only to present their own summaries and reconstructions to the class, but also to discuss intelligently the merits of one another's interpretations of the text, as well as to defend the accuracy of their own interpretations from the objections of their classmates. *To receive a passing grade, students must turn in a summary on **each** of the five assigned texts and must turn in a total of at least **eight** reconstructions during the course.* This is a minimum total of 13 papers (about one per week) and 10,000 words (just over 30 pages, so about 2 and a half pages per week). If you cannot commit to this amount of writing, please consider taking another course. There will be no final exam.