

Modern Philosophy
PHIL3010

Spring Semester, 2008

Raymond Woller

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You are responsible for knowing everything contained in this Syllabus/Description.

Texts: Required readings are all available on the Course Website on WebCT.

Goals & Methods of the Course: The goal of the course is to give you a overview of modern western philosophy in the 17th and 18th centuries by covering these major philosophical figures: Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Leibniz, and Kant. The emphasis will be on how these philosophers sought to deal with issues that arose from the adoption of the new or modern scientific way of thinking and dealing with the world while still maintaining, at least implicitly, a nostalgia for the pre-modern way of looking at the world. These issues still bedevil contemporary philosophers. We will consider only epistemological and metaphysical issues.

Grading:

- There will be seven (7) one-to-two page papers, each counting 10% of your course grade.
 - Potential topics for these papers will be posted on WebCT before we take up the reading and the philosophers to which the topics pertain. **You should make sure that your reading of the text, my lectures, and class discussion enable you to write a paper on ANY of the topics. Ask questions if you do not understand how you would go about responding to the topics. I will select a topic for you to write on about every two weeks. I will only select topics that have been discussed in class.**
 - I will announce the topic and the due-date in class and post the topic, due date, and specific instructions on the course website homepage under the Assignment icon. You will always have one week to complete the assignment.
 - You may discuss assigned paper topics with your classmates, but what you write **must be in your own words**. To do otherwise is to be in violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.
 - You are required to understand the university Academic Honesty Policy.
Information about the policy is available at www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/procedures.html
 - No handwritten papers will be accepted.
 - Papers must be double-spaced with and conform to the word-limit specified in the assignment of each paper.
 - I stop reading when the word count exceeds the stated limit..
 - Your name should occur only in light pencil on the **back** of the last page.
 - Papers are due at the beginning of class on the day they are do; **Late papers will not be accepted without a bonafide excuse.**
 - An optional take-home final will consist in your writing two additional papers.
 - Three topics from the list of topics that have not been previously assigned will be available from which you must choose two: **you cannot choose to do just one.**
 - The grades on these papers will replace the two lowest paper grades that you previously received **even if the new grades are lower than the previously received grades.**
 - **You must complete a total of seven (7) papers to pass the course.**
 - **If you fail to turn in more than two of the assigned papers, you will fail the course**, since there is no way that you can complete all seven papers.
- The remaining 30% of your course grade will be based on quizzes on the readings.
 - There is no fixed number of such quizzes.
 - Quizzes are intended to demonstrate that you have completed the reading assignment and will be factual rather than interpretative in nature.
 - The lowest grade for a quiz that you take will be 50%. But a missed quiz will receive a grade of 0%.
 - There are no makeups for quizzes.
 - The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped when determining your quiz grade.

- **Keep copies of all graded material returned to you in case there is a question about whether your grades have been correctly recorded.**
- Your grades are available on the course website under the My Grades icon on the homepage.
- The university now uses a plus-minus system for recording grades. You should check the following website for answers to some frequently asked questions about this system: <http://www.bulletin.uga.edu/PlusMinusGradingFAQ.html#Q9>.
- I use numbers from 0 to 100 in grading. To see how they relate to plus and minus letter grades, click on the +/- Grades icon on the Course Website Homepage. **I do not do any rounding, either up or down, in calculating grades your grade for the course.**

The course web site on WebCT:

- **Syllabus/Description**, which is this document.
- **Syllabus/Calendar**: contains readings assignments. Readings are listed on the day they are to be completed. The Syllabus/Calendar is subject to change. **You are responsible for checking the website regularly to keep up to date on the assignments.**
 - When there is a change in the Syllabus/Calendar that you have not seen, a calendar-icon appears on the WebCt welcome page where this course is listed, and the Syllabus/Calendar icon also appears with green lines radiating around it.
- **Readings**: All the readings for the course are available under the Readings icon.
- **Misc Material**: Miscellaneous material will be placed here.
- **Paper Topics**: A list of paper topics from which I will selected assignments.
- **Assignment**: The currently assigned paper topic, some specific instructions, and the due date.
- **Discussions** is a bulletin board restricted to members of the class. It is a place where you can pose questions or comments and respond to other students' questions and comments.
 - I post information of general interest here.
 - **You are responsible for knowing any such information that I post there, so check the website often.**
 - I check the bulletin board regularly and reply when appropriate.
 - Using this feature is entirely optional and has no effect on your grade. For personal matters, use intra-class mail, or, better, my regular e-mail given above.
 - If there is a posting that you have not read, a posting-icon appears on the WebCT welcome page and the Discussions icon appears with green radiating lines.
- **Intra-class Mail**: This is an email-system restricted to members of the class and the instructor.
 - Use this or my regular e-mail, listed above, to contact me concerning something that is not of general interest to the class.
 - I move questions of general interest to Discussions.
 - I use this feature if I have to contact you about a class matter that pertains to you.
 - **You are responsible for knowing the contents of any e-mail I send to you using this system.**
 - **Forward your Intra-class mail to a e-mail box that you frequent very often.** You can do this by clicking on Message Settings.
 - If you have unread mail, an mail-icon appears on the WebCT welcome page where this course is listed and the Intra-class Mail icon on the home page also appears with radiating green lines.
 - If you use this feature to pose general questions or comments about the course material, I will move the questions and comments to the bulletin board.
- **Links**: Links to a philosophical dictionary and a philosophical encyclopedia are to be found here. If you find any interesting relevant links, let me know and I'll add them.
- **Academic Honesty**: All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic work in this class. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. More information is under the Academic Honesty Policy icon on the Homepage of the Course Website.
- **My Grades** is where you can see your grades. Only you can see your grades.
- +/- **Grading** explains how my grading system connects with the +/- grading system used by the university.
- **Chat Room** is a real-time discussion area; you can type to each other in real time. To use this --feature, chatters have to be logged onto the website at the same time.

Syllabus/Calendar Philosophy 3010 Dr Woller

January 2008

Date Event

Monday, January 7 Introduction

- Course Mechanics.

Wednesday, January 9 Modern vs Pre-modern

- Have read Barzun, Modern vs Pre-modern.

Friday, January 11 Descartes

- Have read Meditation 1.

Monday, January 14 Descartes

- Have read Descartes, Meditation 2.

Wednesday, January 16 Descartes

- Have read Descartes, Meditation 3.

Friday, January 18 Descartes

- Have read Descartes, Meditation 4.

Monday, January 21 MLK Day

- No Lecture.

Wednesday, January 23 Descartes

- Have read Descartes, Meditation 5.

Friday, January 25 Descartes

- Have read Descartes, Meditation 6.

Monday, January 28 Slack

Wednesday, January 30 Spinoza

- Have read Part 1 of Spinoza's Ethics.

February 2008

Date Event

Friday, February 1 Locke-Innate Ideas

- Have read Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Chapters I & II.

The next reading, for Monday, will be Leibniz's New Essays Concerning Human Understanding, Chap 1, which is Leibniz's commentary of Locke's Chapter 2 of Book I. In this dialogue the character Philaletes merely paraphrases Locke, with the boldfaced section numbers indicating the section being paraphrased. The character Theophilus speaks Leibniz's criticisms of Locke. You might want to read this in tandem with Locke, looking at Theophilus' criticisms immediately after reading the relevant sections in Locke. I plan to spend today on discussing Locke's arguments.

Monday, February 4 Leibniz-Innate Ideas

- Have read:

1. Leibniz's New Essays Concerning Human Understanding, Chap 1.
2. The excerpt from Stephen Pinker's The Language Instinct, which argues for an innate language instinct.

Wednesday, February 6 Slack

Friday, February 8 Locke - Simple Ideas

- Have read the selections from Locke's Essay, Book II, Chaps 1 through 8.

Monday, February 11 Locke - Complex Ideas
 - Have read the selections from Locke's Essay, Book II, Chaps 12-14, 17-18, 22.

Wednesday, February 13 Locke - Complex Ideas
 - Have read the selections from Locke's Essay, Book II, Chap 23.

Friday, February 15 Locke Knowledge
 - Have read Book IV, Chaps 1-4, & 9-11 in Locke's Essay.

Monday, February 18 Slack

Wednesday, February 20 Locke Personal Identity
 - Have read Book II, Chap 27.

Friday, February 22 Slack

Monday, February 25 Locke on Abstraction
 - Have read: Chap. 3 of Book III of Locke's Essay.

Wednesday, February 27 Berkeley on Abstraction
 - Have read: "Introduction" from Berkeley's Principles of Human Knowledge."

Friday, February 29 Slack

March 2008

Date Event

Monday, March 3 Berkeley Idealism
 - Have read Berkeley Dialogue I from his Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous, in
 Opposition to Skeptics and Atheists. Read carefully through the arguments about
 felt temperature, and then more quickly stopping after Berkeley's rejection of the
 mind-independence of primary qualities.

Wednesday, March 5 Berkeley Idealism
 - Read the rest of Dialogue 1 from the rejection of primary qualities to the end, paying
 special attention to the argument about the possibility of conceiving something
 unconceived.

Friday, March 7 Berkeley Idealism
 - Have read Berkeley's Dialogue II.

Monday, March 10 Spring Break

Wednesday, March 12 Spring Break

Friday, March 14 Spring Break

Monday, March 17 Berkeley Idealism
 - Have read Berkeley Dialogue III.

Wednesday, March 19 Slack

Friday, March 21 Hume
 - Have read Hume's Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Sections 1-6.

Monday, March 24 Hume
 - Have read Hume's Enquiry, Sections 12.

Wednesday, March 26 Hume
 - Have read Hume's Enquiry, Section 10.

Friday, March 28 Hume
 - Have read Hume's enquiry, Section 11.

Monday, March 31 Causality
 - Have read: Hume's Enquiry, Sections 7.

April 2008

Date Event

Wednesday, April 2 Free Will

- Have read Hume's Enquiry Section 8.

Friday, April 4 Free Will

- Have read Locke's Essay, Book II, Chap. 21, the following sections: 7-8, 13-16, 21-26, 29-31, 41-42, 46-49, 56, 67,69, 71-72.

Monday, April 7 Slack

Wednesday, April 9 .Leibniz

- Have read Leibniz's Discourse on Metaphysics. Sections 4, 11, and 17 to the end are optional.

Friday, April 11 Leibniz

- Have read Leibniz's Monadology.

Monday, April 14 Leibniz

- Have read Leibniz's Response to Clark's 5 Letter.

Wednesday, April 16 Slack

Friday, April 18 Kant

- Have read Kant's Prolegomena, "Introduction," "Preamble," & "First Part."

Monday, April 21 Kant

- Have read Kant's Prolegomena, "Second Part."

Wednesday, April 23 Kant

- Have read Kant's Prolegomena, Third Part."

Friday, April 25 Kant

- Have read Kant's Prolegomena, "Conclusion" & Solution."

Monday, April 28 Slack