

Philosophy 2160: Modern European Philosophy to Hume

Patricia Sheridan

Office Hours: Thursdays 11:30-1:00, or by appointment

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Galileo facing the Inquisition

Course Outline

The period we will be covering, from the 16th to the 18th centuries, is commonly referred to as the Renaissance and the Age of Reason. It is an age of extreme dichotomy: the Scientific Revolution saw the birth of modern science, with its aims of objectivity and the search after truth. It was also a time of fierce political repression, religious intolerance, the burning of witches and heretics and dogmatic resistance to ideas that challenged the authority of the Catholic Church or the Aristotelian teaching of the Universities. The thinkers we will be reading were some of the most important voices in the intellectual movement towards the modern age. Our readings will cover Bacon, Galileo, Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley and Hume. Each of these philosophers attempted to establish a new foundation for scientific truth that sought to free the human mind from the prejudices and dogmatic assumptions that dominated the political, religious, moral and scientific thinking of Europe at this time. Their aim to create the foundations for a new science must be read in the context of each thinker's larger goal—to establish the foundations for tolerance, objectivity, and an earnest desire to seek truth. Whether or not the goals laid out were realistic or even at all possible, the attempt to establish a new way of thinking was a response to the authoritarianism that dominated Europe at this time.

Required Texts: Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins, *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources*

Evaluation:

2 three-page critical summaries *	40% (2 x 20%)
Mid-term * *	25%
Final exam * * *	35%

*** Critical Summaries (2 x 20%):** A critical summary is a method of critical analysis, which requires a precise formulation of the argument of a given piece of text, in your own words, along with a critical analysis of its relative strength or weakness. You will be asked to write two critical summaries; each on an assigned piece of text. Detailed guidelines on writing critical summaries will be handed out in class and made available on D2L. The submission dates for critical summaries are clearly indicated below on the *Course Reading Schedule*.

— Late assignments will not be accepted, except on medical or compassionate grounds. You must speak to Professor Sheridan to arrange for late submission of assignments.

****Mid-term (25%):** This will be an in-class test (1 hour in length); it will consist of one essay question. This test is cumulative of all material covered up to the date of the mid-term.

--if you are not able to write the test for medical or compassionate reasons, please come talk to me as early as possible.

*****Final exam (35%):** This exam will be 2 hours long (room TBA); essay format. You will be given three essay questions, in class, on the last day of classes and two of them will appear on the final exam. This exam will be cumulative of all material covered during the term.

--if you are unable to write the final exam, there are specific procedures set out in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Course Schedule

- January 7: Introduction**
- January 9: Scepticism and the new science**
Montaigne, *Apology for Raymond Sebond*
Bacon, *New Organon*
- January 14: Descartes: The defeat of scepticism and the foundations for rationalism**
Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy; Meditations I & II*
- January 16: Proofs of God's Existence**
Descartes, *Meditations III & V*
Pascal, *Pensées*
- January 21: Mind and Body**
Descartes, *Meditation VI*
Princess Elizabeth: *Correspondence* (n.b. this will be available on D2L)
Critical Summary #1 assignment handed out
- January 23: The Best of all Possible Worlds**
Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics, 1-15*
- January 28: Innate Ideas and Freedom of the Will**
Leibniz, *Discourse, 20-30 & 33-34*
- January 30: Monads and Perception**
Leibniz, *Monadology, 1-45*
- February 4: Is there a material world outside the mind?**
Leibniz, *Monadology, 46-90*
Critical Summary #1 due
- February 6: Corpuscular Metaphysics**
Galileo, *The Assayer*
Boyle, *Of the Excellency and Grounds of the Corpuscular or Mechanical Philosophy*
- February 11: The origins of our Ideas**

Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Book II, Chapters 1 & 2*

February 13: Complex Ideas
Locke, *Essay, Book II, Chapters 8, 12*

Week of February 17: Winter Break

February 25: Mid-term

February 27: Our Ideas of Substances
Locke, *Essay, Book II, Chapter 23*

March 4: Our ideas of Identity
Locke, *Essay, Book II, Chapter 27*

March 6: Abstract Ideas: Locke's Nominalism
Locke, *Essay, Book III, Chapter 3, 6*

March 11: Berkeley's Idealism
Berkeley, *Principles of Human Knowledge, Part I, § 1-26; Introduction §9-14*
Critical Summary #2 assignment handed out

March 13: Objections Answered
Berkeley, *Principles, § 34-65*

March 18: Objections (continued) & the Existence of God and Other Minds
Berkeley, *Principles, § 145-155*

March 20: The Origin of our Ideas
Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, § II-III*

March 25: Skepticism with regards to reason and the senses
Hume, *Enquiry, §IV and §XII, Part III*
Critical Summary #2 due

March 27: Skeptical Solution to Doubts
Hume, *Enquiry, §V - VI*

April 1: Necessary Connection-how we construct the world
Hume, *Enquiry, §VII*

April 3: Wrap-up; final exam questions distributed

E-mail Communication

As per University regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name,

id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester Winter 2014 courses, without academic penalty, is Friday, March 7, 2014. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights which carry commensurate responsibilities that involve, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c14/c14-strightsrespon.shtml>

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

Resources

The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>

If you find yourself in difficulty, contact the undergraduate advisor in your program, or the BA Counselling Office:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/baco/contact.shtml>