

**UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH**  
**Phil 2160: Early Modern Philosophy**  
**Winter 2018**

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**Office hours:** Fridays 11:30-1:30, or by appointment

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The period we will be covering, from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> 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 all made key contributions to the intellectual movement towards the modern age, attempting 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 and a new moral outlook 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.

**Course Objectives:**

This course will explore metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical questions that defined the early modern period. We will look at early modern conceptions of the nature of reality, human cognition, and the ideal of proper reasoning as a pathway to personal, scientific, and social improvement.

**Learning Outcomes:**

- *understand* the degree to which the intellectual traditions of the West have shaped modern culture, society, politics, science, religion, and metaphysics.
- *Identify and critically evaluate* central philosophical claims made by canonical philosophers of the early modern period
- clearly and accurately *communicate complex issues* and *argue successfully* for one's own view.
- *identify and question* the often implicit presuppositions that inform various viewpoints, and gain the confidence to propose novel and creative solutions.

**Required Texts:**

- Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins, *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources*.
- Selected online readings to be posted on Courselink

**Method of Evaluation:**

- 2 Critical Summaries                    45% (#1 worth 20%; #2 worth 25%)
- Quizzes (Courselink-based)       20% (5 x 4%)
- Final exam                                35%

**Critical Summaries (45%):** A critical summary is a method of critical analysis, which requires a precise formulation of the argument of an assigned text or texts, in your own words, along with a critical analysis of the relative strength or weakness of the argument(s). You will be asked to write two critical summaries of 3 pages each. Detailed guidelines on writing critical summaries will be handed out in class and made available on Courselink. The submission dates for critical summaries are clearly indicated below on the Reading and Assignment Schedule below. *These assignments will be submitted via Dropbox. 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.*

**Quizzes (20%):** These will be made available, and will be completed, on Courselink. They will be made available on specific dates, for a window of 48 hours. The dates for the quizzes are indicated below on the Reading and Assignment Schedule below. Each quiz will deal with a portion of course material, which will be specified in class prior to the quiz date, and will consist of a variety of question types (e.g. multiple choice, true-false).

**Final exam (35%):** This exam will consist of two essay questions. The exam will be distributed on the last day of classes; three questions will be distributed and two questions will appear on the final exam. Final Exam Date: Thursday, April 19, 8:30-10:30 (Room TBA)

### Reading & Assignment schedule

Date	Topics	Readings
January 8	Introduction to the Class	No reading
January 10	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> : 1 & 2	Ariew and Watkins: 40-47
January 15	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> : 3	Ariew and Watkins: 47-54
January 17	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> : 4 & 5*	Ariew and Watkins: 54-61 <b>Jan. 17: Critical Summary #1 handed out</b>
January 22	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> : 6	Ariew and Watkins: 61-68
January 24	Elizabeth and Descartes	Selected Letters—see Courselink <b>Quiz #1 (Jan. 24 5:00 p.m.-Jan. 26 5:00 p.m.)</b>
January 29	Conway's <i>Principles</i>	Chapter 7—see Courselink
January 31	Conway's <i>Principles</i>	Chapter 8—see Courselink <b>Feb. 2: Critical Summary #1 due (via Dropbox, 5:00 p.m.)</b>
February 5	Spinoza's <i>Ethics</i> : I, 1-15	Ariew and Watkins: 144-151
February 7	Spinoza's <i>Ethics</i> : V, 21-42	Ariew and Watkins: 188-195 <b>Quiz #2 (Feb. 7 5:00 p.m.- Feb. 9 5:00 p.m.)</b>

February 12	Leibniz's <i>Discourse</i> : 1-15	Ariew and Watkins: 224-234
February 14	Leibniz's <i>Monadology</i>	Ariew and Watkins: 275-283
February 19-23	Winter Break	No readings
February 26	Locke's <i>Essay</i> : Book II, chs. 1-2, 8	Ariew and Watkins: 322-329;332-337
February 28	Locke's <i>Essay</i> : Book II, chs.12 & 23	Ariew and Watkins: 340-342; 359-367 <b>Quiz #3 (Feb. 28 5:00 p.m. – Mar. 2 5:00 p.m.)</b>
March 5	Locke's <i>Essay</i> : Book II, ch. 21	Ariew and Watkins: 348-357
March 7	Locke's <i>Essay</i> : Book II, ch. 27	Ariew and Watkins: 367-377 <b>Mar. 7: Critical Summary #2 handed out</b>
March 12	Berkeley's <i>Dialogues</i> : First	Ariew and Watkins: 455-474
March 14	Berkeley's <i>Dialogues</i> : Second	Ariew and Watkins: 475-484 <b>Quiz #4 (Mar.14 5:00 p.m. – Mar. 16, 5:00 p.m.)</b>
March 19	Berkeley <i>Dialogues</i> : Third	Ariew and Watkins: 484-503
March 21	Hume's <i>Enquiry</i> : Sections 2-3; 4 (I)	Ariew and Watkins: 538-545 <b>Mar. 23: Critical Summary #2 due via Dropbox, 5:00 p.m.</b>
March 26	Hume's <i>Enquiry</i> : Sections 4 (II) -5	Ariew and Watkins: 545-555
March 28	Hume <i>Enquiry</i> : Section VII	Ariew and Watkins: 556-564 <b>Quiz #5 (Mar. 28 5:00 p.m.-Mar. 30 5:00 p.m.)</b>
April 2	Hume's <i>Treatise</i> : Section 6	Ariew and Watkins: 525-531
April 4	Wrap-up; final exams distributed	No readings
April 19	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m (Room TBA)</b>

### **E-mail Communication**

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <mail.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.](#)

### **Drop Date**

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day (**Friday, 9 March, 2018**); two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of the add period in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

### **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.

### **Accessibility**

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day. More information: [www.uoguelph.ca/sas](http://www.uoguelph.ca/sas)

### **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](#)

### **Academic Misconduct**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of 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. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. [The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.](#)

### **Recording of Materials**

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

### **Resources**

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.