

College of Arts – Online Course Outline

Course Code:	Section:	Semester:
PHIL*2160	01	W15
Course Title: Modern European Philosophy		
Instructor: P. Sheridan		
Brief Course Synopsis: <p>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.</p> <p>Required Texts: Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins, <i>Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources</i></p>		