



PHIL*2160 Early Modern Philosophy: Reason vs. Experience

Winter 2019

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - January 07, 2019

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

Philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries grappled with a central question regarding the foundation of human knowledge: Does knowledge arise from pure reasoning alone or from sensory experience? This question inspired debates regarding scepticism, the nature of reality, the connection between mind and body, language and meaning, moral certainty, and the relationship between religion and science, to name but a few.

Pre-Requisite(s): 2.00 credits or (1 of PHIL*1000, PHIL*1010, PHIL*1030, PHIL*1050)

1.2 Course Description

This course will serve as an introduction to the major figures of the Early Modern Period in Philosophy, specifically of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries during which the so-called Scientific Revolution occurred. To properly appreciate this period, however, it will be necessary to understand what exactly its representative thinkers were rejecting in their attempts to formulate a new science. We will therefore devote the beginning of the course to examining the intellectual background of Early Modern Philosophy. Although the course will devote a significant amount of attention to the epistemology of the major early modern thinkers and their predecessors, the course we will also devote a fair bit of attention to developments in the areas of philosophy of mind, ethics, philosophical anthropology and political philosophy. Thinkers to be discussed will include well-known figures as René Descartes (1596-1650), Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704), and David Hume (1711-1776). Lesser known, though influential, authors to be treated will include Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and Francisco Suarez (1548-1617)..

1.3 Timetable

Day: Mondays and Wednesdays

Time: 10-11:20 AM

Location: Mackinnon 229

1.4 Final Exam

There will be no final exam for this course.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor:	Peter Eardley
Email:	peardley@uoguelph.ca
Telephone:	+1-519-824-4120 x53211
Office:	MCKN 333

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resource(s)

Early Modern Texts (Readings)

There is no textbook as such for this course. Instead, we will utilize a series of readings that will be uploaded to Courselink.

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. **Think Critically:** The ability to detect and analyse the central ideas and implicit assumptions of an argument.
2. **Write Clearly:** The ability to communicate in a style that is succinct and appropriate for disseminating philosophical ideas.
3. **Read Advanced Philosophical Texts:** The ability to handle philosophical texts from a period different to one's own, thus achieving a new perspective on important philosophical ideas. Early Modern texts can be challenging. Students will get ample

practice getting acquainted with these texts throughout the term.

4. **Communicate Abstract Ideas:** The ability to orally defend one's ideas. Because class participation is strongly encouraged, students will have ample opportunity to orally express their thoughts.
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5 Teaching and Learning Activities

5.1 Lecture

Topic(s):

Schedule

Note: All readings are on Courselink.

January

07. Introduction to Course.

09. Scientific Background to Early Modern Philosophy: Aristotle, *Physics* and *Posterior Analytics* (excerpts), Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum* (excerpts) and Galileo, *The Assayer*.

14. Epistemology: Michel de Montaigne, *Apology for Raymond Sebond* (excerpts); René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* 1 and 2.

16. Epistemology: Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* 3 and 4.

21. Epistemology: John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (excerpts).

23. Epistemology: Locke continued.

28. Epistemology: George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous in Opposition to Sceptics and Atheists*, First Dialogue.

30. Epistemology: George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous in Opposition to Sceptics and Atheists*, Second and Third Dialogues.

February

04. Epistemology: David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (excerpts).

06. Philosophy of Mind: René Descartes, *Discourse on Method* and the *Passions of the Soul* (excerpts); Anne Conway, *Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, chapters 8 and 9.

11. Philosophy of Mind: Locke, "Of Ideas of Identity and Diversity" from *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (excerpts).

13. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*.

18. WINTER BREAK: NO CLASS

20. WINTER BREAK: NO CLASS

25. Mid-Term Exam

27. No Class – Out of town on academic business.

March

04. Ethics: Francisco Suarez, *De legibus ac Deo legislatore* (excerpts).

06. Ethics: Suarez cont.

11. Ethics: Hugo Grotius, *De iure ac pacis* (excerpts).

13. Politics and Human Nature: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (excerpts)

18. Politics and Human Nature: Hobbes, cont.

20. Politics and Human Nature: John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (excerpts)

25. Politics and Human Nature: John Locke, *Letter Concerning Toleration*.

27. Politics and Human Nature: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*.

April

01. Politics and Human Nature: Rousseau cont.

03. Quiz.

6 Assessments

6.1 Assessment Details

Mid-Term Exam (Monday, February 25th) (35%)

Date: Mackinnon 229

Term-Paper (Due Wednesday, March, 20th) (30%)

Quiz (Wednesday, April 03) (25%)

Attendance and Participation (10%)

7 University Statements

7.1 Email Communication

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

7.2 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. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

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

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

7.3 Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of the add period in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

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

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

7.4 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.

7.5 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 can be found on the SAS website
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

7.6 Academic Integrity

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 encourages academic integrity. 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.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

7.7 Recording of Materials

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

7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>