



PHIL*4420 Major Texts in Philosophy

Winter 2020

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 2.00 - January 07, 2020

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

Advanced study of a major text in philosophy not treated in either PHIL*4400 or PHIL*4410.

Pre-Requisites: 1.00 credits in Philosophy at the 3000 level

1.2 Course Description

This course will look at three of the most influential thinkers of the early modern period: Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. Through these thinkers, we will see the development of early empiricism. We will explore their views on the origin of mental contents, the nature of reality, skepticism, and language, through a close reading of their major texts: Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Berkeley's *Principles of Human Knowledge*, and Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*.

1.3 Timetable

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-3:50

MacKinnon 521

1.4 Final Exam

There is no final exam for this course.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor: Patricia Sheridan
Email: pmsherid@uoguelph.ca
Telephone: 519-824-4120 x53221
Office: MCKN 347

2.2 Office Hours

By appointment

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resources

John Locke (Textbook)

An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Ed. Kenneth Winkler. Hackett, 1996.

George Berkeley (Textbook)

A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Knowledge. Ed. Kenneth Winkler. Hackett, 1982.

David Hume (Textbook)

An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding. Ed. Eric Steinberg. Hackett, 1993.

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. *Understand and appreciate* the ideas and contributions of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume in the areas of metaphysics and epistemology.
2. *Orally Articulate and Defend* a position on a historical text, either in class discussion or in a formal presentation, that is clear, accurate and well-reasoned.
3. *Demonstrate Independence* in articulating an original approach to the interpretation of historical philosophical texts.
4. *Write* clearly and cogently on complex problems in the history of philosophy.
5. *Read* primary historical texts extensively and systematically.

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

A schedule of readings will be distributed in class and posted on Courselink.

6 Assessments

6.1 Assessment Details

Weekly Write-ups (20%)

Date: Every Tuesday beginning January 13th

1 -2 pages. Each write-up is worth 2%. You will bring one to class every Tuesday (you do not have to do a write-up for the week you present). The write-up is an opportunity for you to raise interpretive points and critical observations of the text. What point or points struck you as particularly interesting (i.e. that raises some interesting ideas that you think are relevant or innovative in some way), troubling (i.e. implying something worth worrying about), or problematic (perhaps inconsistent with other aspects of the text,).

You may be asked to contribute your ideas to the class, as a way of opening up some discussion.

Weekly write-ups will be graded on the basis of the following three criteria: 1. How well you've understood the text; 2. The clarity of your writing; 3. The quality of your critical engagement with the text.

Presentation (40%)

Date: TBD (we will determine presentation dates in the first class)

Your presentation should be 20-30 minutes in length. Presentations must do more than merely expository work. You must aim to explore what you take to be key points in the reading. Your presentation should take a critical approach to the text: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the points you discuss. Why do you agree or disagree. What obvious problems arise to your mind from the ideas you find here.

Remember, any time you discuss an historical text you are taking an interpretive position. You are reading the text a certain way. Be aware of that and be prepared to defend that interpretation.

Expect that presentation will be discussion-oriented. I will encourage questions and discussion on various points made in the course of your presentation. Presentations may run more as a kind of seminar discussion than as a straight, uninterrupted lecture.

Presentations will be graded on the basis of three criteria: 1. Understanding of the text and attention to interpretive points; 2. Clarity and organization of the presentation; 3. Critical engagement with the text.

Final Paper (40%)

Date: TBA (it will be due during the April exam period)

8-10 pages. The paper will be on a topic of your own choosing (and you can use your presentation as the basis for this paper). The paper must take an interpretive position.

You should make an appointment to come see me about your papers. I will want to hear what you are working on, how you are approaching the topic, and what secondary literature, if any, you are planning to use.

A grading guideline will be made available on our course website.

7 Course Statements

7.1 Participation

This is a seminar course, and it will therefore be run as a discussion-oriented class. This means you must keep up in the readings and come to class ready to talk about the texts, raise ideas and issues about it, and exchange ideas with other students.

8 University Statements

8.1 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.

8.2 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>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions

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

8.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic 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>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses

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

8.4 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.

8.5 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.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website
<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

8.6 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>

8.7 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.

8.8 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>
