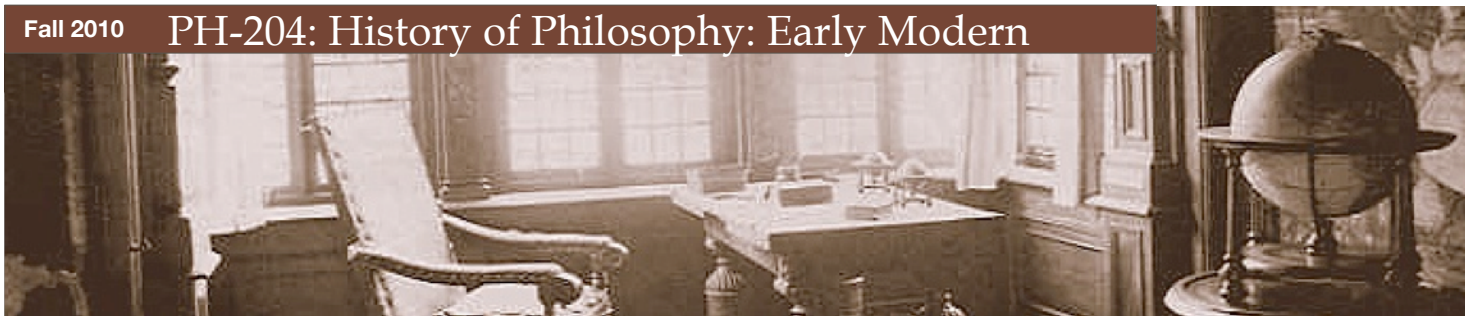




PH-204: History of Philosophy: Early Modern

The Scientific Revolution generated discoveries and inventions that went well beyond what the human eye had ever before seen—extending outward to distant planets and moons and downward to cellular structures and other microscopic entities, none of which had been previously observed. But these new discoveries, and the scientific methods that were evolving during this time, also demonstrated fundamental flaws in how we understood ourselves as humans and our relationship to the rest of the universe.

As a result of this (among other things), in the 17th and 18th century there were radical changes in the philosophical conceptions of the nature of reality, human freedom, the relationship between mind and body, and the extent and limits of our knowledge. Philosophers wrestled with these questions with a passion. These questions were not abstract intellectual pursuits—they reached to the heart of distinctively human concerns. We will survey the philosophical systems of Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. We will see a variety of theories, some that will seem tame and quaint by contemporary standards, and others that will seem quite odd, and we will put each one to the philosophical test.

Instructor Information

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Office: Ladd Hall, room 212
Office Hours: Mon-Thu, 1-2 p.m.

Course Texts

The following text is *required* for the course:

Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources, 2nd Ed., edited by Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins (Indianapolis: Hackett Publ., 2009; ISBN: 9780872209787).

If you have not taken a philosophy class before or if you would like to work on your philosophical writing this semester, the following text is *recommended*:

Lewis Vaughn, *Writing Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006; ISBN: 9780195179569)

Both texts are available in the Skidmore Shop.

Course Requirements

Attendance, Participation, and Reading Responses (10%).

Two 5-7 page papers (25% each).

Two sets of peer reviews of classmates' papers (calculated as part of paper grade).

Two exams (20% each).

Reading Responses

I will assign reading questions on a (roughly) weekly basis. The questions I distribute will ask you to analyze certain parts of the reading in preparation for class discussion. The primary goals of these assignments are (a) to allow you to evaluate arguments in a low-stakes setting (i.e., one that doesn't form a big part of your grade, like an exam or a paper), and (b) to make sure that everyone is prepared for a lively discussion in class. They will be due in class on the assigned date, and I will not allow late responses.

GRADING OF THE RESPONSES: The responses will be graded with a check, check plus, or check minus. If you receive a check on the assignment, you receive full credit for the assignment. A check minus receives only half credit for the assignment. I generally will not give many comments on these assignments, since the primary benefit is in your completing them. I will be looking primarily for active engagement with the readings—I mainly want to see evidence that you have read actively and with care.

Papers

There are two 5-7 page papers, due on the following schedule:

Oct. 5: First Draft of Paper 1 due

Nov. 16: First Draft of Paper 2 due

Oct. 12: Final Draft of Paper 1 due

Nov. 23: Final Draft of Paper 2 due

I am generally *not* considered an “easy grader” on papers. But, as many students discover, I will work with you on your writing. Please feel free to make use of my office hours to come discuss your papers in advance of the due date.

One of the most common mistakes students fall into with their writing is in thinking that their first draft is pretty close to their final draft. In my experience (both personally and in working with other students), a first draft is a *long way* from being a final draft, and it often takes several rounds of careful revision before you have something close to a good final draft. So, allow yourself plenty time for your paper—you'll be glad you did. The best way to improve your writing (and improve your grade) is to revise multiple times. (And by “revise” I don't mean proofread and edit—I mean to see the argument again, better, and to rewrite it.)

Peer Reviews

For each of the two papers, you will be asked to provide constructive comments on two of your peers' first drafts, and you will also receive feedback on your drafts from two of your classmates. The aim of this is to engage in a collaborative effort to improve each person's argument. I will provide more details on the review procedure closer to the due date for the first draft of paper one.

Grading Policy

I will follow the evaluation rubric outlined in the course catalog (p. 49) when assigning grades:

A+, A	Distinguished work
A-, B+, B	Superior Work
B-, C+, C	Satisfactory Work
C-, D+, D	Passing, poor-quality work
F	Failure, no credit earned

Late Work: I do not allow make-up exams. Also, any late assignments will be graded down by 1/3 of a letter grade for each day that it is late. ***You will receive no credit for work that is more than a week late.***

For example: a B paper will receive a B- if handed in up to one day late; it will receive a C+ if it is handed in two days late; etc.

Attendance & Participation

I expect you to attend class regularly, on time, having read the assigned readings, ready to discuss them. Any absence will reduce your attendance/participation grade by 10 percentage points. (The only exceptions to this are absences due to illness or family emergency, which should be confirmed with an email from the Health Center or the Registrar's Office.) **Six or more absences, including absences due to illness, will result in automatic failure of the course.**

Honor Code

In keeping with the Honor Code, I must give you some sense of what constitutes "honesty and integrity" in your work for this class. The main things I would be concerned about in this class are:

- a. **Papers:** any sources that you use in your papers or reading responses must be properly quoted and cited. I don't expect you to do any outside research for the papers in this class—the only source that you will need is the course text. But if you do happen to consult other sources (whether formal research materials in the library or less formal research materials such as online write-ups), you *must* identify the source. If there is any uncertainty about what constitutes plagiarism or unauthorized aid on the papers, you should discuss it with me.

Of course, you are free to make use of peer reviews, visits to the Writing Center, meetings with me, etc., to sharpen your paper. In fact, I encourage *wide use* of such aids.

- b. **Exams:** you may study together (again, I encourage it!), but you may not make use of any notes or help from others (in any form) during the exams.

If you are in doubt about whether anything else constitutes a violation of the honor code, it is your responsibility to consult with me first. Any violation of the honor code will result in failure of the class.

Tentative Schedule

Below is a tentative reading schedule. It is very possible that we will get off schedule, in which case I will update the schedule along the way.

Introduction	Tue, Sept. 7	<i>Introduction to the course: Philosophy, Science, and Religion at the beginning of the 17th century</i>
Descartes	Thu, Sept. 9	<i>Descartes and the Strategy of the Meditations</i> <u>Read:</u> Biographical Introduction to Descartes (1-3); <i>Meditations</i> , Letter, Synopsis, and First Meditation (35-43).
	Tue, Sept. 14	<i>Descartes on Res Cogitans</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Meditations</i> , Second Meditation (43-47)
	Thu, Sept. 16	No Class – Prof. Jorgensen will be out of town.
	Tue, Sept. 21	<i>Descartes' Proof for the Existence of God</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Meditations</i> , Third Meditation (47-54)
	Thu, Sept. 23	<i>Descartes & the Cartesian Circle</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Meditations</i> , Fourth & Fifth Meditation (54-61)
	Tue, Sept. 28	<i>Descartes on the Real Distinction Argument</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Meditations</i> , Sixth Meditation (61-68)
Princess Elisabeth	Thu, Sept. 30	<i>Dualism and Interaction of Mind & Body</i> <u>Read:</u> Selections from the correspondence with Elisabeth
Malebranche	Tue, Oct. 5	<i>Malebranche on Causation</i> <u>Read:</u> Biographical introduction to Malebranche (200); <i>The Search After Truth</i> , Book 6, Part 2, Chap. 3 and Elucidation 15 (212-223)
Spinoza	Thu, Oct. 7	<i>Spinoza on Substance Monism</i> <u>Read:</u> Biographical introduction to Spinoza (111-113); <i>Ethics</i> , Part I through proposition 15 (144-151) Draft of Paper One Due
	Tue, Oct. 12	<i>Spinoza on Necessitarianism and Parallelism</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Ethics</i> , Part I through the end (151-164) Peer Reviews for Paper One Due
	Thu, Oct. 14	<i>Spinoza on Mind-Body Identity</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Ethics</i> , Part II through the scholium to proposition 13 (164-172) Final Draft of Paper One Due
Leibniz	Tue, Oct. 19	<i>Leibniz's Philosophy of Religion</i> <u>Read:</u> Biographical introduction to Leibniz (197-199); "Monadology" §§31-41 (278) and <i>Theodicy</i> (selections on handout)
	Thu, Oct. 21	Midterm Exam

Locke	Tue, Oct. 26	<i>Empiricism and Primary/Secondary Qualities</i> <u>Read:</u> Biographical introduction to Locke (305-307); <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> , Book II, Chapters 1-8 (322-337)
	Thu, Oct. 28	<i>Locke on Personal Identity</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> , Book II, Chapter 27 (367-377).
Berkeley	Tue, Nov. 2	<i>Berkeley's Argument for Idealism from Perceptual Relativity</i> <u>Read:</u> Biographical introduction to Berkeley (435-437); <i>Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous</i> , Preface and First Dialogue (454-474)
	Thu, Nov. 4	<i>Berkeley on the Problem of Unperceived Objects</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous</i> , Second Dialogue (475-484)
	Tue, Nov. 9	<i>Berkeley's Master Argument</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Principles of Human Knowledge</i> , Part I, §§1-33 [focus especially on §§18-20] (447-453)
Lady Mary Shepherd	Thu, Nov. 11	<i>Perceiving an External World</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Essays on the Perception of an External Universe</i> (selections)
Hume	Tue, Nov. 16	<i>Hume on the Origin of Ideas</i> <u>Read:</u> Biographical introduction to Hume (509-511); <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> , sections 1-3 (533-542) Draft of Paper Two Due
	Thu, Nov. 18	<i>Hume's Skeptical Argument</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> , section 4 (542-548) Peer Reviews for Paper Two Due
	Tue, Nov. 23	<i>Hume's Skeptical Solution and the Idea of Necessary Connection</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> , sections 5 and 7 (548-555, 556-564) Final Draft of Paper Two Due
	Thu, Nov. 25	No Class
	Tue, Nov. 30	<i>Kant on the Aspirations of Metaphysics</i> <u>Read:</u> Biographical introduction to Kant (655-660); <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> , B Preface, Introduction, and the Transcendental Aesthetic (718-737)
Kant	Thu, Dec. 2	<i>Kant's Copernican Revolution</i> <u>Read:</u> <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> , reread the Transcendental Aesthetic (729-737)

Tue, Dec. 7 *Kant on Skepticism and the Neglected Alternative*
Read: *Critique of Pure Reason*, The Antinomy of Pure Reason and the First Antinomy (788-794)

Thu, Dec. 9 *Wrapping things up!*

Friday, Dec. 17 **Final Exam: 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**
(**Note:** The only exceptions allowed for this exam date and time are (a) conflict with other exams or (b) health problems or injury.)