

1-2014

## PHL 262Y.01: History of Modern Philosophy

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### Recommended Citation

Burke, Patrick Maurice, "PHL 262Y.01: History of Modern Philosophy" (2014). *Syllabi*. 889.  
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## Modern Philosophy—PHL 262Y, Spring 2014

Tuesday/Thursday 9:40-11:00 a.m., Rankin #204

Pat Burke

Office: DHC 106

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursday 3:30-5:00 p.m. and by appointment

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce you to seven of the major philosophers of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries: Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Kant. During this period radical changes took place in philosophy, science and politics. Much of our modern western culture originates during this period and in these philosophers works. However, you will also encounter and learn to understand thinking that is very different from you own. Confronting radically different ways of understanding the world should challenge, illuminate and perhaps change your preconceptions and ideas.

We will focus in this class on metaphysics (broadly, the nature and structure of reality) and epistemology (the origin, nature and scope of knowledge). Little emphasis will be placed on moral or political philosophy although all these philosophers had important things to say about these issues.

This course will give you a basic understanding of the positions of these modern philosophers on metaphysics and epistemology. It will also develop your critical thinking and writing skills. In particular, you will learn to carefully analyze philosophical texts, evaluate alternative arguments and explore the relationships between the views of these major philosophers. Finally, you will learn to develop, express and argue for your own coherent understanding of metaphysics and epistemology.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources*, Second Edition, Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins

**\*No Electronic Devices (cellphones, laptops, ipads, ipods etc.) are to be used in the classroom without prior approval. If you are using a device during class I will ask you to leave. Taking careful written notes in class is strongly encouraged and essential to learning this difficult material.**

**CLASS PLAN and READINGS:**

1/28 Introduction to Course	1/30 Descartes— <i>Meditations</i> I (pp. 40-43)
2/4 Descartes— <i>Meditations</i> II (pp. 43-47)	2/6 Descartes— <i>Meditations</i> III (pp. 47-54)
2/11 Descartes— <i>Meditations</i> IV, V (pp.54-61) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	2/13 Descartes— <i>Meditations</i> VI (pp. 61-68) <b>Paper Topics Distributed</b>
2/18 Spinoza— <i>Ethics</i> , Part I (pp. 144-164) <b>Study Questions due</b>	2/20 Spinoza (continued)
2/25 Spinoza— <i>Ethics</i> , Part II (pp. 164-195) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	2/27 Spinoza (continued)
3/4 Leibniz—Preface to the <i>New Essays</i> (pp. 422-424) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	3/6 Leibniz— <i>Discourse on Metaphysics</i> (pp. 224-228)
3/11 Leibniz— <i>Discourse on Metaphysics</i> (pp. 228-242) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	3/13 Leibniz— <i>Discourse on Metaphysics</i> (pp. 243-247)
3/18 Locke— <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> (pp. 316-329) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	3/20 Locke— <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> (pp. 332-339, 359-367)
3/25 Berkeley— <i>Three Dialogues</i> (pp. 454-484) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	3/27 Berkeley— <i>Three Dialogues</i> (pp. 484-503)
4/1 <b>Spring Break</b>	4/3 <b>Spring Break</b>
4/8 Hume— <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> (pp. 533-564) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	4/10 Hume—(continued)
4/15 Hume— <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> (pp. 593-600) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	4/17 Hume—(continued)
4/22 Kant— <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> , Prefaces A, B and Introduction (pp. 717-729)	4/24 Kant—(continued) <b>Paper Due</b>
4/29 Kant— <i>Prologomena</i> (pp. 664-678) <b>Study Question Due</b>	5/1 Kant— <i>Prologomena</i> (pp. 678-690)
5/7 Kant— <i>Prologomena</i> (pp. 695-706) <b>Study Questions Due</b>	5/8 Kant—“What is Enlightenment?”
	5/15 (Thursday)— <b>FINAL EXAM</b> <b>8:00- 10:00 a.m. Rankin #204</b>

## ASSIGNMENTS & GRADES

**Attendance & Active Participation:** Regular attendance and active participation is expected. We are going to cover a great deal of difficult material, which requires your attendance, attention and participation. The quality of your class participation will positively affect your grade. I strongly encourage you to ask questions and/or ask for clarification. Please come to class on time; your peers and instructor appreciate courtesy. If you must leave class early, notify me in advance and sit close to the door. Unexcused absences will noted and will affect your grade (**4 or more unexcused absences will result in a reduction of one full grade; 6 unexcused absences will result in automatic failure**).

### Assignments and Tests:

Beginning the second week, I will give you **study questions** on the week's readings and lectures/discussions. A one paragraph typed response to each of these questions will be due the following Tuesday. I will return your graded responses the following Tuesday. I will only assign grades of A,B, C or F. The lowest of the eleven study question response grades will be dropped in computing your overall grade.

There will also be a **6-8 page paper** due on April 24<sup>th</sup>. I will pass out paper topics during the third week of classes. Papers must be at least six (6) pages in length, not counting a Works Cited page.

There will be a **comprehensive final exam** given during finals week. The final exam will be primarily (70%) questions taken from the class study questions. There will be an additional (15%) short answer questions that cover those weeks in which there were no study questions. Finally, there will be a short essay (15%) that asks for your views on one or more of the major issues we have discussed in class. **Note that no late study question responses or papers will be accepted.**

**Grading Criteria:** Assignment grades will reflect the following criteria of judgment:

- F: Failure to meet minimum requirements
- D: Unsatisfactory, but some effort to meet minimum requirements
- C: Satisfactory; meets minimum requirements of assignment but not much more
- B: Good to Very Good; thoughtful reflection, good analysis, clear writing style
- A: Excellent depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, and writing style; demonstrates creativity and mature analytical skills in going beyond the primary requirements of the assignment

**Course Grades:** In assigning the final grade, I give particular attention to your preparedness for and participation in class.

- Attendance and Participation: 10%
- Study Question Responses (10) 30%
- Term Paper 35%
- Comprehensive Final Exam 25 %

**Incomplete Grade:** Please see the criteria that must be met for an Incomplete (I) in the University catalog. No exceptions from these criteria will be made.

**Suggested Additional Readings:** The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://plato.stanford.edu> and The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

are two reliable sources of information on the internet. However, there is much inaccurate and false information on the internet, so beware of other sources. Three useful introductory texts include: John Cottingham, *The Rationalists*, History of Western Philosophy Series, Oxford University Press 1988; Jonathan Bennett, *Locke, Berkeley, Hume: Central Themes*, Oxford University Press 1971; R.S. Woolhouse, *The Empiricists*, Oxford University Press 1988. In addition you can also trust the series "Cambridge Companion to ..." and Blackwell Guide to...."

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is representing another's work as one's own, a serious violation of academic integrity. Please review the University's plagiarism definition and policy in the catalog: "*Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for possible suspension or expulsion.*" If you have any doubts about plagiarism and attribution of others' work, please consult your Instructor.

**Student Conduct:** All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. You can read this online at [http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student\\_conduct.php](http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php).

**Students with Disabilities:** The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students [DSS]. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154. (406) 243-2243