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PHIL 450.01: Classical Modern Philosophers

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SYLLABUS

Philosophy 450 is a new course covering one major philosopher from the modern rationalists (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz) and one from the modern empiricists (Locke, Berkeley, Hume). We will study Descartes and Hume, though some attention will be given to the history of these major schools of modern thought, and so to the other principals.

TEXTS:

Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Other Writings*, ed. Desmond M. Clarke (Penguin)
---, *Meditations*, etc., trans. John Cottingham (Cambridge)
Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Charles W. Hendel (LLA)
---, *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, (Hackett)
---, *Political Essays*, ed. Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Reading:

A list of assigned readings together with an approximate schedule for them by week is given below. As with all philosophy courses, you should regard reading as an independent task to be undertaken and completed in conjunction with class lectures and discussions. Your reading should comprise unassigned texts of Descartes and Hume and secondary material, as your interest dictates. Lectures will include bibliographical notes and recommendations.

Written Work:

Required written work falls into three categories: (a) occasional papers, (b) a commentary, and (c) a comprehensive final. (a) Occasional papers are short papers (3-4 pp.) on a problem from the text under discussion at the time the assignment is given. Four such assignments will be made. You must do the first one and any two of the other three. (b) Each student will prepare a commentary on a passage from one of the texts. A portion of the commentary will be presented in class. See the separate description of the commentary task. A list of available passages will be distributed during the first full week of classes. Graduate students' commentaries will be more extensive than those produced by undergraduates. (c) The date and time for the final examination are listed below. Guidance for the examination will be provided during the last week of classes.

FINAL EXAM: Wed., Dec. 18, 1:10-3:10

READING SCHEDULE

TEXT	WEEK
Descartes, <i>Discourse</i>	I
" , <i>Rules for the Direction of the Mind</i>	II, III
" , <i>Meditations</i>	IV, VI
-Various articles on Descartes' work by Miller, Hintikka, Ryle, Kenny and others	VII
Hume, <i>An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i>	VIII-X
" , <i>An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i>	XI, XII
" , <i>Political Essays</i>	XIII, XIV