

**PHIL 2050**  
**History of Western Philosophy II**  
**Course Outline**

**Course overview**

This course is a history oriented introduction into modern Western philosophy, which covers the main figures in Western philosophy from the 17<sup>th</sup> up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the first part of the course, we will focus on the main representatives of Continental rationalism: Descartes, Locke and Spinoza. In the second part, we will turn to the major spokespersons of British Empiricism: Locke, Berkeley, Hume. In the third and final part, we will address two of the main figures in German Idealism: Kant and Hegel. Particular attention will be paid to issues in epistemology, metaphysics and ethics. While addressing each and every author, we will also consider how they shaped the development of subsequent philosophy.

**Learning outcomes**

1. Obtain familiarity with the central themes and concepts in modern European philosophy.
2. Enrich your understanding of the history of philosophy.
2. Develop critical and exegetical skills by means of reading and interpreting representative works in modern philosophy.
4. Obtain the basis to further explore the central themes in modern philosophy and beyond.
5. Improve your skills of presenting philosophical arguments in written and oral form.

**Topics**

I. Rationalism

1. René Descartes
2. Baruch de Spinoza
3. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz

II. Empiricism

4. John Locke
5. George Berkeley
6. David Hume

III. German Idealism

7. Immanuel Kant
8. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

## Learning activities

In this course, you are expected to

- read and think about the assigned readings;
- develop the skills mentioned in the course outcomes through philosophical discussion and writing (short essays and reflective summaries of the readings);
- attend *all* lectures/tutorials to participate in discussion.

*Activities and workload:*

In-class (mandatory):

Lecture/Seminar Discussion: 3 hours each week.

Out-of-class (average workload per week):

1. Reading: 3–4 hours on the basic and suggested readings each week.
2. Writing Assignments: About 2 hours each week on preparing and writing essay assignments throughout the term. You should try to design a schedule that allows you to apportion more time on writing and discussing your essay with your teacher two to three weeks before the first and the second essays are due.

## Assessment scheme

Since a major aim of this course is to develop students' ability to interpret, analyze, and generate philosophical arguments through discussion and writing, the assessment methods are designed to encourage participation and learning through argumentative writing.

Task nature	Description	Weight
Participation in class discussions and tutorial discussions	Discussion	10%
Tutorial presentation	Presentation	20%
One Short Essay	Approximately 1000 words long	20%
Final Exam		50%

Remarks:

1. Participation in class discussions: Grading will be based on your active participation. *Absence will damage your grades.*
2. One short essay: Your task is to submit two single-spaced typewritten pages. In this assignment, you are supposed to a) provide a 1-2 paragraph long summary of the assigned text, b) identify what you consider the most significant points of the work (philosophically, with argumentation) and explain why. Your essay should be approximately 1000 words long.
3. Final Exam: It will be composed of a variety of questions, both multiple choice as well as Y/N questions, as well as questions that will require brief elaboration.

## Recommended learning resources

### *Main Texts:*

1. Modern Philosophy: *An Anthology of Primary Sources*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins, eds. Hackett Publishing Company, 2009.
2. Matson, Wallace. *A New History of Philosophy: Volume Two: From Descartes to Searle*. 2. ed. Harcourt College Publishers, 2000.

### *Classical Texts:*

1. R. Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, ed. J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, D. Murdoch, vols. 1 & 2, Cambridge UP 1985.
2. B. de Spinoza, *Ethics*, in *The Collected Writings of Spinoza*, trans. E. Curley, vol. 1, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1985.
3. G. W. Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, trans. P. Remnant and J. Bennett, Cambridge UP 1996.
4. G. W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, ed. and trans. R. Ariew and D. Garber, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1989.
5. J. Locke, *The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke: An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. P. H. Nidditch, Oxford UP 1975.
6. J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* Student edition, ed. P. Laslett, Cambridge UP 1988.
7. G. Berkeley, *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, ed. J. Dancy, Oxford UP 1998.
8. G. Berkeley, *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*, ed. J. Dancy, Oxford UP 1998.
9. D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. D. F. Norton and M. J. Norton, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
10. D. Hume, *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding and concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. L. A. SelbyBigge, 3rd ed. rev. H. Nidditch, Oxford UP 1975.
11. I. Kant, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*, ed. P. Guyer and A. Wood, Cambridge UP 1995.
12. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller, Oxford UP 1977.
13. G. W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic: Part I of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Zusätze*, trans. T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting and H. S. Harris, Indianapolis: Hackett 1991.
14. G. W. F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller, New York: Prometheus Books, 1989.

### Secondary Literature:

1. B. Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Routledge, 1993.
2. F. C. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, 9 vols. (esp. vols. 47), New York: Image Books, 1993.
3. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the history of philosophy: the lectures of 1825/1826*, ed. R. F. Brown, trans. R.F. Brown and J.M. Stewart with the assistance of H.S. Harris, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
4. A. Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 2012.
5. W. Windelband, *A History of Philosophy: With Special Reference to the Formation and Development of its Problems and Conceptions*, trans. J. H. Tufts, New York: Macmillan Co., 1901.

### Feedback for evaluation

1. You are strongly encouraged to provide feedback on the course via email or meetings with professor or tutors.
2. As with all courses in Philosophy Department, you will evaluate the course through a survey and written comments at the end of the term as well as via regular feedback that you will be able to provide to your teacher. This information is highly valued and is used to revise teaching methods, tasks, and content.

### Course schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1	Introduction	No readings	
2	Descartes	Readings from Descartes	
3	Descartes/Spinoza	Readings from Descartes and Spinoza	
4	Spinoza	Readings from Spinoza	Tutorial: Briefing Session
5	Spinoza/Leibniz	Readings from Spinoza and Leibniz	
6	Leibniz	Readings from Leibniz	Tutorial 1
7	Locke	Readings from Locke	
8	Locke/Berkeley	Readings from Locke and Berkeley	
9	Berkeley/Hume	Readings from Berkeley and Hume	Tutorial 2
10	Hume	Readings from Hume	
11	Kant	Readings from Kant	
12	Kant/Hegel	Readings from Kant and Hegel	Tutorial 3
13	Hegel	Readings from Hegel	

\* This course schedule is tentative and it might be modified with the aim of adapting it to your intellectual interests and needs.

### Details of course website

Relevant announcements and course documents will be posted on Blackboard.

### Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

Professor	
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### Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic\\_honesty/](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic_honesty/)

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed [declaration](#) that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.