

PHIL 2050
History of Western Philosophy II
Course Outline

Course overview

This course is a historically-oriented introduction into modern Western philosophy, which covers the main figures in Western philosophy from the 17th up to the 19th 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 Kant's critical philosophy. 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. The Origins of German Idealism

7. Immanuel Kant

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: Approx. 1 hours each week on preparing and writing essay assignments throughout the term.
3. Final Exam: Approx. 2 hours each week for preparation. You should make sure that you reserve more time towards the end of the semester.

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%
Two Take Home Tests	A few short essay questions and some ten short questions to answer	30%
Final Exam		40%

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*, 2nd 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. Selby Bigge, 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>Time</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Week 1	Introduction	No readings	
Week 2	Descartes	Descartes, <i>Meditations I and II</i>	
Week 3	Descartes	Descartes, <i>Meditations II and III</i>	Tutorial: Briefing Session
Week 4	No Class		
Week 5	Spinoza	Readings from Spinoza	Take Home Exam I: Submission due
Week 6	Leibniz	Readings from Leibniz	
Week 7	Locke	Readings from Locke	Tutorial 1
Week 8	Locke/Berkeley	Readings from Locke	
Week 9	Hume	Readings from Berkeley	
Week 10	Hume	Hume, <i>Enquiry</i> (763-780)	Tutorial 2
Week 11	Kant	Hume, <i>Enquiry</i> (763-780)	
Week 12	Kant	Kant, <i>Prolegomena</i>	Take Home Exam II: submission due
Week 13	Kant	Kant, <i>Prolegomena</i>	

* 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)

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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/

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.