

AIM OF THE COURSE:

This course examines the developments in metaphysics and epistemology in 17th and 18th century European philosophy. We will focus on questions such as the following: How do we know our own mind, and in what way can we know the world that lies outside our mind? How is the mind different from the body? Am *I* the same thing as my mind? Is the will free or subject to necessity or fate? What kinds of fundamental entities (or “substances”) are there in the world? What is a cause and how can we know causal connections in nature? The figures we will be covering articulated answers to these questions that are diverse and that also set the stage for our own contemporary understanding of the universe and our place in it. We will focus our reading and discussion on works by Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students successfully completing this course will

- (1) Be able to summarize the epistemological and metaphysical views of six key philosophers of the 17th and 18th century.
- (2) Explain/discuss the major motivations and arguments behind these views,
- (3) be able to evaluate these arguments critically,
- (4) be able to construct sound interpretative arguments concerning a challenging text from the history of philosophy (*i.e.*, be able to marshal textual evidence to construct sound arguments that the author held a certain view and offered certain arguments in favor of that view), and
- (5) be able to synthesize textual interpretation and argument-evaluation in clear, precise, and well-organized written expression.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Roger Ariew & Eric Watkins (eds.), *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources*, 2nd edition, Hackett Publishing Company (2009). Referred to as “2AW” in the course schedule below. (All the readings are also in the first addition, but the page numbers will be different. Also, do not confuse this title with a different, two-volume anthology from the same publisher and editors.) Additional texts will be made available through webcampus.

The original languages of the texts are Latin (Descartes, Spinoza), French (Leibniz), and English (Locke, Berkeley, Hume).

Original texts can be found here: <http://philosophy.ucsd.edu/faculty/ctolley/texts>. You may also find it helpful to refer to the translations by Jonathan Bennett at <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com>. These translations are specifically designed with the undergraduate reader in mind. Included here are “translations” of texts originally written in English by Locke, Berkeley, and Hume (as well as Reid). However, in your papers and comments you must cite from our anthology.

EARLY SEMESTER ABSENCES

Any student who misses the first two classes or three of the first 5 class meetings will receive an ‘F’ for the course (unless the student withdraws from the course). This includes students on the waitlist.

EMAIL:

Course announcements and assignments will be distributed to the email address the UNLV has on file for in MyUNLV. In most cases, this is your Rebelmail (<username>@unlv.nevada.edu). *You will be responsible for any announcements and assignments sent to this email address.* For instructions on forwarding your Rebelmail email to another email address or on reading your Rebelmail with a mail client (like Thunderbird or Outlook) see: <http://rebelmail.unlv.edu/set-pop-imap-or-forwarding>.

You are welcome to send me emails with questions about the contents or mechanics of the course, but it may take me a day or more to respond. Please take this into account if, for example, you email me the night before an assignment is due. (Please do not contact me via the webcampus email function.)

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Your grade for this course will be based on the following five components:

(1) Class Participation (5%)

“Participation” means regularly attending class, being engaged with what is going on in the classroom (e.g., not text-messaging or doing anything else other than listening, joining in the classroom discussion, and taking notes), and at least occasionally contributing to class discussions. Any behavior that actually distracts from the normal functioning of the class (e.g., repeatedly talking to a neighbor or coming and going during class without good reason) will result in a **zero** for your participation grade, even if you join in the classroom discussion. You are also required to bring the text to class.

(2) Three 5-page Papers (23% each, 69% total).

You must write a paper on three of the six philosophers we are covering, but *everyone* must write the first paper on **Descartes** and *everyone* must write a paper on *at least* one of the following (the next three philosophers we are covering): **Spinoza, Leibniz, or Locke**. Late papers will be penalized one-half letter grade per day except in cases of **documented** illness or emergencies. (Note: *Graduate students* enrolled in PHIL 603 must write the first 5-page paper and then one more **10-15 page** paper based on their own topic created in consultation with me. The second paper will be worth 40% of the final grade. Graduate students must contact me no later than the end of 13th week to discuss an appropriate paper topic.) Letter grades have the following numerical value for calculating your final grade:

A+	A	A/A-	A-	A-/B+	B+	B+/B	B	B/B-	B-	C+/B-	C+	C+/C	C	C-	D
100	97	95	92	88	86	84	82	80	78	76	75	73	70	68	67

(3) Midterm Exam (10% total)

(4) Cumulative final exam (16%)

The exam will have the same format and some of the same questions as on the midterm. Make-up exams will be granted only in cases of **documented** illness or emergencies.

(6) Attendance is required, but you can miss up to 2 classes without any penalty. Further absences will result in a reduction of your semester grade according to the formula x^2 , where x is the number of absences beyond 2. Thus 3 total absences reduces your grade by 1 point, 4 absences by 4 points, 6 absences by 16 points, 8 absences by 36 points, etc. (Late arrivals will also be penalized at my discretion. If you arrive late, make sure to tell me after class to avoid being marked absent.) Any *excused* absences will require the timely completion of a make-up assignment to avoid a penalty.

(7) There will be no other make-up or extra credit assignments.

Your final letter grade for the course will be based on the following scale:

>94%	>91%	>85%	>80%	>77%	>75%	>70%	>67%	>63%	≥60%	<60%
A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	D-	F

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's ideas or writings as if they were one's own. It is **your** responsibility to ensure that any ideas or expressions in your writing that are not your own (and that are not merely "common knowledge") are indicated as such. (An item is probably "common knowledge" if it appears in exactly the same form in multiple sources without any credible disagreement. But no instructor will penalize you for citing too much.) Please note that re-wording (paraphrasing) the ideas of someone else counts as a form of plagiarism. **Ignorance of plagiarism standards will in no case be considered an excuse.** You are therefore *required* to read the following two documents about plagiarism: (1) <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>; (2) <http://phil.unlv.edu/plagiarismguidelines.pdf>

UNLV POLICIES/INFORMATION (adapted from the provost office's summary of policies)

Missed Class(es) / Student – Students who represent UNLV at any official extracurricular activity shall also have the opportunity to make up assignments, but the student must provide official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es). *Students who without previous arrangement with the instructor or department fail to attend the first two class meetings of a course may be dropped from the course.* See <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=164>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)— **Disability Resource Center (DRC)**—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

UNLV Writing Center – One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>

Tutoring and Coaching – The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

Academic Misconduct – Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic*

Misconduct Policy (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>

Copyright – The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves **with** and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Religious Holidays Policy – Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor **within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses**, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching – The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information:
<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>
<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency>

Incomplete Grades – The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Rebelmail – By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students’ Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students’ e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

Final Examinations – The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Library statement – Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the Subject Librarian is (https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject). UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students’ access to information. Discover, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu>

COURSE SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO REVISION!!!):

TOPIC 1	THE ORIGINS OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY	
1.1	Introduction: the Aristotelian Universe and the Modern World	[no reading]
1.2	Galileo, <i>The Assayer</i> , “Corpuscularianism” (1623)	² AW 21-24
TOPIC 2	DESCARTES’ METHOD OF DOUBT AND THE ARCHIMEDEAN POINT	
2.1	Descartes: <i>Meditations</i> Letter of Dedication, optional: <i>Discourse on Method</i> (selections) Synopsis, Meditation I	² AW 35-37b ² AW 25-34 ² AW 39b-43a
2.2	Meditation II An objection from Hobbes & Descartes’ Reply	² AW 43a-47a ² AW 76a-78a
TOPIC 3	DESCARTES ON GOD’S EXISTENCE AND PRIORITY	
3.1	Meditation III	² AW 47a-54b
3.2	An objection from Arnauld Descartes’ reply	² AW 86, ¶¶3-4 ² AW 92b, 2 nd ¶
TOPIC 4	DESCARTES ON THE CRITERION OF KNOWLEDGE & THE EXISTENCE OF MATERIAL SUBSTANCE	
4.1	Meditation IV	² AW 54a-58a
4.2	Meditation V	² AW 58a-61b
4.3	Meditation VI	² AW 61b-68b
TOPIC 5	SPINOZA ON SUBSTANCE & GOD	
5.1	Spinoza, Letters to Oldenburg <i>Ethics</i> (1677) I: Definitions, Axioms, Propositions 1-11	² AW 137-138, ² AW 142-143 ² AW 144a-149a
5.2	<i>Ethics</i> , Part I: Props. 1-15	² AW 145a-151b
5.3	<i>Ethics</i> , Part I: Props. 16-36, Appendix	² AW 151b-164a

TOPIC 6 SPINOZA ON THE HUMAN MIND, KNOWLEDGE, & FREEDOM

6.1	<i>Ethics</i> II: Definitions, Axioms, Props. 1-14	² AW 164a-172b
6.2	<i>Ethics</i> II, Props. 15-49	² AW 172b-187b
6.3	<i>Ethics</i> V, Preface and Props. 21-42	² AW 188a-195

TOPIC 7 THE “MIDDLE” LEIBNIZ ON TRUTH, NECESSITY & HUMAN FREEDOM

7.1	Letter on God and the Soul (1679) “Primary Truths” (1689) Discourse on Metaphysics (1686), §§13, 30	² AW 104b-105b ² AW 265-268 ² AW 230b-232a, 242a-243a
7.2	Letters to Arnauld (1686-7)	² AW 248-254

TOPIC 8 LOCKE’S *ESSAY* (1674): EMPIRICIST METAPHYSICS, FREEDOM, & PERSONAL IDENTITY

8.1	<i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> I.i-ii [innate ideas], II.i-vii [ideas, thinking] II.viii §§2, 7-26 [primary/secondary], ix-xii [perception]	² AW 316-342a
8.2	II.xxi §§1-35, 47 [power: liberty/necessity]	² AW 348-353b, 355

TOPIC 9 LOCKE’S *ESSAY*: EMPIRICISM & THE EXTENT OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

9.1	<i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> II.xxiii [substances]: <u>only</u> 1-6, 11-15, 22, 28, 33, 37 xxvii [identity]: <u>skip</u> 21-22, 27 III.iii §§1-11 [general terms], 15-18 [essence] III.vi §§1-5 [essence, names] and Thomas Reid: <i>Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man</i> , Essay 3, chapter 6: “Of Mr. Locke’s Account of Our Personal Identity”	² AW 359b-377a 377a-379a, 380a-381b 381b-383a [webcampus]
9.2	IV.i §§1-7 [knowledge & ideas] IV.iii §§1-16, 22-26 [limits of knowledge] IV.x, §§1-6 [God], xi [external world]	² AW 386a-387b 392b-397a, 399b-401a ² AW 405b-407a, 411a-415b

TOPIC 10 BERKELEY'S IDEALISM

10.1 <i>Principles of Human Knowledge</i> (1710), Preface, Intro., Part I §§1-25	² AW 438a-452b
10.2 Part I: §§1-33	² AW 447a-453b

TOPIC 11 HUME'S *ENQUIRY*: SKEPTICISM OR SKEPTICAL REALISM?

11.1 Hume: <i>An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding</i> (1748), Sections I-V	² AW 533-555a
11.2 Hume: <i>An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding</i> Sections VI-VIII optional: Section IX	² AW 555a-575a ² AW 575a-576b

TOPIC 12 HUME: SKEPTICISM, PERSONAL IDENTITY, & COMMON LIFE

12.1 Hume: <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i> , I.iv.5-6	² AW 517a-532b
12.2 <i>An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding</i> , Section XII optional: Sections X-XI	² AW 593b-600b ² AW 577a-593a