

Introduction to Modern Philosophy

Dale Tuggy

This course is an introduction to some of the main issues of modern philosophy, through a careful and critical reading of primary texts. We will focus on problems of epistemology (do we, and *how* do we have *knowledge* of the external world, ourselves, and other things?) and metaphysics (what is the relation between mind and body? what is the nature of human freedom? in what does personal identity consist? what is it for one thing to cause another?).

Our emphasis will be on the philosophical issues rather than the history as such. An accurate, historically-informed understanding of the text is an important goal, but the *ultimate* goal is a philosophical evaluation of the positions espoused. Having honestly wrestled with the texts, we will find things of relevance to contemporary philosophical discussions and begin to form views of our own on the issues.

Texts:

Descartes, *Meditations*

Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

abr. and edited by Kenneth Winkler

Leibniz, *New Essays Concerning Human Understanding*

ed. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett

Berkeley, *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*

Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of*

Common Sense

Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*

Abbreviations:

MED

ESS

NES

PHK

EHU

IHM

PFM

Class Topics

Reading

I. Descartes

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|----|---|-----------|
| 1. | Introduction | |
| 2. | What can be doubted, knowledge of mind and body | MED I-II |
| 3. | existence of God, error | MED III-V |
| 4. | mind and body, perception | MED VI |

II. Locke and Leibniz

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|-----|--------------------------------------|---|
| 6. | Locke's attack on innate principles | ESS 4-32 [I.1-4] |
| 7. | Leibniz' defense of innate knowledge | NES 44-108 |
| 8. | Locke: how we get ideas | ESS 33-46 [II.1-7]
NES 109-30 |
| 9. | Locke: primary & secondary qualities | ESS 47-56 [II.8-9]
NES 130-3 |
| 10. | power and causation, and freedom | ESS 93-114 [II.21]
NES 169-84 |
| 11. | Locke on personal identity | ESS 133-50 [II.27]
NES 229-47 |
| 12. | Locke: the limits of human knowledge | ESS 224-54, 264-74, 284-300
[IV.1-4, 7-9, 11-13] |

III. Berkeley

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|-----|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. | ideas, attack on matter | PHK Introduction, I.1-38 |
| 14. | cont.; defense of idealism, God | PHK 39-156 |

IV. Hume

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|-----|---|------------|
| 15. | origin of our ideas, association of ideas | EHU II-III |
| 16. | scepticism | EHU I, IV |
| 17. | sceptical solution to scepticism | EHU V, XII |
| 18. | causation and necessary connection | EHU VII |
| 19. | cont; free will | EHU VIII |

IV. Reid

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|-----|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 20. | modern philosophy and scepticism | IHM I |
| 21. | concepts and perception | IHM II.5-10, IV.2, V.3 |
| 22. | ideas and the external world | IHM V.7-8, VI.4-6, 12 |

23. perception, testimony, and causation IHM VI.24, VII

V. Kant

24. diagnosis of metaphysics PFM 1-5
25. pure mathematics & natural science PFM 6-39
26. the possibility metaphysics PFM 40-60
27. the program of transcendental idealism PFM solution, appendix

Requirements and Grading

There are 400 possible points for the course, which break down as follows:

Required Reading	40
Discussion Section	30
Paper 1 (3 pgs)	50
Paper 2 (5 pgs)	80
Paper 3 (8-10 pgs)	100
<u>Final exam</u>	<u>100</u>
Total	400

Reading 10%

It is important that you keep up with the reading. Lectures will presuppose that you have read the material beforehand. You will be asked at the start of each class to sign a sheet indicating that you have done the required reading for that day. Everyone will be granted three free absences/failures to read without any grade penalty. If you come in late it is your responsibility to find the sheet and sign it. Skipping class equals losing reading points.

Discussion Section 8%

Required discussion sections will meet weekly eleven times, starting the second week of class. The discussion group grade covers attendance only, and everyone gets one free skip.

Exam 25%

There will be a comprehensive final exam. We will observe the reading period, during which there will be an optional review session.

Papers 58%

There will be three papers - 3 pages, 5 pages, 8-10 pages.