

History of Philosophy—Modern Syllabus Spring 2018

PHIL 3365-01
MWF, 11-11:50pm
CHSS 140
Credit hours: 3

Instructor: S. West Gurley, Ph.D.
Office hours: MW 1-2:30pm
and by appointment
Office: CHSS 358
Email: wgurley@shsu.edu

Course description: A survey of philosophical thought from about 1500 to the 20th Century. The course will examine the philosophical significance of the rise of modern science, the classical philosophies of rationalism, empiricism, the philosophy of Kant, and the development of these philosophies through the 19th and 20th Centuries (from official course catalogue listings). The course has three essential aims: 1) to acquaint you with the basic thoughts and systems developed by the main philosophies from the 15th Century Renaissance to the 20th Century in Western Europe. Much of this is information that you must assimilate in order to understand the implications of foundational western categories of thought. Western philosophy has often been characterized as exegetical and both modern and contemporary systems of understanding are born out of the documents and systems of the past. This means that you will have to learn the terms and organization of specific systems of numerous philosophers and schools of philosophy. This should be made available to you in class and in your textbooks; 2) to demonstrate the development of philosophy as the use of “models” and assist you in learning to recognize and use differing philosophical models. Class time will be used to illustrate the development of specific western models such as “nature,” “reason,” “god,” “freedom,” “causality,” “individual,” “truth,” “reality,” and “history”; 3) to give you a chance to communicate creatively what you have learned. In-class debates are designed to give you the opportunity to verbalize in a living situation the information you will have been assimilating.

Official objective: Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, philosophy, etc.).

Implicit objectives: learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories relative to philosophical schools of thought in the Modern era; developing skill in expressing oneself orally and in writing; and learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.

Required Texts: Note that I have provided ISBN numbers so that you may purchase these texts via your preferred bookseller, but the specific text is crucial.

Roland H. Bainton, <i>The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century</i> (Beacon Press, September 30, 1985)	9780807013014
Forrest Baird, ed., <i>Philosophic Classics: From Plato to Derrida</i> (Prentice-Hall, 2011)	9780205783861
E. A. Burt, <i>The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science</i> (Dover Publications (January 27, 2003))	9780486425511
Donald Palmer, <i>Looking at Philosophy: The Unbearable Heaviness of Philosophy</i> <i>Made Lighter</i> , 6 th edition (McGraw-Hill, 2013)	9780078038266

Other assigned texts will be made available on Blackboard under “Course Documents” from time to time.

Grading plan, assignments, attentiveness, papers: Final grades will be determined according to the following schema:

Combined average of in-class written papers	50%
Debate evaluation and attentiveness	25%
Comprehensive take-home final examination paper	25%

This is a “W” course, which means that at least 50% of the course grade will derive from writing activities designed to help you master course objectives.

While I use a “+/-/whole letter” grading scale on individual pieces of work, the final grade will be in whole letter grades and distributed as follows:

90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, 70-79 = C, 60-69 = D, and below 60 = F

Satisfactory work (earning a “C”) will consist in knowing the material accurately and being able to communicate it adequately.

Above average work (earning a “B”) will indicate some depth of knowledge of the material.

Excellent work (earning an “A”) will demonstrate intellectual mastery of the material.

“D” and “F” grades will reflect unsatisfactory command of the material or outright failure to demonstrate a grasp of the objectives of the course.

Note well my use of the word “**attentiveness**” as a component (averaged with the grade for your contribution to the formal debate) of your grade in the course. I use this term to distinguish my expectation of your performance in the classroom from mere bodily presence therein. You will only earn attentiveness credit by showing *all the way* up to class. Much of our work will be based on specifically assigned readings from our texts. You will be expected to bring and to have read carefully the reading assigned on the day that we plan to discuss it. Cell phones, MP3 players, Laptops, IPads and other technological devices should be turned off and stored during class period. Other distractables (crossword puzzles, work for other classes, novels, comic books, newspapers, etc.) should be put out of sight as well. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in no attentiveness credit for each day that an infraction occurs. Note well: I will not always say something about infractions, but I will be making mental notes.

In-class written papers will be drawn from the attached outline of course objectives.

Preparation for these exams involves actually writing out your assimilated knowledge of each objective and then memorizing what you wrote. You are encouraged to seek my advice as to your accuracy and the quality of your articulation of the objectives. Three or four objectives will be asked.

The **comprehensive take-home (partial) final examination paper** will require that you trace four of the models of your choosing mentioned above (“nature,” “reason,” “god,” “freedom,” “causality,” “individual,” “truth,” “reality,” and “history”) through the Modern era. The exam should be exhaustive and synthetic in scope. Hence, I provide you with no

page number constraints. I will only accept hard copies of this exam. The other part of your final examination will be comprised of the SACS post-Test which will be administered during the scheduled final exam period below. Your score on this part of the exam will be added to your final exam paper.

Finally, **the debate evaluation** will be based upon the quality of your performance in a formal debate. I will divide the class into an even number of groups of three (eight or ten groups). Each group of three will be assigned a side and conduct a debate on one of the following controversies: “The source of knowledge is in the mind vs. The source of knowledge comes through the senses” or “Freedom of the will vs. the Causal determination of nature”. For each debate, in other words, two teams of three will be given a side to argue and will be expected to argue persuasively for the assigned position (regardless of the personal beliefs of the participants). These sessions will be evaluated by the other members of the class and will be reviewed by me. Presentations should be as creative as possible while remaining relevant to the topic under consideration.

Departmental Grade Policy:

As of the fall semester 2009, only grades of C or better (A, B, or C) will be counted toward the student’s major in Psychology or Philosophy.

Use of Telephones, Pagers and Text-Messaging devices:

2.0 The use by students of telephone, pagers, and text messagers or any device that performs these functions during class-time is prohibited unless specifically permitted by the instructor. All such devices should be turned off or put in a silent or vibrate mode and should not be visible during class. At no time should students answer a call, page, or text message during class or leave the classroom to answer a call, page or text message. Failure to comply with this policy could result in expulsion from the classroom or with three or more offenses, failure of the course.

3.0 Any use of a telephone, pager, or text messenger or any device that performs these functions during a test period is prohibited. These devices should not be present during a test or should be stored securely in such a way that they cannot be seen or used by the student. Even the visible presence of such a device during the test period will result in a zero for that test. Use of these devices during a test is considered de facto evidence of cheating and could result in a charge of academic dishonesty (see student code of conduct <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/StudentGuidelines2010-2012.pdf#page=29> <<http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/StudentGuidelines2010-2012.pdf#page=29>>).

4.0 If there is an emergency situation for a student, that student should inform the instructor, place the device on silent or vibrate mode, and place himself/herself in a seat near the door where an exit for a phone call would be only minimally disruptive. Other arrangements for handling potential emergency situations may be granted at the discretion of the instructor.

Institutional policies and requirements regarding Q-drops, dates of religious observance, academic dishonesty, disabilities accommodations, etc., may be found at the following link: <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/> Please familiarize yourself with the policies.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments (subject to modification at the whim of Instructor):

Week One (W-F, 17-19 January): *Introduction to the History of Philosophy*, realms of discourse, and models (Ancient, Hellenic and Medieval=Reason, Nature, and Human Destiny). Historical development from Ockham to Descartes (political, religious, discovery and invention). Read Baird, pp. 358-376, begin Bainton, Burt, pp. 15-104, and Palmer, pp. 146-179.

Week Two (MWF, 22-26 January): More Introduction. Philosophical movements: Aristotelianism and Thomism—the new orthodoxy; Nominalism and Democracy—the new sovereignty; Italian Renaissance—the new art and literature; Speculative Mysticism—the new hope; The Reformation—the new authority; new emphasis in Science—the new causes. Hobbes and Pascal. Read Bainton, all, and Baird, pp. 421-469.

Week Three (MWF, 29 January—2 February): **In-class examination #1 on Monday, 29 January, covering the first set of objectives “Introduction”.** Rationalism and Empiricism. Historical development—the emergence of new models: psychology and individualism; knowledge and certainty; methodology and proof; freedom and utopia; passions, emotions and sentiments; mind and matter (space and time); natural history; space and time. Rationalism, Descartes: read Baird, pp. 372-420; read Burt, pp. 105-124; read Palmer, pp. 162-178.

Week Four (MWF, 5-9 February): Continue with Descartes, Spinoza. Read Baird, pp. 470-522; read Burt, pp. 125-206; read Palmer, pp. 179-183. Debate teams.

Week Five (MWF, 12-16 February): Leibniz. Read Baird, pp. 578-618; read Burt, pp. 207-325; read Palmer, pp. 183-189.

Week Six (MWF, 19-23 February): Empiricism. Lecture notes on Newton. Locke, Berkeley. Read Baird, pp. 523-577 and 619-680; read Palmer, pp. 189-206. Schedule Rationalism/Empiricism debates.

Week Seven (MWF, 26 February—2 March): Continue Empiricism, Berkeley and Hume. Read Baird, pp. 681-761; read Palmer, pp. 207-214.

Week Eight (MWF, 5-9 March): Sentimentalism and Romanticism, the French and British Enlightenment. Rousseau. Read Baird, pp. 762-774. **In-class examination #2 on Friday, 9 March covering the second set of objectives and the third set up to Kant.**

Week Nine (MWF, 12-16 March): **No class. Spring break.**

Week Ten (MWF, 19-23 March): Kant and the German Enlightenment. Read Baird, pp. 775-897; read Palmer, pp. 215-235. Schedule Free Will/Determinism debates.

Week Eleven (MW 26-28 March): continue with Kant and Romanticism. Mary Wollstonecraft. Read Baird, pp. 898-904. **No Class Friday, religious holiday.**

Week Twelve (MWF 2-6 April): 19th Century Romanticism, Idealism, Idealism's other and Historical/Dialectical Materialism. Hegel, Kierkegaard, Feuerbach and Marx. Read Baird, pp. 905-919, 983-1006; Palmer, pp. 236-278.

Week Thirteen (MWF, 9-13 April): Positivism and Utilitarianism. Bentham, Mill, Comte, and Spencer. Read Baird, pp. 920-961; Palmer, pp. 286-300.

Week Fourteen (MWF, 16-20 April): Catch up on Marx, Utilitarianism, etc. **In-class examination #3 on Wednesday, 18 April covering Kant through part 4.**

Week Fifteen (MWF, 23-27 April): The end of the Modern Era, overcoming anxiety and cultural relativism. Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Read Baird, pp. 962-982, 1033-1060; read Palmer, pp. 278-286.

Week Sixteen (MWF, 30 April-2May): Course wrap-up and review. **No class Friday.**

Final Exam Wednesday, 9 May, Noon-2pm, bring final papers)

Study Objectives

- I. Introduction
 - A. Be able to discuss what the History of Philosophy is about, especially what a realm of discourse is and a philosophical model.
 - B. Trace the major historical events from Ockham to Descartes that shaped philosophical change (political, ecclesiastical, and technological).
 - C. Be able to discuss the Philosophical movements of the period in detail, e.g., Thomism, Nominalism, the new political thought, Italian Renaissance, Speculative Mysticism, the Reformation, the New Science. Be able to discuss each of these separately.
- II. Rationalism and Empiricism
 - A. Be able to discuss Descartes' ideas—
 1. Methodology—esp. the importance of analysis
 2. Clear and distinct ideas
 3. Cogito
 4. Doubt
 5. Innate ideas
 6. Argument for God's existence
 7. *res cogitans* and *res extensa*
 - B. Be able to discuss Spinoza's ideas
 1. methodology
 2. God
 3. Substance
 4. Attribute
 5. Mode
 6. *Natura naturans*, *Natura naturata*, and *sub-specie eternitate*
 7. Human bondage and freedom
 - C. Be able to discuss Leibniz's ideas
 1. Monadology
 2. Theodicy
 3. Language theory
 - D. Be able to discuss Locke's ideas
 1. What is borrowed from Rationalism?
 2. Innate ideas and general ideas
 3. Knowledge
 4. Civil government
 5. Personal freedom and morality
 6. Faith and reason
 - E. Be able to discuss Berkeley's idea the *esse est percipi*
 - F. Be able to discuss Hume's ideas
 1. Sense data
 2. Reality
 3. Causation
 4. Ethics
 5. Religion

- III. The Enlightenment
 - A. Be able to discuss Rousseau's ideas
 - 1. Sentiment
 - 2. Culture
 - 3. Education
 - 4. The general will
 - 5. The noble savage
 - B. Be able to discuss the various factors which contributed to the French Enlightenment, especially French materialism, the encyclopedists and the political radicals.
 - C. Be able to discuss Kant's ideas
 - 1. Pure reason and judgments regarding sense data
 - 2. Antinomies of pure reason
 - 3. God, the world, the transcendental ego
 - 4. Practical reason—duty, the categorical imperative
 - 5. Autonomous and heteronomous man
 - 6. Aesthetic reason/Judgment
 - D. What are the key models of enlightenment after Kant?
- IV. Romanticism and Idealism
 - A. Be able to discuss sentimentalism
 - B. Be able to discuss Hegel's ideas
 - 1. Reason
 - 2. History
 - 3. Absolute Spirit
 - 4. Individual ethics
 - 5. The State
 - C. Be able to discuss the idea of process, conflict, progress and dialectic as post-Hegelian ideas.
 - D. How did Feuerbach and Marx change Hegel's dialectics?
 - E. Be able to discuss the relationship of Humanism and Totalitarianism in the 19th Century.
 - F. Discuss the basic ideas of the following philosophers:
 - 1. Auguste Comte
 - 2. Jeremy Bentham
 - 3. John Stuart Mill
 - 4. Herbert Spencer
 - 5. Mary Wollstonecraft
 - G. Discuss the rise of the idea of Humanity and Sociology
- V. The End of the Modern Era
 - A. Be able to discuss the course of cultural relativism and fragmentation both of reason and cultural consensus
 - B. Be able to discuss the basic ideas of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard and how they disrupt the Modern Era.
 - C. What solution have you developed to deal with cultural and intellectual relativism?