

## PHIL 25B: Modern Philosophy

### UC Berkeley Summer Session D (2024)

**Course Description:** The 17th century was a revolutionary period in Western philosophy. Medieval philosophy came to an end and (early) modern philosophy began. The purpose of this course is to understand the new and exciting ideas that emerged in this time period, and to see how they shaped our own intellectual world. We will study the primary texts of a number of important authors starting with René Descartes and ending with Immanuel Kant. This will give us a chance to think about some of the “big ideas” in philosophy: the existence of God, the concept of the human soul or mind, and our knowledge of the fundamental nature of reality.

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**Office Hours:**

**GSI Information:** Amanda Lopatin  
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**Office Hours:**

**Location and Time:** 120 Wheeler. M, Tu, W, Th: 10am-Noon.

**Discussion Section:** 200 Wheeler. Friday: 10am-Noon.

**Reading Materials & Required Texts:** *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Arieuw and Watkins.

**Course Requirements:** There are two broad goals for the class. The first goal is to learn about important ideas in modern philosophy. The second goal is to develop a set of skills, including thinking, reading, and writing about philosophy. To achieve both these goals, it's important to **do the reading slowly and carefully** and to **participate in class and section**. The assignments are designed to facilitate these things. Due dates will be enforced; turning in assignments late will result in a reduction in one grade interval (e.g., B+ to B) for each day late. If you have an emergency (e.g., family, medical) please email both me and the GSI.

**Assignment 1: In class quiz 15%**

You will be asked to answer 3-4 short answer questions. These questions will be drawn from a list of 10 or so questions that will be distributed ahead of time. So, as long as you study this longer list, the quiz should be no problem.

**Assignment 2: Oral exam 15%**

You will have a 5-10 minute oral exam with the GSI. You will simply discuss a reading from Week 3 (announced ahead of time) to show that you understand the key concepts and can answer questions in your own terms.

**Assignment 3: Two Reading Responses 20% (Each 10%)**

You will be asked to write two short papers (2pgs each, double spaced) that identify the main point of a portion of our reading, such as the conclusion of an argument or the thesis advanced by an author. You will be asked to explain the reasoning behind this conclusion or discuss the importance of the thesis.

**Assignment 4: Final paper 30%**

You will be asked to write a paper (4pg, double spaced) that incorporates a formal argument reconstruction. It will be explained what makes the reconstruction “formal” and how you are expected to assess the reconstructed argument.

**Participation: Section & Class 20%**

Participation includes asking questions in class, answering the instructor’s questions in class, and making contributions to section. This also includes submitting questions for the Town Hall.

### Class Schedule & Reading Assignments:

Monday July 1	Introduction & Descartes (bring reader to class)	No assigned reading
Tuesday July 2	Descartes (bring reader to class)	Read through Meditation 3
Wednesday July 3	Descartes (bring reader to class)	Read through Meditation 4
Thursday July 4	NO CLASS: HOLIDAY	Read through Meditation 5
Monday July 8	Descartes (bring reader to class)	Read through Meditation 6
Tuesday July 9	IN CLASS EXAM & Elisabeth	<i>Correspondence</i>
Wednesday July 10	Bacon; Galileo; Cavendish	<i>New Organon</i> (all) <i>The Assayer</i> (all) <i>Philosophical Letters</i> 30, 35-36
Thursday July 11	Hobbes and Bramhall	PDF uploaded to bCourses
Monday July 15	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> I, through Proposition 27
Tuesday July 16	Spinoza  SUBMIT TOWN HALL Q'S BY 7PM.	<i>Ethics</i> I, Propositions 28-Appendix

Wednesday July 17	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> II, through Proposition 15
Thursday July 18	Ann Conway + Town Hall	<i>Principles</i> (all)
Friday July 19 →→	IN SECTION: Oral Exam on Spinoza	
Monday July 22	Malebranche & Leibniz	<i>The Search After Truth</i> , Book VI, Part II, Chapter 3 & Elucidation 15  <i>A New System</i> (all)
Tuesday July 23	Leibniz	<i>Discourse on Metaphysics</i> (1-36)
Wednesday July 24	Leibniz  READING RESPONSE DUE	<i>Primary Truths</i> (all) <i>Monadology</i> (all)
Thursday July 25	Locke & Discuss paper-writing & Distribute final paper prompts	Book I, Chapter II & Book II, Chapters I, II, and XII.
Monday July 29	Locke	Chapter XXIII & Chapter XXVII
Tuesday July 30	Hume	<i>Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> , Sections II-VI
Wednesday July 31	Hume	<i>Enquiry</i> , Sections VII-VIII, XII

Thursday August 1	Hume	<i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i> , Book I, Part 4, Sections 5-6
Monday August 5	Berkeley & FINAL PAPER DUE (midnight)	<i>Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous</i> , First and Second Dialogues
Tuesday August 6	Berkeley	<i>Three Dialogues</i> , Third Dialogue
Wednesday August 7	Kant & READING RESPONSE DUE	<i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> , Preface, Preamble, and The Main Transcendental Problem: Part One
Thursday August 8	Kant	<i>Prolegomena</i> , The Main Transcendental Problem: Parts Two and Three

**Academic Integrity:** Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you are found to have cheated on the written quiz, you will receive 0% credit for the assignment. If you are found to have plagiarized in one of your papers (or used some Artificial Intelligence program), you will have one chance to re-write the paper properly, or you will receive an F for the course and the incident will be reported to the Center for Student Conduct. (However, studying together – for the quiz and/or oral exam example, for example – is perfectly permissible.)

#### **Resources for Students:**

**Information about plagiarism and paraphrasing:** <https://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/academic-misconduct-intro/>

**A primer on reading philosophy papers by Jim Pryor:**  
<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>