

PHIL 3121: MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Syllabus, Spring 2013

Professor Saam Trivedi

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Class Meets: Tue 2:15 – 3:30 pm, and Thu 1:25 – 3:30 pm in 3305 Boylan

Office Hours: Thu 12:30 – 1:25 pm

COURSE AIMS:

- (1) To survey and critically examine philosophical views on epistemology, metaphysics and the mind, from Descartes to Kant;
- (2) to frame general questions about the nature of reality and the mind, and about the nature, scope and limits, sources, and justification of knowledge;
- (3) to clarify notions crucial to philosophical thinking such as existence; substance; primary, secondary and tertiary qualities; mind and body or matter; idea; abstract ideas; innate ideas; God; cause and effect; realism; idealism, subjective and objective; self and personal identity; noumena and phenomena; freedom and determinism; the soul; skepticism; empiricism and sense-experience; rationalism and reason; truth; justification; analytic and synthetic propositions; necessary and contingent truths; a priori and a posteriori knowledge; doubt and certainty; and so on;
- (4) to provide students with the intellectual background and analytic skills to develop and refine their philosophical ideas about reality, the mind and knowledge.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins (eds.), *Modern Philosophy* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Hackett, 2009)

REQUIREMENTS:

- (1) 2 in-class exams, each worth c. 25% of your grade
- (2) 1 final c. 8 page paper, worth c. 30%
- (3) Class attendance & participation, worth c. 20%

Please note that class participation may be crucial if your grade is borderline. Please also note exam and paper dates.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS:

1/29: Welcome and Course-Introduction

1/31: Rene Descartes, *Discourse*, Part II (pp. 28-33); + *Meditations* I-III (pp. 40-54); + Objections and Replies (pp. 76-82).

2/5: ”

2/7: Descartes, *Meditations* IV-VI (pp. 54-68); + Objections and Replies (pp. 83-92).

2/12: College Closed – Lincoln’s Birthday

2/14: Readings for 2/7 above continued – Conversion Day on a Tuesday schedule

2/19: Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*, Sec. 1-37 (pp. 224-47); + *Primary Truths* + *New System of Nature* (pp. 265-74); + *Monadology* (pp. 275-83).

2/21: Leibniz (contd.)

2/26: **Exam I.**

2/28: John Locke, *Essay*, Bk. I, Ch. 1-2 (pp. 316-22); + *Essay*, Bk. II, Ch. 1-2, 6-12 (pp. 322-28, 331-42); + *Essay*, Bk. II, Ch. 21, 23 (pp. 348-57, 359-67).

3/5: ”

3/7: Locke, *Essay*, Bk. II, Ch. 27 (pp. 367-77); + *Essay*, Bk. IV, Ch. 1-4 (pp. 386-405); + *Essay*, Bk. IV, Ch. 10-11 (pp. 405-15); + Leibniz, *New Essays*, Preface (pp. 422-33).

3/12: ”

3/14: George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues*, First and Second Dialogue (pp. 454-84).

3/19: ”

3/21: Berkeley, *Three Dialogues*, Third Dialogue (pp. 484-503); + *Principles of Human Knowledge*, Introduction and Part I, Sec. 1-33 (pp. 438-53).

3/26: Spring Recess

3/28: “

4/2: “

4/4: Berkeley (contd.)

4/9: **Exam II.**

4/11: David Hume, *Inquiry*, Sect. I-VIII (pp. 533-75).

4/16: ”

4/18: ”

4/23: Hume, *Inquiry*, Sect. X (pp. 577-86); + *Inquiry*, Sect. XII (pp. 593-600); + *Treatise*, Bk. I, Part 4, Sect. 6 (pp. 525-32).

4/25: **Paper-Topics Given Out.** ”

4/30: Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena*, Preface & Preamble, and Parts One and Two (pp. 661-95)

5/2: ”

5/7: ”

5/9: Kant, *Prolegomena*, Part Three + Conclusion + Scholium (pp. 695-716).

5/14: ”

5/16: **Papers Due.** Also “