



Syllabus for PHIL 412.500: 17th Century Philosophy

Tuesday & Thursday: 5:30-6:45 (YMCA 113)

Fall 2017; Dr. Stephen H. Daniel



Course Description and Objectives. In 17th Century Philosophy students learn to analyze and critically evaluate major thinkers (e.g., Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Leibniz) who set the stage for later discussions of mind, nature, freedom, knowledge, and God. By interpreting their works in light of secondary literature, students also develop the ability to identify quality scholarship and incorporate it into their writing and speaking. The course has no prerequisites.

Textbooks: *Readings in Modern Philosophy*, vol. 1, ed. Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins. **Supplementary readings** are in a bound packet at the Copy Corner in the MSC. Recommended: F. Copleston, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 4.

<u>Aug.</u> 31	“Modern” Philosophy , Readings xi-xxi	<u>Oct.</u> 19	Spinoza, <i>Ethics</i> Iip14-49: 184-201
<u>Sept.</u> 5	Descartes, <i>Discourse on Method</i> , 1-3, 12-21	24	Spinoza, <i>Ethics</i> Vp21-42: 201-209
7	Descartes <i>Meditations</i> I-II: 1-3, 27-34	26	Mid-semester exam (in class)
12	Descartes <i>Meditations</i> III-IV: 34-45	31	Cavendish, <i>Philosophical Letters</i> , 77-79, 94-101, 143-49
14	Descartes <i>Meditations</i> V-VI: 45-55		
	(17) Essay 1: on Descartes (due midnight)	<u>Nov.</u> 2	Anne Conway, <i>Principles</i> 56-59, 63-70
19	Mersenne/Hobbes/Descartes, <i>Obj</i> II/III: 56-70	7	Bayle, SEP article by Lennon & Hickson
21	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> I.1-4: 128-39	9	Leibniz, <i>Discourse</i> 1-18: 210-212, 234-45
26	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> I.5, III.34, IV.46: 139-50		(12) Research paper due
28	Arnauld/Descartes, <i>Obj</i> IV: 70-80 & Readings 19-24	14	Leibniz, <i>Discourse</i> 19-37: 245-57
		16	Leibniz, Primary Truths/New System 275-84
<u>Oct.</u> 3	Pascal, 102-114	21	Leibniz, New Essays Preface, readings 115-26
5	Malebranche, <i>Search after Truth</i> III.2.1-4, 6; pp. 213-22	[23]	[No class: Thanksgiving holiday]
	(8) Essay 2: on Descartes’ Contemporaries	(26) Essay 3: on Leibniz and his contemporaries	
10	Malebranche, <i>Search after Truth</i> III.2.7 & <i>Elucidation</i> 15; pp. 222-33	28	Leibniz, <i>Monadology</i> 285-93
12	Spinoza, <i>Ethics</i> Ip1-31: 158-71	30	Newton, <i>Principia</i> Scholium, Optics 294-303
17	Spinoza, <i>Ethics</i> Ip32-IIp13: 171-84	<u>Dec.</u> 5	Leibniz, Letters to Clarke 304-313
		13	(Wednesday) Final exam 3:30-5:30 (in class)

#See [Guidelines for Philosophy Research Papers](#)

- The **semester grade** is based on:
 - three 500-word essays on readings (10 pts each): due at Assignments on [eCampus](#) Sunday midnight.
 - mid-semester (20 pts) and final essay exams (30 pts).
 - a 10-page research paper (20 points).
- There is no separate grade for attendance or participation, but both can affect your mastery of the material. [Student Rule 7](#) notes that you are expected to attend all classes. You should also prepare notes summarizing readings for each class.
- If you miss the mid-semester or final exam, contact me immediately. My expectations of essays rise if they are submitted past deadlines, but **you should still turn in** assignments even after they are due (up to a week).
- Minimum grades: 88=A, 78=B, 68=C, 57=D.

Office hours (YMCA 417): Tues/Thurs 12:00-2:00. **Phone:** 845-5619 (office), 324-4199 (cell); **email** sdaniel@tamu.edu. **Web:** philosophy.tamu.edu/~sdaniel/.

Students with disabilities are guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact [Disability Services](#), Student Services at 757 West Campus Blvd or call 845-1637.

Students are bound by the Aggie honor code not to lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do. If you violate the code (e.g., by plagiarizing something from the Internet), you fail the course. For information on cheating and plagiarism, go to <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>.