



Syllabus for PHIL 682.600: Seminar on Spinoza

Spring 2017; Dr. Stephen H. Daniel



The Spinoza seminar covers his entire corpus, from his *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* (roughly 1661) to his *Political Treatise* (roughly 1676). It includes his *Ethics* (1677) and his *Theological-Political Treatise* (1670), along with his correspondence, and covers his treatment of God, necessity, knowledge, virtue, and political obligation.

Texts: Baruch Spinoza, *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, vols. I & II (Princeton UP, 1985, 2016).

- Jan.** 17 Background, General Preface (I: ix-xx, II: ix-xxi), *Emendation of the Intellect* (I: 3-45)
 24 *Short Treatise* (I: 45-120)
 31 *Short Treatise*, Letters 1-11 (I: 120-200)
- Feb.** 7 Ryan Letters 12-16, *Descartes' Principles* (I: 200-276)
 14 Rob *Descartes' Principles*, *Metaphysical Thoughts* (I: 276-346)
 21 Letters 17-28, *Ethics I* (I: 349-446)
 28 *Ethics II-III* (I: 446-530)
- Mar.** 5 **First paper due** (Sunday noon)
 7 Ryan *Ethics IV-V* (I: 531-617)
 21 Letters 29-41, *Theological-Political Treatise* Preface, Ch. 1 (II. 3-93)
 28 Rob *Theological-Political Treatise*, Ch. 2-6 (II. 93-169)
- Apr.** 4 Rob *Theological-Political Treatise*, Ch. 7-12 (II. 169-256)
 11 *Theological-Political Treatise*, Ch. 13-18 (II. 257-331)
 18 *Theological-Political Treatise*, Ch. 19-20, Letters 42-54 (II. 332-416)
 25 Letters 55-84, *Political Treatise*, Ch. 1 (II. 417-506)
- May** 2 Ryan *Political Treatise*, Ch. 2-11 (II. 507-604)
 10 **Second paper due** (Sunday midnight)

Presentations/Papers/Grades: twice during the semester, seminar members will prepare a six-page outline of primary texts and secondary sources and lead a discussion of their outlines. Together, these outline presentations count for 30% of the semester grade. A 10-page paper (30%) and a 20-page paper (40%) are due on the indicated dates.

Office hours (YMCA 417): Tues 12:15-12:45, 2:00-5:45; Thurs 12:15-12:45, 2:00-3:30. **Phone:** 324-4199 cell. **Email:** sdaniel@tamu.edu. **Web:** people.tamu.edu/~sdaniel/

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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: no second chances. For information on cheating and plagiarism, go to <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>.

Notes for Outlines/Presentations/Papers

Your presentation has two aspects: the first is something that you do in our seminar meeting, namely, summarize the basic argument and ideas developed in the readings. The outline should include no more than 16 quotes. In between each you should indicate how to interpret the passage—with longer passages receiving more extensive comments. Presumably everyone in the seminar will have read that material and will have comments or questions. You will also have a chance in the subsequent meeting of the seminar to discuss issues we did not talk about on your outline or further thoughts you have, as well as issues from your presentation that bear on points raised in the readings of the subsequent meeting. The second aspect of your presentation is your written outline distributed no later than the night before by email. (A [sample outline](#) can be found in the Content section of the eCampus webpage for the course.) You want your outline to look like an outline of a paper you are writing, the theme of which is Locke's treatment of the topic that you have selected. The outline is your chance to show how you would write a paper that says "here is Locke's doctrine of X."

The Outline should begin with a short paragraph about how the topic has occasioned different interpretations among Locke scholars. [To get a sense of the range of scholarly interpretations, consult the following online resources: (a) the [Philosopher's Index](#) (available through the Evans Library), (b) [PhilPapers](#), and (c) the [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#).] Note briefly the places where Locke makes the pertinent claims and indicate (in passing, citing them in a footnote) how specific commentators have disagreed on the issue. Then indicate, in separate paragraphs, (1) your primary sources and (2) useful secondary sources. Your final introductory paragraph should be your thesis statement, the claim about Locke's thought that you want to defend, followed by a sentence on how your outline lays out the defense of that thesis.

Both the 10-page research paper and the 20-page term paper should have the following structure:

- a) after the title (which will be something like "Locke on X" or "Locke's Doctrine of X"), one or two paragraphs should indicate the issues that have arisen in the scholarly literature about how to interpret his discussion of X, followed by an indication of the specific problems you plan to address and the order of your main points. Use a note to identify the main advocates of positions you will engage.
- b) each section of the paper should have a title and should be at least 3-4 pages long. For the short paper, that means there will be no more than three sections.
- c) a final brief (less than a page) section, entitled "Concluding Remarks," indicating how the points you made address the issues you raised.
- d) footnote citations should adopt the following format:
 - (author, book) Nicholas Jolley, *Leibniz and Locke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 35.
 - (essay in book) Samuel C. Rickless, "Locke's Polemic against Nativism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Locke's "Essay concerning Understanding,"* ed. Lex Newman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 42.
 - (journal article) Thomas Lennon, "Locke and the Logic of Ideas," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 18 (2001): 155-56.
 - (translation) Rene Descartes, *Conversation with Burman*, trans. John Cottingham (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 17.

You should cite all references to Locke quotes parenthetically in the text itself at the end of the sentence, not in a footnote. Use internal references when the location is small enough for someone to find the passage easily. For example, E II.21.69 tells the reader that the cited passage is from the *Essay* book II, ch. 21, section 69. Add the Nidditch location (separated by a colon when the section is longer than a page (E II.21.69: 281). The period goes after the parenthesis.

Insert something like the following as a note the first time you refer to a quote: "Abbreviations used: *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (E), ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); *Some Thoughts concerning Education* (TE), ed. John W. Yolton and Jean S. Yolton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); *The Works of John Locke* (W) (London, 1823)." A citation of a work referred to in a previous note should list simply the author's last name and an abbreviated title (e.g., Lennon, "Logic of Ideas," 160). If you cite a secondary source repeatedly, abbreviate it (e.g., Lennon) and insert it parenthetically in the text. Use only standard sources, never other editions or translations unless you have a reason to do so.